



Field Guides Tour Report

Holiday Costa Rica: Rancho Naturalista I 2014

Dec 20, 2014 to Dec 28, 2014

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

Sometimes it's nice to step out of the madness of modern day holiday preparations. To trade the clamor of shoppers squabbling over the last toy for the racket of dozens of Cattle Egrets jousting over space in a bamboo thicket. To replace bright packages with the brilliant reds and iridescent greens of Resplendent Quetzals glowing among the foggy boughs of a moss-draped tree. To swap canned holiday music for the bubbling songs of courting Montezuma Oropendolas somersaulting from branches, the jolly whistle of a Rufous-collared Sparrow, the frog-like croaks of a Keel-billed Toucan, or the soft hooting of a Mottled Owl. To wake on a brilliantly blue morning to the sure surprise of a new place, with new trails to explore and new birds to see. Sometimes, it's nice to head south of the border to a place like the famously homey surroundings of Rancho Naturalista.

That's not to say that we didn't celebrate the holidays in Costa Rica -- far from it; we just had a different KIND of celebration! There was the traditional "Christmas feast" (which was more like a traditional Thanksgiving feast, if we're honest). The presents: little reminders of Costa Rica. The band singing "Feliz Navidad" -- and love songs. The snowmen and snowflakes and icicles dangling from tropical houses. And birds -- lots and lots of birds!



This tour is a great one for up close and personal looks at hummingbirds (like this Black-crested Coquette) thanks to Rancho's feeders and plantings. (Photo by participant Tony Quezon)

Top of the hit parade for most people were the Sunbitterns we found along two different rushing streams; they crept along the rocky shores, jumped across short gaps, sat on their eggs on mossy branches and occasionally -- just occasionally -- flashed those gorgeous wings. Then there was the fabulously stripey Fasciated Tiger-Heron standing stockstill in middle of a stream. The trio of Bay Wrens that danced along a streambank. The Tropical Screech-Owl that peered, blinking, from its leafy dayroost. The handsome Cinnamon Woodpecker that perched right at the top of a big tree. The Snowcaps and Crowned Woodnymphs that threw themselves repeatedly into the hummingbird pools. The swarm of Black-and-yellow Tanagers that boiled along a roadside. The Bay-headed Tanagers that nibbled on dangling Cecropia fruits. And, of course, the dozens of hummingbirds that jostled around the feeders and flowers at Rancho and elsewhere.

Mixed flocks boiled along trails and roadsides. A male Red-headed Barbet flashed among the more soberly-hued Common Chlorospingus and Red-faced Spinetails at Tapanti. A Crimson-collared Tanager and a Black-cowled Oriole gleamed beside a noisy pair of Cinnamon Becards at Universidad E.A.R.T.H. At Rancho's moth cloth, a Kentucky Warbler joined a pair of White-breasted Wood-Wrens under the benches, while Spotted and Plain Brown woodcreepers crawled up the shelter's poles, Red-throated Ant-Tanagers and Buff-throated Foliage-gleaners rummaged through the vegetation, and Tawny-chested and Dusky-capped flycatchers made repeated little sallies.

Thanks to all of you for joining us; it was fun to share the holidays with you. I hope to see you again somewhere, some day!

-- Megan

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

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

BIRDS

Tinamidae (Tinamous)

GREAT TINAMOU (*Tinamus major*) -- Some of us heard the eerie whistle of one echoing from the darkening forest as we climbed back up from the hummingbird pools. [*]

LITTLE TINAMOU (*Crypturellus soui*) -- We heard the higher pitched quavering whistles of this species at E.A.R.T.H., as we left the side trail where

we found our first Streak-headed Woodcreepers. [*]

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Anas discors*) – One snoozed among a handful of Lesser Scaup on Laguna Angostura (the reservoir at Casa Turire) looking quite small.

REDHEAD (*Aythya americana*) – A distant drake preened on a muddy island with a gang of Lesser Scaup on Lake Cachi, the reservoir near Tapanti NP. This is a vagrant in Costa Rica.

RING-NECKED DUCK (*Aythya collaris*) – A few among the hundreds of Lesser Scaup on Lake Cachi.

LESSER SCAUP (*Aythya affinis*)

Cracidae (Guans, Chachalacas, and Curassows)

GRAY-HEADED CHACHALACA (*Ortalis cinereiceps*) – A regular muttering group crowded the fruit feeders at Rancho each day, and we spotted others in hedges along various byways.

CRESTED GUAN (*Penelope purpurascens*) – One lying on a branch near the edge of the pasture at Rancho Naturalista gave us fine opportunity for scope studies, thanks to Roberto's sharp eyes. It was eventually joined by two others, one of which spent long minutes preening its tail.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

LEAST GREBE (*Tachybaptus dominicus*) – Two ferried mouthfuls of vegetation to their growing platform nest near the dam on Lake Cachi, occasionally diving underneath to get more material. [N]

Ciconiidae (Storks)

WOOD STORK (*Mycteria americana*) – Two circled over Casa Turire with dozens of Black Vultures, and another flapped past (much lower) while we searched for the crakes near the reedbeds there.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – A couple dried their wings on the muddy banks of Laguna Angostura.

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

ANHINGA (*Anhinga anhinga*) – A female flapped her wings dry along the edge of the lake at CATIE, and a male (flushed by people walking on the other end of the lake) flew into the tree with the Yellow-crowned Night-Herons.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

LEAST BITTERN (*Ixobrychus exilis*) – A lucky few happened to be looking in the right direction when Ernesto spotted one flying low over the Water Hyacinth on Laguna Angostura.

FASCIATED TIGER-HERON (*Tigrisoma fasciatum*) – One standing in the middle of a little stream at the edge of La Suiza was a surprise -- and gave us fabulous opportunity for 30 minutes of study (and photographs) as it hunted.

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – At least a dozen stood sprinkled across the mudflats edging the (much reduced) water at Casa Turire.

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*)

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*)

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*) – Two adults contrasted with the white sea of Cattle Egrets in the bamboo and papyrus along the back edge of the lake at CATIE, and a white youngster stepped along a mudflat near the dam at Casa Turire.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Scores squabbled and fussed in a bamboo thicket along the lakeside at CATIE, with adults bringing occasional goodies back to their nearly grown youngsters. [N]

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*)

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nyctanassa violacea*)

BOAT-BILLED HERON (*Cochlearius cochlearius*) – A handful in the bamboo around the lake at CATIE, including one not far from the road. The huge eye of this species hints at its nocturnal habits.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

GREEN IBIS (*Mesembrinibis cayennensis*) – Three or four (it was tough to count them in the long grass!) wandered along a narrow track at Casa Turire, appearing and disappearing as they worked their way steadily away from us. For a while, a couple of them stood with their backs to the sun and wings spread, apparently warming up. We saw a couple of others at CATIE, where one perched up on a tree branch with its iridescent green nape feathers gleaming in the afternoon light.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*)

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*) – Daily, including a boisterous mob gobbling palm fruits on the ground at CATIE.

KING VULTURE (*Sarcoramphus papa*) – Suzanne and I spotted one of these spiraling at the very top of a big kettle of vultures (and storks) over Casa Turire. Unfortunately, it reached the (very high) top of the thermal and headed out into the wide blue sky almost immediately -- and was never seen again.

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – One of these winter visitors sat atop a dead snag near the trout farm just outside Tapanti NP -- living the good life, apparently!

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

WHITE-TAILED KITE (*Elanus leucurus*) – Two hunting around the Hotel Bougainvillea performed nicely our first morning, with one hovering briefly over a nearby field.

HOOK-BILLED KITE (*Chondrohierax uncinatus*) – A dark male soared past as we started our morning along the road at E.A.R.T.H., showing its distinctively paddle-shaped wings well. This species specializes on snails.

BLACK HAWK-EAGLE (*Spizaetus tyrannus*) – One flew over us as we started our walk down the side track at E.A.R.T.H., its shrill whistling call

drifting down as it circled.

DOUBLE-TOOTHED KITE (*Harpagus bidentatus*) – One spiraled over the forest at E.A.R.T.H., its distinctively long undertail coverts fluffed so far out that it appeared to almost have a white rump patch. This species follows monkey troops, feeding on the insects that the mammals stir up with their passage.

BICOLORED HAWK (*Accipiter bicolor*) – A lucky few were on the Rancho balcony early enough one morning to see one perched for a few minutes in the dead tree up the hill from the cabins. Thanks Harry!

BARRED HAWK (*Morphnarchus princeps*)

ROADSIDE HAWK (*Rupornis magnirostris*) – Easily the most common raptor of the tour, seen well on most days -- including a calling bird sitting in a tree near the road at E.A.R.T.H. with its mate on a nearby telephone pole.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (*Buteo platypterus*)

SHORT-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo brachyurus*) – A dark morph bird hunting at the edge of the clouds above the parking lot and picnic area on Irazu volcano was fun to watch -- and even kited in the stiff winds blowing over the ridge.

RED-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo jamaicensis*)

Eurypygidae (Sunbittern)

SUNBITTERN (*Eurypyga helias*) – WOW!! Finding one along the swift little creek at Las Minas was great -- particularly when it flashed those gorgeous wings as it flew across the stream towards us. We watched its mate settle on two eggs perched (seemingly precariously) atop a big mossy branch over the river. And later in the week, we found another pair hunting along the stony edge of another quick running stream right at the edge of Tuis -- with a Fasciated Tiger-Heron for company! [N]

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

WHITE-THROATED CRAKE (*Laterallus albigularis*) – All of us heard a pair calling (and calling and calling) from the thick Water Hyacinth around the boat dock at Laguna Angostura, and Gray actually caught a glimpse of one of the birds as it wiggled through the vegetation. We heard another, more distant, pair at CATIE.

GRAY-BREASTED CRAKE (*Laterallus exilis*) – One called monotonously and repetitively from the Water Hyacinth around the boat dock at Laguna Angostura, but -- though the sounds crept closer and closer -- we just could not actually SEE it. [*]

GRAY-NECKED WOOD-RAIL (*Aramides cajaneus*) – An adult and a couple of youngsters scurried around in the front yard -- and garage -- at a home on the CATIE campus, giving us a great chance for study.

PURPLE GALLINULE (*Porphyrio martinicus*)

AMERICAN COOT (*Fulica americana*)

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

SOUTHERN LAPWING (*Vanellus chilensis*) – Two pairs trotted around in the pastures at Casa Turire: the first along the back edge of one of the more distant fields, the second -- far more confiding -- in one of the paddocks right beside the road.

Jacanidae (Jacanas)

NORTHERN JACANA (*Jacana spinosa*) – Multiple family groups -- chestnut and black adults with big, stripey-faced chicks in tow -- pattered across the lily pads on the lake at CATIE.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*) – A couple bobbing on rocks in the middle of the Platanillo river, seen as we searched for the Sunbittern.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) [I]

PALE-VENTED PIGEON (*Patagioenas cayennensis*)

RED-BILLED PIGEON (*Patagioenas flavirostris*) – Nice views of a few resting (and preening) in one of the big trees behind the Hotel Bougainvillea - where the distinctively pale yellow bill of this misnamed species was particularly apparent -- with others most days throughout the tour.

BAND-TAILED PIGEON (*Patagioenas fasciata*)

RUDDY PIGEON (*Patagioenas subvinacea*) – A couple in the big tree over the main building at Rancho cooperated reasonably well, and another made a timely appearance in a little shrub beside the Silencio road, shortly before we found our Black-striped Sparrows.

WHITE-WINGED DOVE (*Zenaida asiatica*)

MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaida macroura*) – A few on the wires along the road up to Volcan Irazu, with a handful of others in flight on the same mountain. This species is relatively rare as a breeding species in Costa Rica; it only does so in the Central Range.

INCA DOVE (*Columbina inca*)

RUDDY GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina talpacoti*) – Our first was one we found trotting around behind several cages full of exotic birds at Casa Turire. We had even better looks at multiple pairs on wires beside the road at Universidad E.A.R.T.H.

WHITE-TIPPED DOVE (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – One trundling along beside the garden wall at the Hotel Bougainvillea our first afternoon was seen especially well.

GRAY-CHESTED DOVE (*Leptotila cassini*)

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

SQUIRREL CUCKOO (*Piaya cayana*) – One sailed across the road at E.A.R.T.H. and landed in a nearby tree, then bounded up the branches like its namesake before pausing for a few moments in the open. What a tail!

GROOVE-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*)

Strigidae (Owls)

TROPICAL SCREECH-OWL (*Megascops choliba*) – Two snoozing along a railway line in Cartago were amazingly well camouflaged, looking impressively like tree stumps (though tree stumps with blinking eyes) even in the scopes.

FERRUGINOUS PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium brasilianum*) – Two silent birds hunted around the lights on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea, allowing us the opportunity to study them repeatedly in the scopes. Some of the group saw a far less cooperative bird in a big bamboo thicket at CATIE.

MOTTLED OWL (*Ciccaba virgata*) – Arg! We heard several of these owls calling late most nights (and early most mornings) around our cabins at Rancho -- except for the night we looked for them, of course! [*]

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

LESSER NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles acutipennis*) – Some great spotting by Roberto netted us fine views of one snoozing on a tree branch near the lake at CATIE.

COMMON PAURAUQUE (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) – One hunted along the driveway at Rancho, leaping up after passing insects in a flurry of white patterned wings and tail, and returning again and again to the lefthand concreted wheel rut.

Apodidae (Swifts)

SPOT-FRONTED SWIFT (*Cypseloides cherriei*) – At least one, showing its blocky head and stocky shape, zipped back and forth over the road at Universidad E.A.R.T.H., among a mix of other swifts and swallows.

WHITE-COLLARED SWIFT (*Streptoprocne zonaris*) – The most widespread of the tour's swifts, seen in big groups on multiple days -- including a screaming flock over the river at Platanillo and another group swirling over Silencio road.

VAUX'S SWIFT (*Chaetura vauxi*)

GRAY-RUMPED SWIFT (*Chaetura cinereiventris*)

LESSER SWALLOW-TAILED SWIFT (*Panyptila cayennensis*) – Small numbers over the forest at E.A.R.T.H., distinguished by their long pointed tails and the big patches of white on their undersides.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

WHITE-NECKED JACOBIN (*Florisuga mellivora*) – Dozens -- both males and females -- jostled around the feeders at Rancho each day, often sitting in bushes right under the balcony between feeding bouts.

WHITE-TIPPED SICKLEBILL (*Eutoxeres aquila*) [*]

GREEN HERMIT (*Phaethornis guy*) – Including a female that made occasional visits to one of the feeders off the Rancho balcony.

STRIPE-THROATED HERMIT (*Phaethornis striigularis*) – Our best views came down the hill at Rancho Bajo, where one penny-bright bird flitted among the verbena flowers.

BROWN VIOLETEAR (*Colibri delphinae*) – One sat for long minutes in a tree near the end of the main building at Rancho, stretching and preening -- and allowing great scope studies.

GREEN VIOLETEAR (*Colibri thalassinus*)

PURPLE-CROWNED FAIRY (*Heliodytes barroti*) – Two different females bathed in one of the hummingbird pools at Rancho Naturalista, and a male foraged among the narrow leaves of a tree overhanging the road at E.A.R.T.H.

GREEN-BREASTED MANGO (*Anthracothorax prevostii*)

GREEN THORNTAIL (*Discosura conversii*) – A couple of males flitted around a tree covered with pink flowers, right at the edge of the pasture at Rancho Naturalista. Eventually, both perched in nearby leafless trees, giving great opportunity for study -- and photographs. Great spotting, Pat!

BLACK-CRESTED COQUETTE (*Lophornis helenae*) – One little male made several early morning visits to the hummingbird feeders on the balcony, retreating to nearby twigs to rest between feeding bouts. He was certainly dwarfed by the rest of the hummingbirds visiting the feeders!

GREEN-CROWNED BRILLIANT (*Heliodoxa jacula*)

MAGNIFICENT HUMMINGBIRD (*Eugenes fulgens*) – A couple visited the feeders outside Restaurante Noche Buena, sometimes perching briefly on a nearby hanging plant basket before taking their turn. Their large size, the big white spot behind their eye and the very long, straight bill are distinctive.

FIERY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Panterpe insignis*) – One on Volcan Irazu flashed us as it flickered through nearby bushes. Fortunately, it seemed to favor one particular shrub not far from where we were standing, and perched with its gorgeous throat facing us several times.

WHITE-BELLIED MOUNTAIN-GEM (*Lampornis hemileucus*)

PURPLE-THROATED MOUNTAIN-GEM (*Lampornis calolaemus*)

VOLCANO HUMMINGBIRD (*Selasphorus flammula*) – Quite common on Volcan Irazu, with a dozen or more little males perched up on bush tops (flashing those dusky pink gorgets) and others hurling themselves skyward in energetic display flights.

VIOLET SABREWING (*Campylopterus hemileucurus*) – Big and purple with huge white tail tips -- immediately apparent whenever they made their infrequent visits to Rancho's balcony feeders.

BRONZE-TAILED PLUMELETER (*Chalybura urochrysis*) – Our best looks came at Rancho, where one male often sat (singing) in the viny tangle along the porch near the dining room.

CROWNED WOODNYMPH (*Thalurania colombica*) – Quite common around Rancho, both at the feeders and in the hummingbird pools.

SNOWCAP (*Microchera albocoronata*) – One of the stars of Rancho -- particularly the raspberry male with his glowing white cap! We saw one several times at the verbena hedge below the balcony, and others (male and female) splashing in the hummingbird pools.

RUFIOUS-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia tzacatl*) – Daily, including one singing from a perch on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea, and several attempting to defend various feeders at Rancho.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

RESPLENDENT QUETZAL (*Pharomachrus mocinno*) – Wow! Superb views of a pair -- including a fabulously long-tailed male -- in some big trees along the road up to Volcan Irazu; great spotting, Gloria! They called softly and flickered from perch to perch before disappearing down the hill.

GARTERED TROGON (*Trogon caligatus*) – The most common of the tour's trogons, with a female seen in the bamboo stand just off the balcony one morning and a calling pair flitting around the driveway for those who walked the low trail on Christmas.

COLLARED TROGON (*Trogon collaris*)

Momotidae (Motmots)

BLUE-CROWNED MOTMOT (LESSON'S) (*Momotus coeruliceps lessonii*) – One on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea (great spotting Leigh!) played a bit hard to get. After sitting in the open for a few all-too-brief moments, it dropped down into the coffee plants and was never seen again!

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

RINGED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle torquata*) – One sat above the far end of the lake at Catie, and another flashed past several times along the river

at Las Minas.

AMAZON KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle amazona*) – One sat above the river at Las Minas -- conveniently in the same scope view as the next species. We saw another along the road on our drive down to Catie.

GREEN KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle americana*) – In addition to the one we spotted above the stream at Las Minas, we found another sitting on a rock in the middle of the stream at Tuis, just across the river from our Fasciated Tiger-Heron.

Capitonidae (New World Barbets)

RED-HEADED BARBET (*Eubucco bourcierii*) – A bright male gleamed among the soggy vegetation near the entrance building at Tapanti NP, part of a big mixed flock.

Semnornithidae (Toucan-Barbets)

PRONG-BILLED BARBET (*Semnornis frantzii*)

Ramphastidae (Toucans)

COLLARED ARACARI (*Pteroglossus torquatus*) – Regular during the week, including a few checking out the Rancho feeders and others along the entrance drive.

BLACK-MANDIBLED TOUCAN (*Ramphastos ambiguus*) – At least two shared a fruiting tree with the next species near the entrance shed at Universidad E.A.R.T.H.

KEEL-BILLED TOUCAN (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*) – Regular throughout, including a pair croaking in a bare tree near Rancho's driveway one morning.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

ACORN WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) – A few flicked from snag to snag near Restaurante Noche Buena, distracting us briefly from the hummingbird feeders.

BLACK-CHEEKED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes pucherani*)

HOFFMANN'S WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes hoffmannii*) – Common around Hotel Bougainvillea, with another seen well on the Silencio road.

RUFIOUS-WINGED WOODPECKER (*Piculus simplex*)

CINNAMON WOODPECKER (*Celeus loricatus*) – Great views of a trio near the library at E.A.R.T.H., including one that clung for long minutes to a skinny vertical branch near the top of a tree over the driveway, showing well its handsomely patterned underside.

LINEATED WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus lineatus*)

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

CRESTED CARACARA (*Caracara cheriway*)

YELLOW-HEADED CARACARA (*Milvago chimachima*) – An adult surveyed its domain from a palm tree by the lake at Catie, allowing good scope studies.

LAUGHING FALCON (*Herpetotheres cachinnans*) – We heard the hoarse laughing calls of this reptile specialist on several mornings from the Rancho balcony. [*]

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*) – A soggy bird sat in a tree overlooking one of the dairy pastures near the entrance to Tapanti NP.

MERLIN (*Falco columbarius*) – Surprisingly common this year, with at least three individuals seen -- including one that perched atop a tree near the entrance drive at Casa Turire, and one that streaked past while we enjoyed our Fasciated Tiger-Heron. This is a winter visitor to Costa Rica.

BAT FALCON (*Falco ruficularis*) – Two in flight, including a big female that few past in front of the bus, carrying prey, seen as we headed to Tapanti.

Psittacidae (Parrots)

SULPHUR-WINGED PARAKEET (*Pyrhura hoffmanni*) – A little group of 10 or so winged high overhead as we walked down the Silencio road.

CRIMSON-FRONTED PARAKEET (*Aratinga finschi*) – Easily the most common parrot of the trip, with dozens flying over most days. Some perched birds in palm trees across the road from the Hotel Bougainvillea gave us a good opportunity for scope studies -- and a chance to witness the police motorcade for the departing football team from the vantage point of the frenzied fan base.

OLIVE-THROATED PARAKEET (AZTEC) (*Aratinga nana astec*)

ORANGE-CHINNED PARAKEET (*Brotogeris jugularis*) – Two on a dead snag beside the road at E.A.R.T.H. showed extraordinarily well as they pirouetted on their perch. We saw a number of these short tailed parakeets in flight throughout the tour.

BROWN-HOODED PARROT (*Pytilia haematotis*) – A small group flew past Rancho Naturalista one morning while we were birding from the balcony, their red wing pits visible against the green background.

WHITE-CROWNED PARROT (*Pionus senilis*) – Common around Rancho, with good studies of a few perched in tree tops along the driveway one afternoon.

RED-LORED PARROT (*Amazona autumnalis*)

Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)

RUSSET ANTSHRIKE (*Thamnistes anabatins*)

PLAIN ANTIVIREO (*Dysithamnus mentalis*) – A female checked out the plants around the moth sheet shed one morning, and those who did the lower trail walk had another with a mixed flock there.

CHECKER-THROATED ANTWREN (*Epinecrophylla fulviventris*) – Those who walked the high trail at Rancho saw a female moving through the vegetation along the trail, at the edge of an unseen mixed flock.

SLATY ANTWREN (*Myrmotherula schisticolor*) – Those who walked Rancho's lower trails had two males and a female chasing around near the trail, part of a big mixed flock.

Grallariidae (Antpittas)

THICKET ANTPITTA (*Hyllopezus dives*) – Both groups heard one calling repeatedly from the forest around the forest feeders at Rancho. Unsurprisingly, neither group saw it! [*]

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)

OLIVACEOUS WOODCREEPER (*Sittasomus griseicapillus*)

PLAIN-BROWN WOODCREEPER (*Dendrocincla fuliginosa*) – The first -- and the plainest -- of the woodcreepers that appeared at Rancho's moth sheet. It made repeated visits to the sheet, often clinging to the big post holding up the near end of the roof to eat its finds.

COCOA WOODCREEPER (*Xiphorhynchus susurrans*)

SPOTTED WOODCREEPER (*Xiphorhynchus erythropygius*) – This was the second woodcreeper to make an appearance at the Rancho moth sheet; the round spots on its breast -- and its bold pale eye ring -- are distinctive.

BROWN-BILLED SCYTHEBILL (*Campylorhamphus pusillus*) – Two creeping up small tree trunks in a second growth area along the Pepper road for those who walked Rancho's high trail.

STREAK-HEADED WOODCREEPER (*Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*) – Our first were a pair in a big tree right beside a side trail at E.A.R.T.H. We saw others at Rancho, including one in a tree right near the parking lot.

PLAIN XENOPS (*Xenops minutus*) – One foraged through the trees over the cabin near the Rancho parking lot, behaving like a chickadee as it clung upside down to the branches.

STREAKED XENOPS (*Xenops rutilans*)

BUFF-THROATED FOLIAGE-GLEANER (*Automolus ochrolaemus*) – One gleaning the undergrowth around the moth cloth gave us a good chance to study its plumage and behavior.

SPOTTED BARBTAIL (*Premnoplex brunescens*) – Several with mixed flocks at Tapanti, including one that returned again and again to the same big clump of moss on a branch near the visitor's center, carrying huge mouthfuls away -- presumably to build its nest.

RED-FACED SPINETAIL (*Cranioleuca erythroptera*) – A few among the mixed flocks at Tapanti NP, creeping up tree trunks and along branches. The long, ragged tails of these rusty furnariids are distinctive.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

YELLOW-BELLIED ELAENIA (*Elaenia flavogaster*) – One along the road near Platanillo was cooperative, sitting right up near the top of the trees and calling regularly to draw attention to himself.

TORRENT TYRANNULET (*Serpophaga cinerea*) – A couple hunted from rocks in the middle of the Platanillo river at Las Minas.

OLIVE-STRIPED FLYCATCHER (*Mionectes olivaceus*) – One with the big mixed flock near the entrance to Tapanti NP cooperated nicely, repeatedly sallying out into the rain (allowing everybody to find it) and sitting out in the open -- allowing us all to study it once we did!

OCHRE-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Mionectes oleagineus*)

SLATY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Leptopogon superciliaris*) – Two, showing the distinctive dark "ear muffs" that help to identify the species, flicked among a big mixed flock along the Pepper road on Rancho's property, seen by both groups on the day we hiked the trails.

PALTRY TYRANNULET (*Zimmerius vilissimus*) – Quite common around Rancho, including one seen well along the edge of the driveway as we worked our way down the hill one afternoon.

SCALE-CRESTED PYGMY-TYRANT (*Lophotriccus pileatus*) [*]

COMMON TODY-FLYCATCHER (*Todirostrum cinereum*) [*]

BLACK-HEADED TODY-FLYCATCHER (*Todirostrum nigriceps*) – Great studies of one tiny singing bird over the Rancho parking lot. When it flew from one spot to another, it didn't look much bigger than a ping pong ball!

YELLOW-OLIVE FLYCATCHER (*Tolmomyias sulphurescens*) [*]

WHITE-THROATED SPADEBILL (*Platyrinchus mystaceus*) [*]

RUDDY-TAILED FLYCATCHER (*Terenotriccus erythrurus*)

TAWNY-CHESTED FLYCATCHER (*Aphanotriccus capitalis*) – Super views of one hunting around the Rancho moth cloth one morning. This species has a very restricted range; it is found in the foothills, stretching from southern Nicaragua into the very northern edge of Panama. Rancho is one of the best places in the world to see them!

DARK PEWEE (*Contopus lugubris*) – A pair hunted from treetops down the hill below us as we headed out of Tapanti NP. Like all pewees, these tend to return again and again to the same perch.

TROPICAL PEWEE (*Contopus cinereus*) – Our best views came along the entrance drive at Casa Turire, where a pair flirted through the trees right over our heads. At one point, we could nearly have reached out and touched them!

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax flaviventris*)

WHITE-THROATED FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax albigularis*) – One sang from giant fronds of reed grass in a marshy field along the road near Platanillo, occasionally dropping back down into the thicker growth.

BLACK-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax atriceps*) – A pair hunted through the big trees and along nearby barbed wire fences along the road up to Volcan Irazu, distracting us on our search for quetzals.

BLACK PHOEBE (*Sayornis nigricans*) – One hunted from rocks along the stream at Las Minas (in nice comparison with nearby Torrent Tyrannulets); we saw others along Silencio road.

LONG-TAILED TYRANT (*Colonia colonus*) – A pair hunted from the leafless branches of a dead tree at Universidad E.A.R.T.H.

BRIGHT-RUMPED ATTLA (*Attila spadiceus*) – We heard the "maniacal laughter" song of this species distantly from the Rancho balcony on several mornings, and Tony and Pat had great views of one around the Rancho moth cloth before breakfast one day.

RUFIOUS MOURNER (*Rhytipterna holerythra*) – Those in the "low trail" group at Rancho had fine views of one with a mixed flock near the edge of the pasture.

DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) – Especially nice views of one hunting around the Rancho moth cloth. This is the smallest of Costa Rica's *Myiarchus* flycatchers.

GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus crinitus*) – One, looking big and boldly colored, hunted along the entrance road through Universidad E.A.R.T.H.

GREAT KISKADEE (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) – Abundant throughout, with nice looks at one of their big, untidy nests in the coffee drying shed at Finca Cristina. [N]

BOAT-BILLED FLYCATCHER (*Megarynchus pitangua*) – Particularly common around Rancho, where we studied several in the scopes. Though similar to the previous species, this one lacks rufous in the wing and tail, and has a significantly larger bill.

SOCIAL FLYCATCHER (*Myiozetetes similis*) – And this one's bill is tiny! We had many good studies of these appropriately named flycatchers -- which are often found in small groups -- throughout the tour.

GRAY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiozetetes granadensis*) – Best seen along Silencio road, where a half dozen or more hunted from the telephone wires.

GOLDEN-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Myiodynastes hemichrysus*) – Ernesto and Gray spotted one as it flew over the trees while we walked the picnic grove trail at Tapanti. Unfortunately, the rest of us only heard it call -- if we could even hear that much over the noise of the raindrops on our hoods!

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – Abundant and widespread, hunting from roadside wires all across Costa Rica.

Pipridae (Manakins)

WHITE-RUFFED MANAKIN (*Corapipo altera*) – A female flicked through the trees at the edge of Rancho's pasture, not far from our first Emerald Tanager. Many spotted another at the hummingbird pools.

WHITE-CROWNED MANAKIN (*Dixiphia pipra*) [*]

WHITE-COLLARED MANAKIN (*Manacus candei*) – Best seen from the Rancho balcony one morning, when a colorful male visited one of the trees behind the banana feeders. We heard the popping sounds of an active lek several times while walking on the property; unfortunately, they were always well up (or down) the hill from where the trails were!

Tityridae (Tityras and Allies)

BLACK-CROWNED TITYRA (*Tityra inquisitor*) – A pair perched near the top of a leafless tree visible from Rancho's balcony allowing scope studies one morning.

MASKED TITYRA (*Tityra semifasciata*) – Small numbers of them around Rancho, including a couple in one of the big trees over the parking lot one morning. Their vocalizations sound rather like the grunting of very small pigs.

NORTHERN SCHIFFORNIS (*Schiffornis veraepacis*) – One crept in for a brief visit to the stream just up the hill from the hummingbird pools at Rancho; unfortunately, only those toward the left end of the observation deck could see far enough upstream to watch it, and it didn't stay long enough for everyone to shift to that end before it flew off.

BARRED BECARD (*Pachyrampus versicolor*) – Great views of a snazzy male singing from a tree over the road at Tapanti -- though we got a bit damp looking!

CINNAMON BECARD (*Pachyrampus cinnamomeus*) – A whistling pair along one of the side tracks at Universidad E.A.R.T.H. gave us plenty of close looks as they hunted back and forth over our heads.

Vireonidae (Vireos)

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO (*Vireo flavifrons*) – Regular around the main building at Rancho, with others along Silencio road and a final bird flicking through the pine trees along the edge of Lake Cachi.

PHILADELPHIA VIREO (*Vireo philadelphicus*)

LESSER GREENLET (*Hylophilus decurtatus*) – Best seen at Universidad E.A.R.T.H., where several of these small vireos bounced through trees along the main road.

RUFIOUS-BROWED PEPPERSHRIKE (*Cyclarhis gujanensis*) [*]

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

BROWN JAY (*Psilorhinus morio*) – Daily, including the regular raucous visitors to Rancho's feeders each day. We spotted a number of youngsters -- sporting their yellow bills and yellow eye rings -- as well as plenty of adults.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

BLUE-AND-WHITE SWALLOW (*Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*) – The common swallow of the trip, seen every day -- including a gang hunting low over the gardens at Hotel Bougainvillea our first afternoon.

SOUTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) – Seen on most days, with especially good looks at those perched on wires along the road at Universidad E.A.R.T.H. The pale rump of this species -- and the warm butterscotch color on the face and upper breast -- helps to separate it from the closely related Northern Rough-winged Swallow.

GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN (*Progne chalybea*) – A handful of these big swallows circled over the fields around the entrance to Universidad E.A.R.T.H.

MANGROVE SWALLOW (*Tachycineta albilinea*) – Seen at Universidad E.A.R.T.H., including a pair sitting on several of the signs around the library and occasionally making hunting passes over a nearby field -- with nary a mangrove in sight!

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*)

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

SCALY-BREASTED WREN (WHISTLING) (*Microcerculus marginatus luscini*) – Heard regularly at Rancho, where its clear, loud, descending whistles echoed from the ravines. Those who climbed the high trail on Christmas spotted one (or part of one, anyway -- they can be pretty elusive) bouncing through the leaf litter along the trail.

HOUSE WREN (*Troglodytes aedon*) – Common and widespread, seen (and heard) most days -- including one belting out its song from the corner of one of the sheds at Finca Cristina, Ernesto's parents' coffee farm.

OCHRACEOUS WREN (*Troglodytes ochraceus*) – Several at Tapanti, where we found them creeping along trunks and branches, investigating mossy clumps and bromeliads.

TIMBERLINE WREN (*Thryorchilus browni*) – We all heard the high-pitched scolding of this highland species as a pair (and maybe a trio) flitted through the dense brush near the crater at Volcan Irazu. A lucky few had fine views of another scrambling up a vine in another bush (with a couple of Flame-throated Warblers) while Ernesto, Vernon and I made lunch.

RUFIOUS-NAPED WREN (*Campylorhynchus rufinucha*) – A fine encounter with a raucous trio on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea; they even did some of their spread-tailed, wing-wagging territorial display for us. They were collecting bits -- including a big white feather -- for their nearly-completed ball nest. [N]

BLACK-THROATED WREN (*Pheugopedius atrogularis*) – Two on a side trail at Universidad E.A.R.T.H. danced through big clumps of bamboo all around us, eventually showing nicely for all.

STRIBE-BREASTED WREN (*Cantorchilus thoracicus*) – Tony spotted one down near the hummingbird pools while photographing one afternoon; the rest of us had to be content with hearing their distinctively loud whistles (and jolly songs) echoing from the hillsides at Rancho.

PLAIN WREN (*Cantorchilus modestus*) – One near the tennis courts at Hotel Bougainvillea showed reasonably well for some and not at all for others. We certainly all heard its loud song -- repeatedly -- at several places throughout the tour.

BAY WREN (*Cantorchilus nigricapillus*) – Super views of a trio working through the underbrush along the Platanillo -- though it took some patience and some scampering along the stream bank to get them!

WHITE-BREASTED WOOD-WREN (*Henicorhina leucosticta*) – Ah, thank goodness for Rancho's moth cloth; it brought a pair of these little skulkers in close -- repeatedly -- as they crept around looking for moths hidden low in the vegetation around the shelter.

GRAY-BREASTED WOOD-WREN (*Henicorhina leucophrys*)

Poliopitilidae (Gnatcatchers)

LONG-BILLED GNATWREN (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) – Both groups of trail walkers found one worming through viny tangles with a mixed flock on Christmas. Its loud trilling song (which sounds rather like someone running a finger along the teeth of a comb) was accompanied by some great looks at this little bird -- which looks like it's carrying a big toothpick.

TROPICAL GNATCATCHER (*Poliopitila plumbea*) – Seen on several days, including a couple near the gate at the entrance to the pasture on our first morning's walk at Rancho.

Cinclidae (Dippers)

AMERICAN DIPPER (*Cinclus mexicanus*) – A busy pair bounced across rocks and threw themselves into the rushing river at Tapanti, nicely spotted by Mike and Suzanne as we worked our way around the picnic grove trail. The subspecies found in Costa Rica (*ardesiacus*) is far more "two-toned" in appearance than is the subspecies from North America (the aptly named "unicolor").

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

BLACK-BILLED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (*Catharus gracilirostris*) – A supremely cooperative bird gave us all fine views as it sat in several trees around the parking lot near the crater of Volcan Irazu. Like all the members of its genus, this highland species has a lovely song.

SLATY-BACKED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (*Catharus fuscater*)

SWAINSON'S THRUSH (*Catharus ustulatus*) – One visited Rancho's hummingbird pools for a quick dip; this is a winter visitor to Costa Rica.

WOOD THRUSH (*Hylocichla mustelina*) – It's always fun to see "our" birds hobnobbing with the (tropical) locals. This one was with a mixed flock at Universidad E.A.R.T.H.

SOOTY THRUSH (*Turdus nigrescens*) – Our first was a cooperative bird sitting on a hand railing near the top of the stairs at Restaurante Noche Buena, and we had others scattered across the highlands of Volcan Irazu.

CLAY-COLORED THRUSH (*Turdus grayi*) – Daily, often (as on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea) in good numbers. This is Costa Rica's national bird.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

GRAY CATBIRD (*Dumetella carolinensis*) – Suzanne spotted one beyond the bird bath near the Rancho dining room during a break one afternoon. This is another winter visitor.

Ptilonotidae (Silky-flycatchers)

BLACK-AND-YELLOW SILKY-FLYCATCHER (*Phainoptila melanoxantha*) – A pair that flew into a fruiting tree near the upper picnic tables at Tapanti were a nice surprise -- and they cooperated nicely, allowing everybody multiple looks in the scopes.

LONG-TAILED SILKY-FLYCATCHER (*Ptilogonys caudatus*) – Two of these aptly named birds flew in, landed briefly atop some bushes up the hill from the ashy crater of Volcan Irazu, then flew off again, showing well their distinctively long tails.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

OVENBIRD (*Seiurus aurocapilla*) – One strode back and forth across the driveway at Finca Cristina, its little tail cocked well up over its back.

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia motacilla*)

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – One bobbed its way along the edges of a puddle at E.A.R.T.H., providing a challenge for those trying to follow it in the scope.

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER (*Vermivora cyanoptera*)

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) – Quite common, with multiple birds seen every day of the tour -- including one bathing in the concrete birdbath near the dining room one afternoon.

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER (*Mniotilta varia*)

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER (*Protonotaria citrea*) – A couple in the woods near the hotel at Casa Turire were certainly eye-catching. It's easy to see how they got one of their great folk names -- "Swamp Candle".

FLAME-THROATED WARBLER (*Oreothlypis gutturalis*)

TENNESSEE WARBLER (*Oreothlypis peregrina*) – Now we know where all of North America's Tennessee Warblers go for the winter! We saw dozens -- from just about every conceivable vantage point -- during the course of the week.

MOURNING WARBLER (*Geothlypis philadelphia*) – One splashed in the concrete birdbath at one end of the main building at Rancho on several days, or bounced around under the hedges there.

KENTUCKY WARBLER (*Geothlypis formosa*) – One gleaning under the moth sheet (and surrounding vegetation) at Rancho gave us spectacular views one morning.

AMERICAN REDSTART (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – A twitchy female at E.A.R.T.H., part of a gang of little birds that gathered to mob the "intruders" (aka us) along the main road.

TROPICAL PARULA (*Setophaga pitiayumi*) – Super views of a couple along Silent Mountain road, including one that sang from a television antenna, and another that claimed a nearby guava tree.

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER (*Setophaga fusca*) – Reasonably common, including a bright male with the mixed flock near the entrance gate at Tapanti NP. This is a winter visitor to the country.

YELLOW WARBLER (*Setophaga petechia*)

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER (*Setophaga pensylvanica*) – Easily the most common warbler of the tour, seen in good numbers every day. Most were unmarked youngsters, though we did have a few adults, with chestnut flanks.

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER (*Setophaga virens*)

RUFOUS-CAPPED WARBLER (*Basileuterus rufifrons*) – A pair around the tennis courts at Hotel Bougainvillea were remarkably confiding, continuing to feed in flowering bushes right in front of us despite our sizable presence.

GOLDEN-CROWNED WARBLER (*Basileuterus culicivorus*) – A pair at the Rancho moth sheet were most cooperative, flicking in to pick a mouthful and then retreating to a nearby branch to eat it.

BUFF-RUMPED WARBLER (*Myiothlypis fulvicauda*) – One in a little cattle shed along Silent Mountain road chased insects back and forth across the floor several times before jumping up to a railing on the back side of the building and disappearing.

WILSON'S WARBLER (*Cardellina pusilla*) – Including one in the same tree as our first Flame-throated Warblers that kept distracting many of us away from the latter!

SLATE-THROATED REDSTART (*Myioborus miniatus*) – A couple of pairs twitched among mixed flocks we found in Tapanti NP (two near the entrance buildings, another pair in the picnic area), flirting those long, white-cornered tails as they foraged.

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

WHITE-SHOULDERED TANAGER (*Tachyphonus luctuosus*)

WHITE-LINED TANAGER (*Tachyphonus rufus*) – Regular in small numbers around Rancho, particularly under the verbena hedge near the dining room -- where one male regularly flashed his white wing linings at nearby birds.

CRIMSON-COLLARED TANAGER (*Ramphocelus sanguinolentus*) – One dazzled along a side trail at Universidad E.A.R.T.H., its namesake crimson markings bright against the vegetation.

PASSERINI'S TANAGER (*Ramphocelus passerinii*) – Common and widespread, including regular visitors to the Rancho's banana feeders.

BLUE-GRAY TANAGER (*Thraupis episcopus*) – Daily, including several noisy pairs on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea.

PALM TANAGER (*Thraupis palmarum*)

GOLDEN-HOODED TANAGER (*Tangara larvata*) – Seen especially well at Rancho, where we regularly spotted a pair around the main building.

BAY-HEADED TANAGER (*Tangara gyrola*) – Particularly nice looks at a pair feeding on the long, dangling fruits of a *Cecropia* tree along Silencio road, with others along Rancho's driveway.

EMERALD TANAGER (*Tangara florida*) – One picked through the canopy of several small trees near the pasture gate at Rancho, at the edge of a small mixed flock. What a stunning little tanager!

SILVER-THROATED TANAGER (*Tangara icterocephala*)

SCARLET-THIGHED DACNIS (*Dacnis venusta*) – A small gang of these colorful birds swirled through trees near Rancho's parking area early in the week, providing great chance for scope studies. With some persistence, most even got a look at the snazzy red thighs of the males.

GREEN HONEYCREEPER (*Chlorophanes spiza*) – A female along Rancho's entrance road played a bit hard to get as we walked down the hill one afternoon. Fortunately, a pair in a moss-draped tree along Silencio road were a bit more cooperative.

BLACK-AND-YELLOW TANAGER (*Chrysothlypis chrysomelas*) – Fine views of a swarm of these handsome little tanagers along Silencio road; males look surprisingly similar to Prothonotary Warblers.

SLATY FLOWERPIERCER (*Diglossa plumbea*) – Quite common on Volcan Irazu, including one little male busily siphoning nectar from holes he'd made in Fuchsia flowers near the Noche Buena restaurant. Like all flowerpiercers, this one is a nectar thief.

VARIABLE SEEDEATER (*Sporophila corvina*) – Reasonably common through the tour, including a bold male along Rancho's driveway on our first walk there, and a handful bouncing around in the marshy field where we found our White-throated Flycatcher. This species gets its name because west slope males look considerably different than the all-black east slope ones.

WHITE-COLLARED SEEDEATER (*Sporophila torqueola*) – A few perched up in big reed grasses right between us and Lake Cachi on our final morning, distracting us briefly from our scan for uncommon ducks. We saw others in the field with our White-throated Flycatcher.

THICK-BILLED SEED-FINCH (*Oryzoborus funereus*) – A pair among the Variable Seedeaters in a weedy field outside Platanillo allowed good comparison.

BANANAQUIT (*Coereba flaveola*) – Common throughout, including a few yellow-faced youngsters checking out flowers in the verbena hedges around Rancho.

YELLOW-FACED GRASSQUIT (*Tiaris olivaceus*)

GRAYISH SALTATOR (*Saltator coerulescens*) – A couple of confiding birds in a pink-flowered bush at Hotel Bougainvillea stayed put, even when we crept to within yards of where they'd perched. The berry one of them was eating caused confusion for some when it looked like it had a giant red beak!

BUFF-THROATED SALTATOR (*Saltator maximus*) – The most common of Rancho's saltators, with a couple of peachy-throated birds often visiting the trees around the balcony in the mornings.

BLACK-HEADED SALTATOR (*Saltator atriceps*) – Seen on most days, including a noisy gang of four working their way along the line of little trees along the road outside Platanillo.

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

LARGE-FOOTED FINCH (*Pezopetes capitalis*) – Two danced through the thick brush up the hill from the ashy plain where we stood on Volcan Irazu, flicking in and out of view as they dropped lower and lower on the hillside before finally popping out into the open practically at eye level. And most of us even had time to see those big feet!

ORANGE-BILLED SPARROW (*Arremon aurantirostris*) – Those that appeared below the verbena hedges near the Rancho dining room proved quite cooperative, showing well on several days. We heard their jaunty, high-pitched songs around the cabins most mornings.

BLACK-STRIPED SPARROW (*Arremonops conirostris*)

RUFOUS-COLLARED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia capensis*) – Regular in the highlands, where they whistled their cheery songs from fence posts or bounced across gardens.

VOLCANO JUNCO (*Junco vulcani*) – A pair near the parking lot at Volcan Irazu played a bit hard to get to start, ducking back into the vegetation just about the time most people finally figured out which bush they were in. Fortunately, they moved steadily closer, eventually pausing in a tree right beside us before dropping to the ground to forage.

COMMON CHLOROSPINGUS (*Chlorospingus flavopectus*) – Dozens at Tapanti, where they made up the bulk of most of the mixed flocks we found. This species was known as Common Bush-Tanager until quite recently.

SOOTY-CAPPED CHLOROSPINGUS (*Chlorospingus pileatus*) – A little mob of them swarmed across the hillside at Volcan Irazu, rummaging through the bushes in a frenetic search for tasty tidbits.

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*) – Regular throughout, including a scarlet male that provided a good starting point for finding the various members of a mixed flock along the Silent Mountain road.

RED-THROATED ANT-TANAGER (*Habia fuscicauda*) – A pair at Rancho one morning provided repeated good views as they inspected the moth sheet one morning, occasionally sitting on the benches or resting on nearby leafless branches.

CARMIOLE'S TANAGER (*Chlorothraupis carmioli*) – A noisy flock of five or six rummaged around under a big log along the Manakin trail, eating some cobalt blue berries. Unfortunately, they were behind two or three trees, which made them a bit of a challenge to find!

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*)

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

RED-BREASTED BLACKBIRD (*Sturnella militaris*) – A snazzy male was one of the first birds we saw at Casa Turire, sitting atop a small bush in an overgrown pasture. Despite its name, this species is actually a meadowlark.

EASTERN MEADOWLARK (*Sturnella magna*) – One singing from a bush along a fence line at Casa Turire provided nice entertainment for those waiting in line for a scope view of the Red-breasted Blackbird.

MELODIOUS BLACKBIRD (*Dives dives*)

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) – Common in open areas and along roadsides all throughout our tour route, missing only at the highest elevations -- and in the thicker patches of rainforest.

GIANT COWBIRD (*Molothrus oryzivorus*) – A handful of these big cowbirds flew past while we birded along the road at Casa Turire, landing in a dense tree by the pastures. With some persistence, we eventually found them scrambling around among the leaves. This is a brood parasite, primarily laying in oropendola (and occasionally cacique) nests.

BLACK-COWLED ORIOLE (*Icterus prothemelas*) – One at E.A.R.T.H. showed its black and yellow plumage to perfection as it scrambled around in a fruiting tree along one of the side tracks we walked.

ORCHARD ORIOLE (*Icterus spurius*) – A female took a vigorous bath in the birdbath out in front of the Hotel Bougainvillea, splashing a nearby Clay-colored Thrush repeatedly in the process.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE (*Icterus galbula*) – Common throughout, including 4-5 bright birds at once on one of the banana feeders at Rancho. This is a winter visitor to the country.

SCARLET-RUMPED CACIQUE (*Cacicus uropygialis*) – A trio of birds showed their bright rumps, blue eyes and pale yellow beaks nicely as they sang from nearby trees at E.A.R.T.H.

CHESTNUT-HEADED OROPENDOLA (*Psarocolius wagleri*) – Reasonably common around Rancho, though never as numerous -- or as noisy -- as the larger Montezuma Oropendolas.

MONTEZUMA OROPENDOLA (*Psarocolius montezuma*) – Very common around Rancho, including a male doing his very best somersaulting display in one of the trees near the balcony the day after Christmas. Unfortunately for him, the nearest female seemed less than impressed with his efforts!

Fringillidae (Siskins, Crossbills, and Allies)

YELLOW-CROWNED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia luteicapilla*)

YELLOW-THROATED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia hirundinacea*) – The birds were coming thick and fast our first morning, and only a few got on a bright male -- distinguished from all the other euphonias seen on this tour by golden-yellow coloring right up to his chin -- when he perched briefly near the top of one of the big trees over the cabins.

OLIVE-BACKED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia gouldi*) – The most common of the tour's euphonias, seen on multiple days from Rancho's balcony. They're about the same size (and the same color) as many of the leaves in the surrounding trees -- and even those rust and gold accents mimic insect damage and dead spots!

WHITE-VENTED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia minuta*) – A pair at the edge of a mixed flock near the Rancho parking lot our first morning; unfortunately, they moved out of view before most of the group arrived for our first walk.

TAWNY-CAPPED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia anneae*) – A pair with the mixed flock along Silent Mountain road sat long enough that most of the group saw one or the other in the scopes, and we found another even closer female in the same tree as a Hoffman's Woodpecker a little further along the same road.

LESSER GOLDFINCH (*Spinus psaltria*) – A male replaced our first male Volcano Hummingbird atop a bush near the Noche Buena restaurant on Volcan Irazu, a little glowing yellow dot.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) [H]

MAMMALS

LONG-NOSED BAT (*Rhynchonycteris naso*) – A group of these little bats clung to the ceiling of the outdoor church at Universidad E.A.R.T.H., rendering some of the pews decidedly messier -- and decidedly less appealing for a lunch spot!

GREATER WHITE-LINED BAT (*Saccopteryx bilineata*) – A couple of these larger bats clung over the altar of the outdoor church at Universidad E.A.R.T.H.

COMMON TENT-MAKING BAT (*Uroderma bilobatum*) – Two clung under a folded leaf near the start of the trail down to the hummingbird pools. This species makes its own "tents" by chewing along the mid-rib of large leaves, like those of the Heliconias.

HOFFMANN'S TWO-TOED SLOTH (*Choloepus hoffmanni*)

VARIEGATED SQUIRREL (*Sciurus variegatoides*) – Plenty of these big, colorful squirrels seen during the week. The grizzled appearance of the tail - each hair tipped with white -- helps to distinguish this species from the smaller Red-tailed Squirrel.

ALFARO'S PYGMY SQUIRREL (*Microsciurus alfari*) – Only a few of us got on one of these little squirrels as it scampered up a tree along the path through the picnic grove at Tapanti NP.

WHITE-NOSED COATI (*Nasua narica*) – Seen on multiple days, including a bold (and hungry!) mob around the Volcan Irazu picnic tables.

NEOTROPICAL OTTER (*Lontra longicaudis*) – A female with two nearly full grown youngsters frolicked along the edge of the Platanillo river, squeaking loudly. Unfortunately, they dove down under the water and disappeared before the whole group could scramble down to where they could be seen.

RED BROCKET DEER (*Mazama americana*) – Barbara spotted one walking across a little stream we drove past en route to Silencio road.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The following is a list of the herps we managed to identify:

Common House Gecko (*Hemidactylus frenatus*): Regular in buildings at Rancho.

Yellow-headed Gecko (*Gonatodes albogularis*): One at EARTH.

Green Iguana (*Iguana iguana*): Common at EARTH, including a couple of big orange ones.

Slender [Border] Anole (*Anolis limifrons*): Seen along Rancho's driveway.

Ground [Humble] Anole (*Anolis humilis*): One along the Manakin trail for those who walked the high trails on Christmas.

Green Tree [Neotropical Green] Anole (*Anolis biporcatus*): One at EARTH.

Common Rain Frog (*Craugastor fitzingeri*): One under a hedge near the start of the trail at Casa Turire.

Bransford's Litter Frog (*Craugastor bransfordii*): One on Rancho's Manakin trail.

Cane Toad (*Bufo marinus*): A big one along the road at Las Minas.

Wet Forest Toad (*Incilius melanochlorus*) -- Several on the upper trails at Rancho.

Green Climbing Toad (*Bufo coniferous*): One along Rancho's driveway, seen as we walked downhill.

Totals for the tour: 282 bird taxa and 9 mammal taxa