



Field Guides Tour Report

Holiday Costa Rica: Rancho Naturalista I 2015

Dec 19, 2015 to Dec 27, 2015
Dave Stejskal & Ernesto Carman

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

It sure was great to get back to Costa Rica after such a long time -- and to get back to Rancho Naturalista, one of my all-time favorite places in Costa Rica! This short holiday getaway is a real pleasure to guide and has always been extremely popular with our clientele. And for good reason! Very comfortable rooms at a lovely, birdy base like Rancho, with loads of stunning hummingbirds and other birds at arm's length on the balcony each morning, fantastic food, a friendly and attentive staff, and lots of great birding venues on property and also within a short drive all make this short trip a 'must' for anyone interested in the Neotropics.

We had to deal with some uncooperative weather at the start of this tour, with rain and wind on Volcan Irazu that first morning on our way to Rancho, and then we couldn't seem to shake the rain that first full morning at Rancho. But, after that, it was pretty darned lovely for the remainder of the tour. Despite the rain on Irazu, we still managed some great birds, with good looks at Fiery-throated and Volcano hummingbirds, Black-capped Flycatcher, Timberline Wren, Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush, Large-footed Finch, Volcano Junco, Slaty Flowerpiercer, and that surprising Costa Rican Pygmy-Owl before we threw in the towel (or actually went to the bus to get a towel to dry off!) and headed lower to drier, warmer climes. Among the highlights on our drive to Rancho that afternoon were those killer looks we had at a pair of local Prevost's Ground-Sparrow. Ernesto's intimate knowledge of this bird's distribution here really paid off for us!

Then we got to settle in at Rancho for the next five nights. We spent our days here watching from the balcony at the main house, walking the trails on the property, and making some short forays by bus to some different venues with different birds nearby. We did partake in one longer journey by bus to the campus of E.A.R.T.H., an agricultural university near the town of Guacimo in the Caribbean lowlands to the northeast, but most of our outings were very near to Rancho.

Rancho itself produced some great birds and birding experiences, as expected, with highlights being that first morning of hummingbird immersion on the balcony (what anyone who has ever hanged a hummingbird feeder in their yard dreams of!), the parade of insectivorous birds at the 'moth cloth' a short distance down the trail from our rooms, bathing jewel-like hummingbirds in the tiny pools in the stream below us late in the afternoon, and such individual prizes as Crested Guan, Bicolored Hawk, Purple-crowned Fairy, Green Thorntail, the charming Snowcap, Dull-mantled Antbird, Tawny-throated Leaf-tosser, the local Tawny-chested Flycatcher, those amazing Passerini's Tanagers, Scarlet-thighed Tanager, Black-and-yellow Tanager (for some), and so many others.

Nearby, we thrilled at the sight of Fasciated Tiger-Heron in the rushing stream next to the road, strange Boat-billed Herons interacting in a bamboo thicket at C.A.T.I.E., multiple shy Green Ibis, a pair of strange Sunbitterns and a colorful Gray-necked Wood-Rail in a nearby town, a courting pair of tiny Black-crested Coquettes at C.A.T.I.E., an uncharacteristically close Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher at Silent Mountain, charismatic Buff-rumped Warblers along the Rio Pejibaye, and recent invaders to the region such as Southern Lapwing and Red-breasted Blackbird.

Farther afield, a full day at E.A.R.T.H. produced fantastic finds such as Central American Pygmy-Owl, Spot-fronted Swift (for some), a close male Black-throated Trogon, close Rufous Motmot, both White-necked and Pied puffbirds, both Keel-billed and Yellow-throated toucans, Bat Falcon, half a dozen Great Green Macaws, cooperative Northern Barred-Woodcreeper, a flock of Purple-throated Fruitcrows, White-collared Manakin in full view, shy Black-throated Wren, noisy Dusky-faced Tanagers, and colorful Black-cowled Oriole. And a half-day at Tapanti NP, in gorgeous middle elevation Caribbean foothill forest, gave us the likes of a perched juvenile Ornate Hawk-Eagle, both White-bellied and Purple-throated mountain-gems, Black-bellied Hummingbird, Golden-bellied Flycatcher, Black-and-yellow Silky-Flycatchers, Ochraceous Wren, Spangle-cheeked Tanagers, and a very cooperative Black-thighed Grosbeak. A stop on our way back to San Jose at Ernesto's family coffee finca, Finca Christina, taught us all everything that we ever needed to know -- and then some -- about the coffee growing business. What a delight!

Thanks to Lisa Erb and all of the Rancho Naturalista staff for making our stay such a delight, including that fabulous Christmas dinner and celebration!



A little bit of patience (and lighting from the right angle) at the feeders on the slopes of Volcan Irazu allowed us to see the breathtaking array of colors in the underparts of this Fiery-throated Hummingbird, a "Chiriqui" endemic. (Photo by participant Sandy Paci)

And thanks also to Vernon, our cheerful driver and top-notch bird spotter on this tour; I wish all of my drivers around the world on the tours that I do were as good and cheerful as Vernon! And to Ernesto Carman for co-leading this short and productive holiday tour to Rancho Naturalista with me -- Ernesto's knowledge of just about everything Costa Rican (not just the birds) impressed us daily. And, finally, to all of you who joined us this year on the tour -- thank you! It was a pleasure to guide this one for all of you, and I hope that we can travel together again soon.

--Dave

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

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

BIRDS

Tinamidae (Tinamous)

LITTLE TINAMOU (*Crypturellus soui*) [*]

SLATY-BREASTED TINAMOU (*Crypturellus boucardi*) [*]

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*)

MUSCOVY DUCK (*Cairina moschata*) – The best looks that we had on the tour were at the dock overlooking the lake at Casa Turire.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Anas discors*) [b]

LESSER SCAUP (*Aythya affinis*) – Large numbers of wintering birds at the nearby reservoirs. [b]

Cracidae (Guans, Chachalacas, and Curassows)

GRAY-HEADED CHACHALACA (*Ortalis cinereiceps*) – We recorded these almost daily from the porch at Rancho.

CRESTED GUAN (*Penelope purpurascens*) – The forest around Rancho is still healthy enough to hold a few of these big guans, which are often one of the first birds to disappear after a forested area is settled.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

LEAST GREBE (*Tachybaptus dominicus*) – A few of these on the lake on our last morning before we arrived at Tapanti. It's the same species that makes it up to s. Texas.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*)

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

ANHINGA (*Anhinga anhinga*) – One bird at the pond at C.A.T.I.E.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

LEAST BITTERN (*Ixobrychus exilis*) [*]

FASCIATED TIGER-HERON (*Tigrisoma fasciatum*) – Vernon found our first of three birds recorded on the tour. Fantastic looks!

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) [b]

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*)

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*)

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*)

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*)

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*)

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

BOAT-BILLED HERON (*Cochlearius cochlearius*) – Several birds were spotted in the bamboo island patch at the pond at C.A.T.I.E.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

GREEN IBIS (*Mesembrinibis cayennensis*) – We found this forest-based ibis at three different sites. This species has certainly spread since my last visit to Costa Rica!

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*)

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*)

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

WHITE-TAILED KITE (*Elanus leucurus*)

BLACK HAWK-EAGLE (*Spizaetus tyrannus*) [*]

ORNATE HAWK-EAGLE (*Spizaetus ornatus*) – A distant juvenile was scoped across the valley at Tapanti. A pair apparently nested nearby this past year.

SNAIL KITE (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*) – A single bird was seen well at the lake at Casa Turire. A.k.a. - Everglade Kite (for the old-timers, like me!).

DOUBLE-TOOTHED KITE (*Harpagus bidentatus*) – A couple of distant soaring birds at E.A.R.T.H. Superficially similar to an Accipiter in flight, but this species typically keeps its tail tightly closed.

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK (*Accipiter striatus*) – A quick flyby at Silent Mountain. [b]

BICOLORED HAWK (*Accipiter bicolor*) – An adult was reliably seen perched in a treetop from the Rancho balcony most mornings. Normally, a rather difficult forest species to track down.

BARRED HAWK (*Morphnarchus princeps*) – A distant soaring adult at Silent Mountain. A.k.a. - Black-chested Hawk.

ROADSIDE HAWK (*Rupornis magnirostris*) – We saw most of ours along the roadside at E.A.R.T.H. Go figure!

GRAY HAWK (*Buteo plagiatus*) – An adult at C.A.T.I.E. for most. A related species that was just recently re-split from this one, the Gray-lined Hawk, occurs just to the south of here near the Panama border (and south into S. America).

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (*Buteo platypterus*) [b]

SHORT-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo brachyurus*) – From the upper set of trails at Rancho for some.

Eurypygidae (Sunbittern)

SUNBITTERN (*Eurypyga helias*) – Vernon came through again for us when he got us onto a pair of these fantastic birds in La Suiza as we were headed back to Rancho late one afternoon. Not at all related to herons & bitterns, this one is in a family all its own.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

WHITE-THROATED CRAKE (*Laterallus albigularis*) – Glimpsed by some in the big marsh at Casa Turire.

GRAY-NECKED WOOD-RAIL (*Aramides cajaneus*) – In the same stream as the above Sunbitterns.

PURPLE GALLINULE (*Porphyrio martinicus*) [N]

COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*)

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

SOUTHERN LAPWING (*Vanellus chilensis*) – Up until about 25 years ago, this bird was pretty much confined to South America. Now, it seems to be everywhere in disturbed habitats throughout Costa Rica and it continues to spread northward.

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*) – A couple of birds in a field near La Suiza. [b]

Jacanidae (Jacanas)

NORTHERN JACANA (*Jacana spinosa*) – All of the wet spots that we visited held this fancy shorebird with the extravagant toes.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*) [b]

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) [H]

PALE-VENTED PIGEON (*Patagioenas cayennensis*) – Numerous at E.A.R.T.H in the humid Caribbean lowlands.

RED-BILLED PIGEON (*Patagioenas flavirostris*) – This one was in many of the disturbed habitats that we visited and it's the same species that ranges north to southern Texas.

BAND-TAILED PIGEON (*Patagioenas fasciata*) – A big flock of these roamed the property at Rancho.

SHORT-BILLED PIGEON (*Patagioenas nigrirostris*) – After hearing many, we finally got one of these in the scopes at E.A.R.T.H. for some good looks.

RUDDY GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina talpacoti*)

WHITE-TIPPED DOVE (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – Fleeting looks for some.

WHITE-WINGED DOVE (*Zenaida asiatica*) – This is another species that has enjoyed a huge range expansion within Costa Rica since my last visit here.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

SQUIRREL CUCKOO (*Piaya cayana*) – There's no mistaking this one!

GROOVE-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*)

Strigidae (Owls)

CRESTED OWL (*Lophotrix cristata*) [*]

COSTA RICAN PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium costaricanum*) – This was one of our better finds - in the rain - on Volcan Irazu on our first day of birding on this short tour. A relatively recent split from the Andean Pygmy-Owl.

CENTRAL AMERICAN PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium griseiceps*) – A calling bird was scoped nicely at E.A.R.T.H. A relatively recent split from the Least Pygmy-Owl.

MOTTLED OWL (*Ciccaba virgata*) [*]

Apodidae (Swifts)

SPOT-FRONTED SWIFT (*Cypseloides cherriei*) – Seen early in the morning by a few of us at E.A.R.T.H. as a close flyby.

WHITE-COLLARED SWIFT (*Streptoprocne zonaris*) – None close, with the best being at Tapanti on the final morning of the tour.

GRAY-RUMPED SWIFT (*Chaetura cinereiventris*) – The small swifts at E.A.R.T.H. were this species.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

WHITE-NECKED JACOBIN (*Florisuga mellivora*) – This striking species nearly overwhelmed the feeders on the balcony at Rancho each morning.

BRONZY HERMIT (*Glaucis aeneus*) [*]

GREEN HERMIT (*Phaethornis guy*) – Several fine views of this forest species at the feeders at Rancho. One of the few species of hermits that shows any sexual dimorphism.

LONG-BILLED HERMIT (*Phaethornis longirostris*) – Only at E.A.R.T.H.

STRIPE-THROATED HERMIT (*Phaethornis striigularis*) – A few of these quietly worked the flowers at the edge of the yard at Rancho. A relatively recent split from the Little Hermit.

BROWN VIOLETEAR (*Colibri delphinae*) – One bird made very sporadic visits to a couple of the feeders on the balcony at Rancho.

GREEN VIOLETEAR (*Colibri thalassinus*) – Nicely at the feeders on Volcan Irazu.

PURPLE-CROWNED FAIRY (*Heliodytes barroti*) – This striking forest hummer was seen well by most at Rancho.

GREEN-BREASTED MANGO (*Anthracothorax prevostii*) – This and the Crowned Woodnymph were the most common hummers at the feeders

behind White-necked Jacobin.

GREEN THORNTAIL (*Discosura conversii*) – A couple of birds, at least, were found feeding in the tiny purple vervain flowers just off the balcony at Rancho.

BLACK-CRESTED COQUETTE (*Lophornis helenae*) – One bird put in a brief showing at the vervain hedge at Rancho, but the best sighting was the adult male courting a female high in the trees at C.A.T.I.E. Quite a spectacle!

GREEN-CROWNED BRILLIANT (*Heliodoxa jacula*) – Only one bird appeared to be visiting the feeders at Rancho during our stay.

MAGNIFICENT HUMMINGBIRD (ADMIRABLE) (*Eugenes fulgens spectabilis*) – Great views at the feeders on Volcan Irazu. I think that this local race, found only in the mountains of Costa Rica and adjacent Panama, is different enough from the birds farther north to warrant a split.

FIERY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Panterpe insignis*) – WOW!!! This bird isn't much to look at until it turns just right, and we all saw it turn 'just right' at the feeders on Irazu!

WHITE-BELLIED MOUNTAIN-GEM (*Lampornis hemileucus*) – Not uncommon along the road at Tapanti on our final morning of birding. Another one of these Costa Rican/Panama specialties with a tiny world range.

PURPLE-THROATED MOUNTAIN-GEM (*Lampornis calolaemus*) – This one used to be called the Variable Mountain-Gem until it was split into two (or three).

VOLCANO HUMMINGBIRD (*Selasphorus flammula*) – The feeders at the restaurant on Volcan Irazu also hosted a number of these, including a couple pink-throated males.

VIOLET-HEADED HUMMINGBIRD (*Klais guimeti*) – A single female bird was seen briefly by some at the vervain hedge at Rancho one morning.

VIOLET SABREWING (*Campylopterus hemileucurus*) – One of the most spectacular hummers in the world!

BRONZE-TAILED PLUMELEETER (*Chalybura urochrysis*) – The field guide calls this one Red-footed plumeleeter, and it does indeed have red feet. But this name on our list has more history behind it.

CROWNED WOODNYMPH (*Thalurania colombica*) – One of the most common hummers at the feeders and certainly the most frequent visitor to the hummingbird pools in the afternoon.

BLACK-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD (*Eupherusa nigriventris*) – Nice looks at this Chiriqui endemic along the Tapanti road.

SNOWCAP (*Microchera albocoronata*) – We enjoyed a couple of different males coming in to bathe at the pools below the lodge one afternoon. One of the signature species of Rancho Naturalista.

RUFOUS-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia tzacatl*) – The only hummer species recorded every day on this short tour.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

GARTERED TROGON (*Trogon caligatus*) – Called Violaceous Trogon in the field guide (it's since been split into three), we had some nice looks in the yard at Rancho.

BLACK-THROATED TROGON (*Trogon rufus*) – We found an incredibly confiding male along one of the back roads at E.A.R.T.H.

COLLARED TROGON (*Trogon collaris*) – A male seen well by some of us one afternoon in the cattle pasture at Rancho.

Momotidae (Motmots)

BLUE-CROWNED MOTMOT (LESSON'S) (*Momotus coeruleiceps lessonii*) – We saved this one until our visit to Finca Christina at the end of the tour before we headed back into San Jose.

RUFOUS MOTMOT (*Baryphthengus martii*) – Well seen by most at E.A.R.T.H., but strangely absent from Rancho.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

AMAZON KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle amazona*) – We enjoyed a couple of good looks at this one near La Suiza one afternoon.

GREEN KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle americana*) – We found one of these sitting quietly above the stream where the Sunbitterns were hanging out.

Bucconidae (Puffbirds)

WHITE-NECKED PUFFBIRD (*Notharchus hyperrhynchus*) – This big puffbird responded nicely for us at E.A.R.T.H., giving all a great view in the scopes.

PIED PUFFBIRD (*Notharchus tectus*) – Ernesto spotted one of these in a distant tree at E.A.R.T.H. soon after we finished up our views of the above White-necked Puffbird. Great to have the comparison!

Galbulidae (Jacamars)

RUFOUS-TAILED JACAMAR (*Galbula ruficauda*) – Seen at Rancho by the folks who ventured up onto the upper trails.

Ramphastidae (Toucans)

COLLARED ARACARI (*Pteroglossus torquatus*) – Great views of this one in the rain at Rancho on our first morning on the balcony.

YELLOW-THROATED TOUCAN (CHESTNUT-MANDIBLED) (*Ramphastos ambiguus swainsonii*) – We spotted one of these hanging out with the more numerous Keel-billed Toucans along the main road at E.A.R.T.H. Called Chestnut-mandibled Toucan in the field guide.

KEEL-BILLED TOUCAN (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*) – This is usually the first real toucan that birders see when they start birding south of the border, but it's also one of the most beautiful of all of the toucans in the world.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

ACORN WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) – With all of the species of native oaks on Volcan Irazu, it's no wonder that this one does so well up there.

BLACK-CHEEKED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes pucherani*) – A 'regular' in the yard at Rancho.

HOFFMANN'S WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes hoffmannii*) – A close relative of our own Red-bellied and Gila woodpeckers.

YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER (*Sphyrapicus varius*) – Eleanor spotted this scarce wintering bird in the gardens of our San Jose hotel on the first morning. [b]

HAIRY WOODPECKER (*Picoides villosus*) – This southern race is tiny, dark, and brown, with very few white spots in the wing.

GOLDEN-OLIVE WOODPECKER (*Colaptes rubiginosus*) – Seen by some in the cow pasture at Rancho one morning.

LINEATED WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus lineatus*) [*]

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

CRESTED CARACARA (*Caracara cheriway*)

YELLOW-HEADED CARACARA (*Milvago chimachima*) – Unseen until our final day of the tour. Another species that has expanded its range greatly in Costa Rica in the last two decades.

LAUGHING FALCON (*Herpetotheres cachinnans*) [*]

BAT FALCON (*Falco ruficularis*) – A couple of sightings of this small falcon on our day at E.A.R.T.H.

Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots)

BARRED PARAKEET (*Bolborhynchus lineola*) [*]

ORANGE-CHINNED PARAKEET (*Brotogeris jugularis*) – This tiny parakeet with a short tail was only seen at E.A.R.T.H. this year.

BROWN-HOODED PARROT (*Pyrilia haematotis*) [*]

WHITE-CROWNED PARROT (*Pionus senilis*) – Good looks at a few perched birds near La Suiza.

SULPHUR-WINGED PARAKEET (*Pyrhura hoffmanni*) – Glimpsed above the ridge above the Silent Mountain road.

OLIVE-THROATED PARAKEET (AZTEC) (*Eupsittula nana astec*) – Much smaller than the Crimson-fronted Parakeet and only recorded at E.A.R.T.H. on this trip.

GREAT GREEN MACAW (*Ara ambiguus*) – Several birds were seen in flight from the bus early in the morning as we headed toward E.A.R.T.H.

CRIMSON-FRONTED PARAKEET (*Psittacara finschi*) – Our most common psittacid on the tour and recorded every day.

Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)

GREAT ANTSHRIKE (*Taraba major*) [*]

BARRED ANTSHRIKE (*Thamnophilus doliatus*) – A pair seen well in the bamboo at C.A.T.I.E.

RUSSET ANTSHRIKE (*Thamnistes anabatinus*) – On the upper trails of Rancho for some folks.

PLAIN ANTIVIREO (*Dysithamnus mentalis*) – Most easily seen at the 'moth cloth' early in the morning at Rancho.

CHECKER-THROATED ANTWREN (*Epinecrophylla fulviventris*) [*]

SLATY ANTWREN (*Myrmotherula schisticolor*) – Seemingly the most common antbird remaining at Rancho.

CHESTNUT-BACKED ANTBIRD (*Myrmeciza exsul*) – Certainly heard by all of us at E.A.R.T.H., with a few folks catching a quick look in the understory.

DULL-MANTLED ANTBIRD (*Myrmeciza laemosticta*) – We saw a pair of these late one afternoon bathing at the hummingbird pools at Rancho, but the low light conditions really made it difficult to make out any of the field marks on this one!

ZELEDON'S ANTBIRD (*Myrmeciza zeledoni*) [*]

Grallariidae (Antpittas)

THICKET ANTPITTA (*Hyllopezus dives*) [*]

Formicariidae (Antthrushes)

RUFOUS-BREASTED ANTTHRUSH (*Formicarius rufipectus*) [*]

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)

TAWNY-THROATED LEAFTOSSER (*Sclerurus mexicanus*) – The light was a little better when a pair of these uncommon, shy birds came to the pools to bathe at Rancho that same afternoon.

OLIVACEOUS WOODCREEPER (*Sittasomus griseicapillus*) [*]

PLAIN-BROWN WOODCREEPER (*Dendrocincla fuliginosa*) – A 'regular' at the moth cloth most mornings.

WEDGE-BILLED WOODCREEPER (*Glyphorhynchus spirurus*) – Looks at this smallest of the woodcreepers at both Rancho and Tapanti.

NORTHERN BARRED-WOODCREEPER (*Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae*) – Nice study of a responsive bird at E.A.R.T.H. The field guide still calls this one the Barred Woodcreeper, but it has since been split into two.

COCOA WOODCREEPER (*Xiphorhynchus susurrans*) – This one used to be called the Buff-throated Woodcreeper, but it too has been split since the publication of the field guide.

SPOTTED WOODCREEPER (*Xiphorhynchus erythropygius*) – We found one of these with a mixed flock along the road at Tapanti on our final morning.

STREAK-HEADED WOODCREEPER (*Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*) – This is the most expected woodcreeper in open, altered habitats throughout Costa Rica.

BUFF-THROATED FOLIAGE-GLEANER (*Automolus ochrolaemus*) – Fantastic studies of a pair of these at the moth cloth at Rancho. This can be a very difficult bird to see well away from a nice set-up like this.

SPOTTED BARBTAIL (*Premnoplex brunescens*) – About the same size as the Wedge-billed Woodcreeper, but darker overall with a finer bill. Fleeting looks at one of these at Tapanti.

RED-FACED SPINETAIL (*Cranioleuca erythroptus*) – If you were able to follow this bird as it worked through the foliage, you may have gotten a decent look at Tapanti.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

GREENISH ELAENIA (*Myiopagis viridicata*) – A brief, surprise find in the yard at Rancho.

YELLOW-BELLIED ELAENIA (*Elaenia flavogaster*) – The most widespread member of a very difficult genus.

TORRENT TYRANNULET (*Serpophaga cinerea*) – Fleeting looks of one bird as it flew from perch to perch, working its way upstream at Silent Mountain. As the name implies, this one is closely tied to flowing water.

OCHRE-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Mionectes oleagineus*) – This small frugivorous flycatcher was seen a couple of times at Rancho and at E.A.R.T.H.

SLATY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Leptopogon superciliaris*) – This mixed species flock member was mostly along the trails at Rancho.

PALTRY TYRANNULET (*Zimmerius vilissimus*) – The best views of this mistletoe obligate were out in the cow pasture at Rancho. Called Mistletoe Tyrannulet in the field guide.

SCALE-CRESTED PYGMY-TYRANT (*Lophotriccus pileatus*) – At Tapanti for most folks on the final morning.

BLACK-HEADED TODY-FLYCATCHER (*Todirostrum nigriceps*) – We ended up with super views of a very responsive bird in a short tree next to the Silent Mountain road. Getting this canopy-loving species into a short tree was the key!

YELLOW-OLIVE FLYCATCHER (*Tolmomyias sulphureus*) – Seen pretty well from the balcony at Rancho on our first morning there.

TAWNY-CHESTED FLYCATCHER (*Aphanotriccus capitalis*) – This special bird was seen by most, if not all, at the 'moth cloth' at Rancho on a couple of mornings. This generally rare bird is known in the world from only a handful of sites, mostly in Costa Rica.

TUFTED FLYCATCHER (*Mitrephanes phaeocercus*) – It was difficult to get a decent look at this bird at Tapanti as it would fly out to catch an insect, but return to a hidden perch.

TROPICAL PEWEE (*Contopus cinereus*) – Similar to our wood-pewees in N. America, but with very short wings.

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax flaviventris*) – I suspect that all of the migrant *Empidonax* that we saw on this tour were indeed this species. [b]

BLACK-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax atriceps*) – This resident *Empidonax*, endemic to the highlands of Costa Rica and w. Panama, was seen nicely across the street from our lunch restaurant on Volcan Irazu.

BLACK PHOEBE (*Sayornis nigricans*)

BRIGHT-RUMPED ATTLA (*Attila spadiceus*) – Fantastic looks at this normally difficult species at the 'moth cloth' at Rancho.

RUFOUS MOURNER (*Rhytipterna holerythra*) [*]

DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*)

GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus crinitus*) [b]

GREAT KISKADEE (*Pitangus sulphuratus*)

BOAT-BILLED FLYCATCHER (*Megarynchus pitangua*) – Our best looks at this Kiskadee look-alike were at C.A.T.I.E.

SOCIAL FLYCATCHER (*Myiozetetes similis*) – Recorded every day of the tour.

GRAY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiozetetes granadensis*) – This relative of the above Social Flycatcher was probably seen best across the valley from Rancho at Silent Mountain.

GOLDEN-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Myiodynastes hemichrysus*) – At least one bird sat out nicely for us while we sat in the bus at Tapanti.

Another specialty that's restricted to the highlands of Costa Rica and Panama.

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus melancholicus*)

Cotingidae (Cotingas)

PURPLE-THROATED FRUITCROW (*Querula purpurata*) – A small group of these big cotingas came in for some good looks above the road at E.A.R.T.H.

Pipridae (Manakins)

WHITE-COLLARED MANAKIN (*Manacus candei*) – This charming little manakin was seen well by all at either Rancho or at E.A.R.T.H.

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

Tityridae (Tityras and Allies)

BLACK-CROWNED TITYRA (*Tityra inquisitor*) – At Rancho for some.

MASKED TITYRA (*Tityra semifasciata*) – We all got looks at this strange tyrant flycatcher relative.

CINNAMON BECARD (*Pachyrhamphus cinnamomeus*) – This one used to be much more common on the Rancho property.

WHITE-WINGED BECARD (*Pachyrhamphus polychropterus*) – Our best looks at this widespread species were probably in the drizzle at Rancho on our first morning there.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO (*Vireo flavifrons*) [b]

PHILADELPHIA VIREO (*Vireo philadelphicus*) [b]

LESSER GREENLET (*Pachysylvia decurtata*) – Strangely scarce on this trip; normally it's at least a very common voice in the forest canopy.

RUFOUS-BROWED PEPPERSHRIKE (*Cyclarhis gujanensis*) – Ernesto got us onto a bird through the smallest of windows in the vegetation at Tapanti.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

AZURE-HOODED JAY (*Cyanolyca cucullata*) – These shy jays were seen well by just a few folks.

BROWN JAY (*Psilorhinus morio*) – Part of the routine soundtrack of the day's birding on this tour.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

BLUE-AND-WHITE SWALLOW (*Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*) – Somewhat similar to our own Tree Swallow, but with a more deeply forked tail and black undertail coverts.

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*)

SOUTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) – This is where these two Rough-winged Swallow species meet.

GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN (*Progne chalybea*) – The only birds we saw on this tour were in the Caribbean lowlands at E.A.R.T.H.

MANGROVE SWALLOW (*Tachycineta albilinea*) – Mostly flying over the lawns at E.A.R.T.H. and far from the nearest mangroves.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

SCALY-BREASTED WREN (WHISTLING) (*Microcerculus marginatus luscini*) [*]

HOUSE WREN (*Troglodytes aedon*) – Sometimes split from our familiar bird back home and called the Southern House-Wren.

OCHRACEOUS WREN (*Troglodytes ochraceus*) – This tiny arboreal wren is another regional endemic, being restricted to the highlands of Costa Rica and Panama.

TIMBERLINE WREN (*Thryorchilus browni*) – The first bird that we saw at the summit of Volcan Irazu and endemic to the Costa Rica/ w. Panama highlands.

BAND-BACKED WREN (*Campylorhynchus zonatus*) – Nicely seen above the road at C.A.T.I.E. and very much like the closely related Cactus Wren of the SW United States.

RUFOUS-NAPED WREN (*Campylorhynchus rufinucha*) [*]

BLACK-THROATED WREN (*Pheugopedius atrogularis*) – Confined mostly to the Caribbean lowlands of Costa Rica and Panama.

STRIPE-BREASTED WREN (*Cantorchilus thoracicus*) [*]

PLAIN WREN (*Cantorchilus modestus*) [*]

BAY WREN (*Cantorchilus nigricapillus*) – This vibrant songster is quite difficult to see well, like most of these wrens.

WHITE-BREASTED WOOD-WREN (*Henicorhina leucosticta*) – We had our best views at the 'moth cloth' at Rancho.

GRAY-BREASTED WOOD-WREN (*Henicorhina leucophrys*) – We needed to gain a little elevation in order to get into the range of this one, so it's no surprise that our only birds were found at Tapanti on the final morning.

Poliophtilidae (Gnatcatchers)

LONG-BILLED GNATWREN (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) – Poor looks at this one for some of us along the Rancho entrance road.

TROPICAL GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila plumbea*) – Similar in form to our familiar Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, but more of a canopy dweller than that one.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

BLACK-FACED SOLITAIRE (*Myadestes melanops*) [*]

BLACK-BILLED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (*Catharus gracilirostris*) – Good views of this 'Chiriqui' endemic atop Volcan Irazu on our first day.

ORANGE-BILLED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (*Catharus aurantiirostris*) [*]

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

SWAINSON'S THRUSH (*Catharus ustulatus*) [b*]

WOOD THRUSH (*Hyllocichla mustelina*) [b]

SOOTY THRUSH (*Turdus nigrescens*) – Good looks at this big, black 'robin' on Volcan Irazu. Another regional endemic.

CLAY-COLORED THRUSH (*Turdus grayi*) – Just about everywhere in Costa Rica and also the National Bird of Costa Rica.

Ptilionotidae (Silky-flycatchers)

BLACK-AND-YELLOW SILKY-FLYCATCHER (*Phainoptila melanoxantha*) – Good views of a small group of these feeding above the road at Tapanti. A close relative of our Phainopepla in the western U.S. and another 'Chiriqui' endemic.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia motacilla*) [b]

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) – Costa Rica is a great place to see this one on the wintering grounds. [b]

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER (*Mniotilta varia*) [b]

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER (*Protonotaria citrea*) – One bird at E.A.R.T.H. [b]

TENNESSEE WARBLER (*Oreothlypis peregrina*) – Maybe the most common wintering N. American warbler that we saw. [b]

MOURNING WARBLER (*Geothlypis philadelphia*) – In the vervain hedge at Rancho for some folks. [b]

KENTUCKY WARBLER (*Geothlypis formosa*) – Nicely at the 'moth cloth' and at the hummingbird pools. [b]

OLIVE-CROWNED YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis semiflava*) – We had a couple of birds pop into the open in the marshy vegetation at the lake at Casa Turire.

TROPICAL PARULA (*Setophaga pitiayumi*) – A 'regular' off the balcony at Rancho.

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER (*Setophaga fusca*) – Just a couple of brilliant males; most were dull birds. [b]

YELLOW WARBLER (*Setophaga petechia*) [b]

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER (*Setophaga pensylvanica*) – Another one of the more common wintering wood-warblers here. [b]

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER (*Setophaga virens*) [b*]

GOLDEN-CROWNED WARBLER (*Basileuterus culicivorus*) – Good looks at the 'moth cloth' at Rancho.

BUFF-RUMPED WARBLER (*Myiothlypis fulvicauda*) – A walk along the Rio Pejibaye produced some good looks at this warbler. Always found around water.

WILSON'S WARBLER (*Cardellina pusilla*) [b]

SLATE-THROATED REDSTART (*Myioborus miniatus*) – We had our best looks on the last day at Tapanti. Birds here, and farther south, are yellow below and not red, like they are in Mexico.

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

WHITE-SHOULDERED TANAGER (*Tachyphonus luctuosus*) – Usually with mixed feeding flocks, the male and female of this species couldn't be more different from one another.

WHITE-LINED TANAGER (*Tachyphonus rufus*) – Well, maybe the male and female are more different from each other in this species!

PASSERINI'S TANAGER (*Ramphocelus passerinii*) – This one used to be called the Scarlet-rumped Tanager until it was split about 20 years ago. The Caribbean slope birds (our birds on this tour) are now split from the Pacific slope birds. Those males are pretty spectacular!

BLUE-GRAY TANAGER (*Thraupis episcopus*) – Common and widespread in most disturbed habitats here.

PALM TANAGER (*Thraupis palmarum*) – Those strongly bicolored wings are the best mark to i.d. this one.

GOLDEN-HOODED TANAGER (*Tangara larvata*) – If you can see this one well, it's breathtakingly beautiful!

SPECKLED TANAGER (*Tangara guttata*) [*]

SPANGLE-CHEEKED TANAGER (*Tangara dowii*) – We had some fine views of this 'Chiriqui' endemic on our final morning of birding at Tapanti.

PLAIN-COLORED TANAGER (*Tangara inornata*) – We got a nice look at this inornate Tangara in the parking lot at C.A.T.I.E. just before we piled into the bus to head back to Rancho.

BAY-HEADED TANAGER (*Tangara gyrola*) – I think that most of the birds that we saw were dull, brown-headed juveniles.

SILVER-THROATED TANAGER (*Tangara icterocephala*) – The second-most common Tangara on the tour, behind Golden-hooded.

SCARLET-THIGHED DACNIS (*Dacnis venusta*) – A few fancy males frequented the grounds at Rancho.

BLUE DACNIS (*Dacnis cayana*) – We had a couple of these in the scopes at E.A.R.T.H.

GREEN HONEYCREEPER (*Chlorophanes spiza*) – Including a gorgeous male or two for some.

BLACK-AND-YELLOW TANAGER (*Chrysothlypis chrysomelas*) – A few of us got on this lovely tanager at the edge of the cow pasture at Rancho one afternoon.

SLATY FLOWERPIERCER (*Diglossa plumbea*) – This 'Chiriqui' endemic was seen well on Volcan Irazu. Primarily Andean in distribution, there are only two species north of S. America - this one and the Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer farther north.

BLUE-BLACK GRASSQUIT (*Volatinia jacarina*) – A few along the roadsides on the final day.

VARIABLE SEEDEATER (*Sporophila corvina*) – Most of the birds that we saw were female-plumaged birds, but most did get a look at the nearly all-black males at some point.

BANANAQUIT (*Coereba flaveola*) – A regular in the vervain hedge at Rancho.

YELLOW-FACED GRASSQUIT (*Tiaris olivaceus*) – A couple of males along the Silent Mountain road provided our best looks of the trip.

DUSKY-FACED TANAGER (*Mitrospingus cassinii*) – A curious group of these noisy tanagers came in for a look at the group on the back road at E.A.R.T.H.

BUFF-THROATED SALTATOR (*Saltator maximus*) – Rather similar to the Grayish Saltator, but always told from that one by its bright green back and wings.

BLACK-HEADED SALTATOR (*Saltator atriceps*) – Good looks at a couple of these big saltators (the largest of the genus) in the ornamental vegetation at C.A.T.I.E.

GRAYISH SALTATOR (*Saltator coerulescens*) – Nicely at C.A.T.I.E.

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

SOOTY-CAPPED CHLOROSPINGUS (*Chlorospingus pileatus*) – A few folks got onto this 'Chiriqui' endemic atop Volcan Irazu. All of the Chlorospingus used to be called Bush-Tanagers until recently.

COMMON CHLOROSPINGUS (*Chlorospingus flavopectus*) – A common bird at Tapanti.

BLACK-STRIPED SPARROW (*Arremonops conirostris*) – I don't think that anyone ever saw one of these. [*]

ORANGE-BILLED SPARROW (*Arremon aurantiirostris*) – This shy, handsome sparrow came out nicely for us at the 'moth cloth' at Rancho.

CHESTNUT-CAPPED BRUSHFINCH (*Arremon brunneinucha*) [*]

VOLCANO JUNCO (*Junco vulcani*) – It took a little work and patience with the fog, but we eventually got decent looks at this 'Chiriqui' endemic atop Volcan Irazu.

RUFOUS-COLLARED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia capensis*) – A close relative of our White-crowned and White-throated sparrows.

LARGE-FOOTED FINCH (*Pezopetes capitalis*) – Another species that took a little work in the fog on Volcan Irazu, and another 'Chiriqui' endemic species.

WHITE-EARED GROUND-SPARROW (*Melospiza leucotis*) – Glimpsed by some folks at Finca Christina on our last afternoon.

PREVOST'S GROUND-SPARROW (PREVOST'S) (*Melospiza biarcuata biarcuata*) – Ernesto knew where to find this local specialty, which actually might get split from the birds occurring farther north in Central America.

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*) [b]

RED-THROATED ANT-TANAGER (*Habia fuscicauda*) – Great views of several birds gleaning insects from the 'moth cloth' at Rancho.

CARMIOL'S TANAGER (*Chlorothraupis carmioli*) [*]

BLACK-THIGHED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus tibialis*) – We couldn't have asked for a better look at this one along the road at Tapanti!

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) [b]

BLUE-BLACK GROSBEAK (*Cyanococcyz cyanoides*) [*]

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

EASTERN MEADOWLARK (*Sturnella magna*)

RED-BREASTED MEADOWLARK (*Sturnella militaris*) – This is another species that has greatly expanded its range in Costa Rica in recent years and it continues to march northward.

MELODIOUS BLACKBIRD (*Dives dives*) – I remember when the first record for Costa Rica occurred back in the late 1980's - it sure has come a long way since then!

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus mexicanus*)

BRONZED COWBIRD (*Molothrus aeneus*)

GIANT COWBIRD (*Molothrus oryzivorus*) – We had some nice looks near La Suiza of this huge cowbird. It's an oropendola brood parasite, so it always seems to be around wherever there are numbers of oropendolas present.

BLACK-COWLED ORIOLE (*Icterus prosthemelas*) – Good looks of a couple of birds feeding in a blooming *Erythrina* at E.A.R.T.H.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE (*Icterus galbula*) [b]

SCARLET-RUMPED CACIQUE (*Cacicus uropygialis*) [*]

CHESTNUT-HEADED OROPENDOLA (*Psarocolius wagleri*) – The rice and banana feeders at Rancho were mostly dominated by the next species, but a big group of these smaller birds noisily made the occasional rounds there during our stay there.

MONTEZUMA OROPENDOLA (*Psarocolius montezuma*) – This huge blackbird - yes, it's a blackbird! - was recorded daily on this short tour.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

YELLOW-CROWNED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia luteicapilla*) – We found a cooperative adult male in the ornamental growth at C.A.T.I.E.

YELLOW-THROATED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia hirundinacea*) – The only black-and-yellow euphonia on this tour with a yellow throat.

OLIVE-BACKED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia gouldi*) – Fairly common on the grounds at Rancho.

WHITE-VENTED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia minuta*) – I generally think of this species as being rather scarce, but it was a 'regular' on the Rancho property.

TAWNY-CAPPED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia anaeae*) – You had to go inside the forest at Rancho in order to find this one. Another one of the many species on this tour mainly restricted to Costa Rica and Panama (this one barely gets into Colombia).

MAMMALS

LONG-NOSED BAT (*Rhynchonycteris naso*) – Roosting above our picnic lunch spot at E.A.R.T.H. I normally see these roosting on the underside of a log that's suspended over the water in the lowlands of South America.

GREATER WHITE-LINED BAT (*Saccopteryx bilineata*) – A few roosting on the same ceiling as the above Long-nosed Bats, but entirely segregated from those by quite a distance. A little bigger and darker, but with the same parallel wavy white lines on the back.

MANTLED HOWLER MONKEY (*Alouatta palliata*) – Excellent views of a couple of troops of these at E.A.R.T.H. (including some adult males!).

BRAZILIAN RABBIT (*Sylvilagus brasiliensis*) – At E.A.R.T.H. for some folks.

VARIEGATED SQUIRREL (*Sciurus variegatoides*) – The common squirrel species on this tour and quite common on the grounds at Rancho.

RED-TAILED SQUIRREL (*Sciurus granatensis*) – Smaller and more uniform in color than the above species.

DUSKY RICE RAT (*Melanomys caliginosus*) – A regular visitor to the feeders at Rancho each morning.

WHITE-NOSED COATI (*Nasua narica*) – This one paid us a visit while we ate our picnic lunch at Tapanti. The old males, the 'Coati Mundis', get kicked out of the female dominated packs of coatis after they reach a certain age.

NEOTROPICAL OTTER (*Lontra longicaudis*) – Seen by some, if not all, at the reservoir that we stopped to scan on our final morning before we arrived at Tapanti.

Herps

GREEN TREE ANOLE (*Norops biporcatus*) – One of the most common of the Anoles in Costa Rica

SLENDER ANOLE (*Norops limifrons*) – This is the one that we saw along the Silent Mountain road.

GREEN IGUANA (*Iguana iguana*) – Several of these monsters were out on the lawn at E.A.R.T.H. during our picnic lunch there.

GREEN BASILISK (*Basiliscus plumifrons*) – Nice looks at a vibrant adult on the road at E.A.R.T.H. - we even got to see him 'walk' across a small pond!

SPECTACLED CAIMAN (*Caiman crocodilus*) – Hauled out on the shore of the pond at C.A.T.I.E.

WET FOREST TOAD (*Incilius melanochlorus*) – Ernesto pointed this one out to several folks.

STRAWBERRY POISON DART FROG (*Dendrobates pumilio*) – Nice looks at several of these at E.A.R.T.H. Now put into the genus *Oophaga*.

PYGMY RAIN FROG (*Pristimantis ridens*) – Also seen at E.A.R.T.H. and pointed out by Ernesto.

RED-EYED STREAM FROG (*Duellmanohyla uranochroa*) – Heard singing down in the ravine from the viewing platform at the hummingbird pools. This species was hit hard by the *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* (Bd) fungus and only hangs on in a handful of spots. [*]

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 280 bird taxa and 9 mammal taxa