



Field Guides Tour Report

Holiday Costa Rica: Rancho Naturalista I 2016

Dec 18, 2016 to Dec 26, 2016

Megan Edwards Crewe with Ernesto Carman

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



Getting a good look at a Sunbittern is always a treat. Photo by participant Mike Crewe.

Our Holiday Costa Rica trips offer a wonderful alternative to the hustle and bustle of a holiday season at home. It's not ALL different, of course. There are still trees covered with gaudy baubles -- though they're living, breathing baubles instead of glass and plastic ones. Granted, the snow is missing (though it felt a bit like it might snow while we were braving the fog and wind and rain on Volcan Irazu), but there was that wonderful turkey dinner with all the trimmings on Christmas day, and a bit of serenading, and lots and lots and LOTS of birdy "gifts" to delight in each day. Though we're based in one location -- the lovely Rancho Naturalista, nestled in its own private reserve in the Caribbean slope foothills -- we ventured to quite a varied lot of habitats during the week, and totted up a nice list of species as a result.

Top of the hit parade for many people were the Sunbitterns we found along two different rushing streams; they strolled along the stony shorelines, poking and prodding and giving us the occasional flash of their gorgeous wings. Tied for "first" was the female Resplendent Quetzal we found blazing against the dark mosses of a big tree on Volcan Irazu -- a reward for braving some truly hideous mountain morning weather -- and the fabulous Snowcaps, including some glowing neon-bright against the gloom of the late afternoon at the hummingbird pools. Then there was the fabulously stripey Fasciated Tiger-Heron standing stockstill in middle of a stream, and the "don't mind me, I'm just a stick" Lesser Nighthawk on its day roost, the pair of Bat Falcons surveying their domain from a cliff-top tree, the Rufous Motmot sitting stockstill on its vine, and the pair of young Green-fronted Lancebills doing their best sword swallowing act as their mother fed them on their burgeoning nest. Male Red-breasted Meadowlarks gleamed in grassy fields, a male Snowy Cotinga dazzled in its whiteness against a verdant background, Montezuma Oropendolas courted passing females by doing noisy somersaults off branches, and a plethora of hummingbirds -- White-naped Jacobins, Green-breasted Mangos, Violet Sabrewings, Green Hermits, and Rufous-tailed Hummingbirds among them -- jostled around feeders mere inches from our admiring faces.

Mixed flocks boiled through trees and along roadsides. Beside our picnic shelter on Volcan Irazu, we found dozens of birds: Black-cheeked Warblers and Collared Redstarts, Flame-throated Warblers and Yellow-thighed Finches, Spot-crowned Woodcreepers and Red-faced Spinetails, Black-capped Flycatchers and a double fistful of Common Chlorospinguses (Chlorospingi?) foraged at eye level mere yards from where we stood. At Rancho's moth cloth, a Kentucky Warbler joined a pair of White-breasted Wood-Wrens under the benches, while Northern Barred-, Cocoa and Plain Brown woodcreepers crawled up the shelter's poles, Red-throated Ant-Tanagers and Buff-throated Foliage-gleaners rummaged through the vegetation, a Bright-rumped Attila bashed a big insect to death on a fence rail, and Tawny-chested, Yellow-bellied, and Dusky-capped flycatchers made repeated sallies from twiggy perches. And, of course, the whole thing was made even better by having such a relaxed and enjoyable group of fellow adventurers to share the fun with!

Thanks so much to all of you for joining Ernesto and me; we're honored that you chose to spend your holidays with us. I hope to see you again on another trip somewhere, some day!

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 one calling tremulously from the forest at Rancho in the pre-dawn hours as we prepared for our mornings on the balcony. [*]

SLATY-BREASTED TINAMOU (*Crypturellus boucardi*) – We heard the low, somewhat mournful, whistles of this species from the forest at EARTH while we searched for the Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher. [*]

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Anas discors*) – A few -- all in dull nonbreeding plumage -- floated among the big rafts of Lesser Scaup on the lake at Casa Turire.

LESSER SCAUP (*Aythya affinis*) – Typically the most common waterfowl of the tour -- and this year was no exception; scores floated on the lake at Casa Turire.

Cracidae (Guans, Chachalacas, and Curassows)

GRAY-HEADED CHACHALACA (*Ortalis cinereiceps*) – Regular in small numbers at the banana feeders just outside the Rancho dining room -- including five sharing the same perch one lunchtime. We saw others along the ranch's driveway.

CRESTED GUAN (*Penelope purpurascens*) – Four sat up in a dead snag -- which we already had the scope on, thanks to a previously perched Chestnut-headed Oropendola -- just down the hill from the balcony at Rancho Naturalista.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

PIED-BILLED GREBE (*Podilymbus podiceps*) – One floated near the big raft of Lesser Scaup on the lake at Casa Turire, diving a few times before engaging in a bout of energetic preening.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – Quite common at the lake at Casa Turire, either in flight low over the water, or perched (and drying out, spread-winged) in the taller trees at one end of the reservoir. We saw another gang doing the same on the stony bank of a river we crossed en route to EARTH.

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

ANHINGA (*Anhinga anhinga*) – The skinny head and neck (and long, dagger-like beak) of a male poked up from among the leaves of a big tree beside the pond at CATIE, showing why this species is widely known by the folk name "Snake Bird".

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

FASCIATED TIGER-HERON (*Tigrisoma fasciatum*) – One hunting in the riffles below the narrow suspension bridge at EARTH was still there when we returned, many hours later. This species is smaller, more compact, and shorter-billed than the Bare-throated Tiger-Heron, with a line of feathers (which we could clearly see silhouetted against the water) down the middle of its throat.

BARE-THROATED TIGER-HERON (*Tigrisoma mexicanum*) – An adult stood hunched along the shore of the pond at CATIE.

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – One strode along the edge of the pond at CATIE and investigated the area around the picnic tables. This is a winter visitor to Costa Rica.

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – We saw scattered birds in roadside streams and puddles on our drives around the countryside.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*) – A couple of adults flew across the big lake at Casa Turire, and an all-white youngster huddled in the papyrus -- conveniently close to a couple of Cattle Egrets for easy comparison -- along the pond at CATIE.

TRICOLORED HERON (*Egretta tricolor*) – A couple of birds flapped across the lake at Casa Turire, headed for the far shore.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Very, very common throughout the tour, with dozens lurking around the feet of virtually every grazing animal we encountered. The flocks we saw heading out from their roosts each morning, flashing white against the verdant background visible from the Rancho balcony, were quite picturesque.

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*) – One slunk through the Water Hyacinth at Casa Turire, eventually freezing at the water's edge. We saw others beside little streams we crossed en route to various birding sites, typically while stopped briefly on the bridges.

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nyctanassa violacea*) – A handful hunted among the lily pads (or along the far shore) of the lake at Casa Turire; their distinctive white cheek patch made them instantly recognizable.

BOAT-BILLED HERON (*Cochlearius cochlearius*) – A youngster snoozed in the papyrus stand at CATIE, looking like little more than a brownish ball of feathers -- though a brownish ball of feathers with a huge dark eye when it opened it up for quick peeks around!

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

GREEN IBIS (*Mesembrinibis cayennensis*) – A few flew across the far end of the horse paddocks at Casa Turire, but our best views came at CATIE, where a trio rummaged on the grassy lawn just past the big pond.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*) – Daily, often in sizable numbers.

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*) – Every day but our first afternoon at Hotel Bougainvillea, often rocking along in the same thermals as the previous species.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

- WHITE-TAILED KITE** (*Elanus leucurus*) – One over the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea (seen just as we gathered to leave for Volcan Irazu our first morning together) with a couple of others hovering along the highways and byways.
- HOOK-BILLED KITE** (*Chondrohierax uncinatus*) – Two circled over the Silent Mountain road on our second visit, dark against gray clouds. Those paddle-shaped wings are distinctive -- as are their huge, hooked bills! The one that landed in the trees along the ridge definitely made the local Brown Jays nervous -- and they eventually got brave enough to drive it away.
- GRAY-HEADED KITE** (*Leptodon cayanensis*) – One in the skies over Rancho Naturalista, seen on our way down the hill -- great spotting, Brian!
- BLACK HAWK-EAGLE** (*Spizaetus tyrannus*) – A very distant bird over the ridge line along the Silent Mountain road proved elusive for most; it was hard to track with the scope, and disappeared over the top before everybody got a chance to try for it.
- SNAIL KITE** (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*) – We had two around the lake at Casa Turire: a distant adult male perched in a tree on the far side of the water, and a youngster perched low in a tree right near the boat launch. Though its brown and white plumage made it a bit tough to pick out from the trunk in the background, its bright orange legs and feet quickly gave it away!
- DOUBLE-TOOTHED KITE** (*Harpagus bidentatus*) – Some great spotting by Mercedes netted us fine scope studies of one hunting the lower canopy of one of the big trees in the primary forest at EARTH. This species often follows monkey troops, scooping up the insects flushed by their activity.
- BICOLORED HAWK** (*Accipiter bicolor*) – One perched atop a dead snag near the driveway at Rancho early one morning, visible in the scope -- though it nearly required standing on your head to get low enough! As the light strengthened, we could even see its distinctive rufous thighs.
- ROADSIDE HAWK** (*Rupornis magnirostris*) – Lovely views of one circling over our heads as we birded the Rancho Naturalista parking area on our first morning there; those rusty primaries were pretty spectacular against that blue sky background!
- GRAY HAWK** (*Buteo plagiatus*) – One flew along the driveway as we walked in to the hummingbird feeders in Ujarra, delaying the back half of the group even further!
- BROAD-WINGED HAWK** (*Buteo platypterus*) – Three birds, all youngsters, seen during the tour -- one along the Rancho driveway, and the others on roadside wires.
- SHORT-TAILED HAWK** (*Buteo brachyurus*) – A light-morph bird circled overhead during our visit to Ujarra.
- RED-TAILED HAWK** (*Buteo jamaicensis*) – A few folks got a quick glimpse of one as it flew past on Volcan Irazu (a bit of a challenge in the fog!), but we had better views of another soaring over the forest at Tapanti. Most of the birds here -- the rufous-bellied ones -- belong to the locally-breeding subspecies "costaricensis". However, during the northern winter, subspecies from further north are also possible.

Eurypygidae (Sunbittern)

- SUNBITTERN** (*Eurypyga helias*) – Fabulous views of two at La Mina, with another poking along the little stream along the Silent Mountain road. We followed one of the pair at La Mina for long minutes, watching (and photographing!) as it carefully investigated every stone and eddy along the river.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

- WHITE-THROATED CRAKE** (*Laterallus albigularis*) – We heard several pairs calling from the dense stands of Water Hyacinth at Casa Turire, but couldn't entice any out into the open. We heard another calling from one of the gullies in the sugar cane field -- again without ever actually seeing it. [*]

- RUSSET-NAPED WOOD-RAIL** (*Aramides albiventris*) – A couple, including one sporting some unfortunate plastic debris, trotted around the botanical garden at CATIE. This species is a recent split from the former Gray-necked Wood-Rail.
- PURPLE GALLINULE** (*Porphyrio martinicus*) – A few clambered through the Water Hyacinth on the lake at Casa Turire, flashing their sky blue bill shields and white undertail coverts.
- COMMON GALLINULE** (*Gallinula galeata*) – One poked along the edge of a nearby raft of Water Hyacinth, eventually displacing a Green Heron that was crouched among the leaves.
- AMERICAN COOT** (*Fulica americana*) – A few distant birds chugged across the big lake at Casa Turire.

Aramidae (Limkin)

- LIMPKIN** (*Aramus guarauna*) – One walked through the vegetation on the far side of the lake at Casa Turire, flickering in and out of view.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

- SOUTHERN LAPWING** (*Vanellus chilensis*) – Two in one of the horse pastures at Casa Turire -- nice spotting, Liz! They appeared to be nest-building; one bird spent a fair bit of time spinning in a circle on its belly, kicking its feet backwards as it attempted to clear out the short vegetation.
- KILLDEER** (*Charadrius vociferus*) – Jan spotted one in a roadside field as we drove to EARTH.

Jacaniidae (Jacanas)

- NORTHERN JACANA** (*Jacana spinosa*) – Especially nice views of several family groups -- including some stripe-faced, nearly-grown youngsters -- trotting across the lily pads at CATIE's big pond. We had others among the Water Hyacinth at Casa Turire, where we got to see their distinctively yellow wings as they flew from place to place.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

- SPOTTED SANDPIPER** (*Actitis macularius*) – One bobbed in the middle of the river at La Mina, distracting us briefly from the nearby Sunbittern, and another hunted on the rocks in a stream along the Tuis Valley, seen from the bus. This is a winter visitor to Costa Rica.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

- ROCK PIGEON** (*Columba livia*) – Very common throughout, particularly around cities and towns. [I]
- PALE-VENTED PIGEON** (*Patagioenas cayennensis*) – Common in the lowlands, particularly at EARTH, where we scoped a bird preening in a tree near the student housing.
- RED-BILLED PIGEON** (*Patagioenas flavirostris*) – A common species, including group of a half dozen or so resting in the top of a tree near the main building at the Hotel Bougainvillea, seen on our first afternoon together. With the scope, we could clearly see its red-based, yellow-tipped bill.
- SHORT-BILLED PIGEON** (*Patagioenas nigrirostris*) – We heard the "up cup a COO" song of this species in the forest at EARTH. [*]
- INCA DOVE** (*Columbina inca*) – A few on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea on our first morning together, with flicking through the coffee fields at Ujarra, and still more along the road we walked in Paraiso, looking for the ground-sparrows.
- RUDDY GROUND-DOVE** (*Columbina talpacoti*) – Seen on scattered days, in particularly good numbers (typically in pairs) in the open areas at EARTH, with others at Ujarra, Paraiso and along the Silent Mountain road.

WHITE-TIPPED DOVE (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – One strolled along under the hedges below the Rancho balcony on most mornings, occasionally taking a quick dip in the bird bath. We saw others along the Silent Mountain road, mostly in flight.

WHITE-WINGED DOVE (*Zenaida asiatica*) – Abundant throughout. This species is another recent invader, moving into the country from points north -- first into the dry northwest, and then (in a matter of mere decades) throughout most of the country.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

GROOVE-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*) – Regular in open areas from the middle elevations down, with especially nice looks at some trundling around in the grass near the entrance to EARTH, with others drying their wings (or warming up) on some of the walls there.

SQUIRREL CUCKOO (*Piaya cayana*) – A couple bounced through trees (rather like their namesakes) at EARTH, not far from our Slaty-tailed Trogon.

Strigidae (Owls)

MOTTLED OWL (*Ciccaba virgata*) – One perched on a post along the Rancho driveway, seen as we toiled our way up the hill after our afternoon at Casa Turire, was certainly a surprise. It stayed for a surprisingly long time, peering around in the light of our headlights. We heard it (or another) calling from the darkened forest around the main building on several nights/early mornings.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

LESSER NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles acutipennis*) – One snoozing on a branch right near the student cafeteria at EARTH made for a nice finale to our visit -- and totally amazed David, our student guide, who'd apparently been walking right past it for years! (Ernesto says it's been roosting in the same tree for at least four years.)

COMMON PAURAUQUE (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) – One along the Rancho driveway gave us good "from the bus" views before fluttering up and away into the darkness. This species is longer-tailed than other nighthawks and nightjars we could see on the trip.

Apodidae (Swifts)

SPOT-FRONTED SWIFT (*Cypseloides cherriei*) – A handful zoomed back and forth over the entrance clearing at EARTH, low enough that folks could see the distinctive white facial spots that give the species its name. They also have a white band near the legs, which a few of the photos taken clearly showed.

CHESTNUT-COLLARED SWIFT (*Streptoprocne rutila*) – A huge group of several hundred swirled over the town of La Suiza, seen as we headed towards Casa Turire one afternoon, and a handful of others circled over the clearing near the EARTH entrance gate -- close enough we could clearly see their chestnut neck rings in the mellow early morning light.

WHITE-COLLARED SWIFT (*Streptoprocne zonaris*) – Our best views came at Tapanti, where dozens circled overhead as we walked the main road, and a big group raced past down the valley, their distinctive white collars clearly visible against the background trees. We saw a few others over the road near Silent Mountain.

VAUX'S SWIFT (*Chaetura vauxi*) – A single bird zipped around a church steeple along the road to Tapanti before disappearing inside; shortly afterwards, it reappeared and zoomed off into the distance. A few minutes later, it was back with another mouthful, presumably feeding young. [N]

GRAY-RUMPED SWIFT (*Chaetura cinereiventris*) – Some among the swift flock over the EARTH entrance gate, showing their pale gray rump patches nicely in the morning sun.

LESSER SWALLOW-TAILED SWIFT (*Panyptila cayennensis*) – At least one of these small, long-tailed swifts flew back and forth above the clearing at the EARTH entrance gate, quickly distinguished from the other swifts thanks to its brilliant white throat, breast and rump.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

WHITE-NECKED JACOBIN (*Florisuga mellivora*) – Dozens jostled around the feeders at Rancho, with about an even mix of males and females.

BRONZY HERMIT (*Glaucis aeneus*) – One of these shorter-tailed hermits visited Heliconia flowers along the road at EARTH, seen by some as we tried to get a better look at the Snowy Cotinga and Rufous-winged Woodpecker.

GREEN HERMIT (*Phaethornis guy*) – At least one made repeated visits to Rancho's balcony feeders during the course of the week, and we saw another (or maybe the same one) bathing in the hummingbird pools.

LONG-BILLED HERMIT (*Phaethornis longirostris*) – One appeared briefly at the same stand of Heliconia flowers that the Bronzy Hermit visited at EARTH. This one has a long, white-tipped tail as well as a long bill.

STRIPE-THROATED HERMIT (*Phaethornis strigularis*) – Our best looks came at a vervain hedge near the parking lot at Rancho, where one of these small, rusty hummingbirds made repeated visits to the small, purple flowers. We heard many males singing on their lek along Rancho's Manakin trail, but never caught up with the singers there.

GREEN-FRONTED LANCEBILL (*Doryfera ludovicae*) – Some great spotting by Ernesto led to scope studies of a nest with two large youngsters at the top. Mom made several visits with food -- the delivery of which involved a bit of sword swallowing! [N]

LESSER VIOLETEAR (*Colibri cyanotus*) – This species, newly split from the former Green Violetear, was seen (and heard!) well on Volcan Irazu. This, the southern half of the split, is smaller (hence the "Lesser") and has a green, rather than violet-blue, breast.

GREEN-BREASTED MANGO (*Anthracothorax prevostii*) – Regular around the feeders, where they tussled with White-naped Jacobins and each other. Their rusty-maroon tails are distinctive -- as is the bold central stripe running from chin to tail on the female.

GREEN THORNTAIL (*Discosura conversii*) – A male perched briefly in one of the guava trees in the pasture at Rancho, seen by most, and Jan and I spotted another foraging in a vervain hedge along the Silent Mountain road.

BLACK-CRESTED COQUETTE (*Lophornis helenae*) – We spotted a tiny female buzzing along the vervain hedge below the Rancho balcony on several mornings early in the week, and a young male (sporting only a few of his soon-to-be-distinctive black feathers) doing the same on several mornings toward the end of the tour.

WHITE-CRESTED COQUETTE (*Lophornis adorabilis*) – Ernesto spotted one foraging high in a flowering tree along La Mina creek; unfortunately, it got chased off shortly after he spotted it, so we didn't get much of a look! This species is usually gone by the time of our holiday tours.

FIERY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Panterpe insignis*) – This high-elevation specialist was seen well along the road up Volcan Irazu. Unfortunately, the combination of thick fog and unfortunate perching angles meant we never got that "Oh WOW!" view of its beautiful gorget -- though it certainly flashed that violet-blue crown!

WHITE-BELLIED MOUNTAIN-GEM (*Lampornis hemileucus*) – A few fed at curved pink flowers along the track in Tapanti NP; their all-white bellies quickly separate them from the other possible mountain-gems.

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Archilochus colubris*) – A female in the garden at Ujarra looked pretty plain.

VOLCANO HUMMINGBIRD (*Selasphorus flammula*) – A few of these tiny hummers zipped around the flowers along the road up Volcan Irazu -- occasionally perching for long enough to give us a view.

VIOLET SABREWING (*Campylopterus hemileucurus*) – One of these big hummingbirds made regular visits to a corner feeder on the Rancho balcony (twitching those flashy white tail tips), and we found another near the forest feeders one morning on the trail system there -- the only hummer there, amazingly!

CROWNED WOODNYMPH (*Thalurania colombica*) – Surely the dirtiest birds in all of Costa Rica -- or the cleanest, considering how many minutes they spent dunking themselves in the hummingbird pools! We had super views of both males and females at the balcony feeders.

BLACK-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD (*Eupherusa nigriventris*) – A couple of these distinctively dark little hummers hovered around patches of flowers along the track at Tapanti; their rusty secondary patches (visible as a rusty "stripe" when they're flapping at speed) were also distinctive.

SNOWCAP (*Microchera albocoronata*) – We saw both males and females, first at the little purple flowers of the vervain hedge below the Rancho balcony, then dunking themselves in the hummingbird pools. The incredible whiteness of the male's head was extraordinary -- and so visible, even as the light started to fade at the pools.

RUFOUS-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia tzacatl*) – Probably the most common and widespread hummingbird of the trip, seen every day -- including one squeaking from a shrub on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea and several jealously guarding patches of vervain hedge at Rancho.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

RESPLENDENT QUETZAL (*Pharomachrus mocinno*) – When Ernesto told us the avocados were blooming, we were optimistic. Then we arrived on the mountain, and the fog was so thick we could barely see the sides of the road! We waited for a long time, hoping it would clear, then finally set off to higher heights, hoping to find other species. Fortunately, by the time we came back down, it was clear and beautiful -- and minutes after we disembarked, Ernesto spotted a female. She bounced around a bit before finally settling to allow scope views.

SLATY-TAILED TROGON (*Trogon massena*) – Mercedes spotted us a female perched above the track at EARTH; it sat for long minutes, giving us all great chances to study it in the scopes.

GARTERED TROGON (*Trogon caligatus*) – Some of those who checked for Stripe-throated Hermits at the vervain hedge near the Rancho parking lot on our penultimate morning were lucky enough to still be there when one flashed in to a nearby fruiting tree.

Momotidae (Motmots)

LESSON'S MOTMOT (*Momotus lessonii lessonii*) – Those on the pre-breakfast walk at the Hotel Bougainvillea on our first morning saw one in the garden. It started in the trees over our heads, then moved to a lower perch along a vine-covered wall near the observation tower. Many in the group saw another gobbling fruits from the feeder trays outside the hotel's restaurant on the last day of the tour. This species was recently split from the Blue-crowned Motmot complex.

RUFOUS MOTMOT (*Baryphthengus martii*) – One arrived late in the afternoon, one day at Rancho, and sat for a few minutes on the vine spanning the banana feeders. Unfortunately, it flew off before I had the chance to gather everybody!

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

RINGED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle torquata*) – One flew in to a distant tree at Casa Turire with a fish, which it proceeded to whack to death on a branch. We saw another (closer) bird perched over the pond at CATIE. This is the New World's largest kingfisher.

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle alcyon*) – One flew across the lake at Casa Turire, and landed in the same tree the Ringed Kingfisher had recently vacated. This is a winter visitor to Costa Rica.

AMAZON KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle amazona*) – Lyle spotted our first, at Casa Turire, but Liz proved to be the Amazon Kingfisher queen, spotting another on our drive to Silent Mountain and a further trio from a bridge on our way to Tapanti.

Bucconidae (Puffbirds)

PIED PUFFBIRD (*Notharchus tectus*) – We heard one calling (and calling and calling) from tall trees around the edge of a clearing at EARTH, but just couldn't find the singer -- even when Ernesto offered to buy a beer for the person who spotted it first! [*]

Galbulidae (Jacamars)

RUFOUS-TAILED JACAMAR (*Galbula ruficauda*) – One hunting from trees along the edge of the pasture at Rancho gave us all the chance to study it in the scope -- eventually.

Capitonidae (New World Barbets)

RED-HEADED BARBET (*Eubucco bourcierii*) – Arg! Mike spotted one over our heads at Tapanti, but only Jean got a glimpse -- and it was pretty subliminal at that -- before it disappeared off up the hill. Phooey!

Semnornithidae (Toucan-Barbets)

PRONG-BILLED BARBET (*Semnornis frantzii*) – A trio called and interacted in the trees just up the hill from the road at Tapanti. The very heavy bills of this species are distinctive.

Ramphastidae (Toucans)

COLLARED ARACARI (*Pteroglossus torquatus*) – A little gang of them braved noisy traffic and lots of commotion to gobble mouthfuls of papaya in front of a truck stop along the highway between EARTH and the city of Siqueres. We saw others in the subdivision at CATIE -- also eating fruit, but in much quieter conditions!

KEEL-BILLED TOUCAN (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*) – Easily the most common toucan of the trip, with dozens seen. The one croaking from the top of a nearly leafless fruiting tree near the entrance to EARTH, seen just before we headed back to Rancho, was particularly gorgeous in the slanting afternoon light.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

ACORN WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) – Great looks at a handful in the dead trees near the fruiting avocado tree, seen while we waited for a quetzal to make an appearance.

BLACK-CHEEKED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes pucherani*) – Our first shared a palm trunk at EARTH with a much larger Lineated Woodpecker. We saw others on the banana feeders at Rancho and in the subdivision we walked at CATIE.

HOFFMANN'S WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes hoffmannii*) – Surprisingly scarce this trip, with none (!) in the gardens of the Hotel Bougainvillea, where they're usually easy to spot. Fortunately, we found a nicely scope-able bird in an open Cecropia tree along the Silent Mountain road.

SMOKY-BROWN WOODPECKER (*Picoides fumigatus*) – One along the road at Tapanti took a bit of maneuvering to see well, but we got there in the end! It proved a bit more obliging than the nearby Red-headed Barbet did...

RUFIOUS-WINGED WOODPECKER (*Piculus simplex*) – One in the forest at EARTH proved singularly uncooperative, always landing just out of view for most. Everyone did get a few quick flight views, and we certainly heard it, but we never could get it to stay put long enough for a scope view.

GOLDEN-OLIVE WOODPECKER (*Colaptes rubiginosus*) – One along the Silent Mountain road proved far more cooperative than the previous species, allowing nice scope studies as it tapped on the trunk of a small tree. We heard the shrill shriek of another from the Rancho balcony one morning.

LINEATED WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus lineatus*) – One worked on excavating a nest hole in a dead snag near the entrance to EARTH; occasionally, we could only see its back half! We had others at CATIE and Tapanti, and along the Silent Mountain road.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

CRESTED CARACARA (*Caracara cheriway*) – One flew past as we waited for folks to "pit stop" en route to Volcan Irazu our first morning, and we saw a couple of others over the sugar cane fields on our way back from Silent Mountain on our afternoon visit there.

YELLOW-HEADED CARACARA (*Milvago chimachima*) – Two at CATIE -- one screaming its head off from the top of a tall tree, while the other flapped across the big pond. These open-country birds are a relatively recent arrival to Costa Rica (i.e. the past few decades), spreading north as forests are cleared.

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*) – One hunted from a telephone wire over the sugar cane fields we visited on the way back to Rancho after our Silent Mountain outing, and a couple of others watched the pastures along the river near Tapanti.

MERLIN (*Falco columbarius*) – A couple of folks got on one as it rocketed past while we birded on Volcan Irazu. This is a winter visitor to Costa Rica.

BAT FALCON (*Falco ruficularis*) – A pair perched along a quiet back road en route to Tapanti were a real treat; they sat for long minutes while we ogled them in the scopes. The size difference between the big female and the little male was striking.

Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots)

ORANGE-CHINNED PARAKEET (*Brotogeris jugularis*) – One nibbled at a fruit nearly as big as itself, near the top of a tree by the suspension bridge at EARTH. Through the scope, we could clearly see the tiny orange patch under its beak that gives it its common name.

BROWN-HOODED PARROT (*Pyrilia haematotis*) – Flyby groups on several days at Rancho, typically seen as they went screeching past over the forest visible from the balcony.

WHITE-CROWNED PARROT (*Pionus senilis*) – The most common and widespread of the tour's parrots, seen nearly every day. Those white crowns were easily visible, even when we only saw the birds flying over.

RED-LORED PARROT (*Amazona autumnalis*) – We heard some calling while birding in the forest at EARTH, but didn't see them there. [*]

MEALY PARROT (*Amazona farinosa*) – Seen only at EARTH, where one perched atop a tree gave us the chance to study it in the scope. The big white eye ring on the otherwise plain face of this big Amazon is distinctive.

OLIVE-THROATED PARAKEET (AZTEC) (*Eupsittula nana astec*) – We heard the screeching calls of this small species along the road through EARTH, but unfortunately, never where we could actually see the birds. [*]

GREAT GREEN MACAW (*Ara ambiguus*) – We heard the gruff, low growls of this species while we birded in the primary forest at EARTH. This is a relatively recent recolonizer in Costa Rica; they were extirpated (no thanks to the pet trade), but have reintroduced themselves from neighboring Nicaragua. [*]

CRIMSON-FRONTED PARAKEET (*Psittacara finschi*) – Easily the most common parakeet of the tour, with dozen and dozens seen over the Hotel Bougainvillea and down the hill from Rancho Naturalista, primarily in flight. A calling bird sitting on a palm spike near the student cafeteria at EARTH gave us a great chance to study it in the scope.

Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)

BARRED ANTSHRIKE (*Thamnophilus doliatus*) – A male, all black and white stripes, flicked through vegetation along the Rancho parking lot, his location given away by his quivering tail as he sang.

RUSSET ANTSHRIKE (*Thamnistes anabatinus*) – A few of these fairly plain antshrikes accompanied a mixed flock we found along Rancho's Upper trail, with one descending to nearly eye level as it foraged in a tree in a gully we stood near.

DUSKY ANT BIRD (*Cercomacroides tyrannina*) – We heard on singing from the woods along the top edge of the pasture on our first full day at Rancho. [*]

CHESTNUT-BACKED ANT BIRD (*Poliocrania exsul*) – A pair quickly responded to my whistles as we walked the path back up from the little stream at EARTH. They flicked across the forest floor along the path, occasionally popping up a foot or two onto a branch for a quick look around.

ZELEDON'S ANT BIRD (*Hafferia zeledoni*) – Arg! A pair worked along the edge of the path near Rancho's forest feeders, but they just WOULD NOT come out where most could see them -- and the trail was too narrow to allow any but the first few people to catch at glimpse.

Rhinocryptidae (Tapaculos)

SILVERY-FRONTED TAPACULO (*Scytalopus argentifrons*) – We heard the rapid churr of this species echoing from the hillside forest at Tapanti. [*]

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)

TAWNY-THROATED LEAFTOSSER (*Sclerurus mexicanus*) – An incredibly cooperative bird sat for more than five minutes on a flat rock at the edge of the hummingbird pools -- after first taking a very vigorous bath in one of those very pools.

PLAIN-BROWN WOODCREEPER (*Dendrocincla fuliginosa*) – Great studies of one carefully inspecting all the poles holding up the moth sheet shed (and most of the surrounding trunks as well), searching for roosting moths. This one certainly lives up to its name -- no spots, no streaks, no two-toned wings, only the hint of a couple of dark lines on its face.

NORTHERN BARRED-WOODCREEPER (*Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae*) – Another moth sheet visitor -- the biggest of the woodcreepers we found there. The fine barring on its front and back, and its large dark bill, quickly separated it from nearby woodcreepers.

COCOA WOODCREEPER (*Xiphorhynchus susurrans*) – One, showing nicely the buffy throat and streaked head that help to identify it, closely investigated the moth cloth shed and surrounding forest. Jan spotted another from Rancho's balcony one morning.

SPOTTED WOODCREEPER (*Xiphorhynchus erythropygius*) – One at Tapanti hitched itself around in several trees, giving us views now and then of the circular spots on its chest.

STREAK-HEADED WOODCREEPER (*Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*) – Our first was spotted over the Rancho balcony (creeping along the bottom of a branch), and we spotted another along the edge of the pasture there while searching for the jacamar. But our best views probably came at EARTH, where we had one with a flock along the forest trail, not far from our Bay Wrens.

SPOT-CROWNED WOODCREEPER (*Lepidocolaptes affinis*) – One crept up trunks near the quetzal spot on Volcan Irazu and another accompanied the big flock near our picnic lunch spot on the mountain. This is the high elevation replacement for the previous species.

LINEATED FOLIAGE-GLEANER (*Syndactyla subalaris*)

STREAK-BREADED TREEHUNTER (*Thripadectes rufobrunneus*)

BUFF-THROATED FOLIAGE-GLEANER (*Automolus ochrolaemus*) – Great views of one hunting near the moth cloth at Rancho. First, it skulked around in the thicker vegetation, but eventually, it came right into the shed, picking moths off some of the weeds and tree roots.

SPOTTED BARBTAIL (*Premnoplex brunnescens*) – A couple of these little birds -- appropriately spotty, when seen well -- crept around on the moss-covered branches of trees at Tapanti; they were both accompanying big mixed flocks.

RUDDY TREERUNNER (*Margarornis rubiginosus*) – Two flicked through the foggy branches of some roadside trees on Volcan Irazu, in the company of a noisy gang of Common Chlorospingus, seen while we waited for the quetzals to make an appearance.

RED-FACED SPINETAIL (*Cranioleuca erythroptus*) – Two with the mixed flock near our picnic lunch spot on Volcan Irazu descended to nearly eye-level, providing fabulous views. We saw others with the mixed flocks at Tapanti.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

BROWN-CAPPED TYRANNULET (*Ornithion brunneicapillus*) – One of these flitted, calling incessantly, through the canopy above our heads on the forest track at EARTH. Its love of heights (the top of the tree was clearly its favorite place) made it a bit of a challenge to see!

YELLOW-BELLIED ELAENIA (*Elaenia flavogaster*) – Seen on several days, including a calling pair along the driveway into the hummingbird feeding station in Ujarra, and another pair around one of the houses at CATIE.

TORRENT TYRANNULET (*Serpophaga cinerea*) – One fluttered from stone to stone in one of the tumbling little streams we passed en route to Tapanti. They look a little bit like tiny, slightly more colorful dippers.

OCHRE-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Mionectes oleagineus*) – One took a vigorous bath in one of the hummingbird pools at Rancho, part of a late afternoon flurry of flycatcher activity.

SLATY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Leptopogon superciliaris*) – This was another of the late-day bathers at Rancho's hummingbird pools. The dark ear patch of this small flycatcher helps to quickly identify it.

PALTRY TYRANNULET (*Zimmerius vilissimus*) – Plenty of good looks at this diminutive flycatcher throughout the tour, including an eye-level bird burping up sticky mistletoe seeds in a front yard along the Silent Mountain road.

SCALE-CRESTED PYGMY-TYRANT (*Lophotriccus pileatus*) – We heard several trilling in the forest at Rancho: one near the White-crowned Manakin lek, and another, which actually deigned to be seen by at least some of the group, with the Russet Antshrikes in a steep gully on our way back down the hill.

COMMON TODY-FLYCATCHER (*Todirostrum cinereum*) – One of these little cuties twitched through a roadside bush in the subdivision at CATIE, returning several times to the edge to check us out.

BLACK-HEADED TODY-FLYCATCHER (*Todirostrum nigriceps*) – A calling bird along the forest track at EARTH proved reasonably cooperative, returning again and again to the same tree and allowing scope views. However, there was an awful lot happening at the same time (Snowy Cotinga! Rufous-winged Woodpecker! Long-tailed Hermit!) and I think a few folks never did get a good look at him.

EYE-RINGED FLATBILL (*Rhynchocyclus brevirostris*) – A bird hunting along the road at Tapanti posed nicely on a whole variety of mossy branches; it's certainly a well-named species, as that eye ring is one of its most notable features!

YELLOW-OLIVE FLYCATCHER (*Tolmomyias sulphurescens*) – One with the big mixed flock over the Rancho driveway was initially located by its buzzy, rising song. We found another at CATIE.

SULPHUR-RUMPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiobius sulphureipygius aureatus*) – Another of the late afternoon bathers at Rancho's hummingbird pools, where its flashy yellow rump made it relatively easy to pick out in the deepening gloom.

TAWNY-CHESTED FLYCATCHER (*Aphanotriccus capitalis*) – Super studies of one as it gleaned moths from Rancho's moth sheet on a couple of mornings. This small flycatcher is extremely range-restricted, occurring only from southeastern Nicaragua to northeastern Panama; Rancho is among the best places anywhere to see them!

TROPICAL PEWEE (*Contopus cinereus*) – Especially nice views of one hunting from a fence wire around one of the horse pastures at Casa Turire. This resident species has much shorter wings than do the overwintering wood-pewees, which migrate from points further north.

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax flaviventris*) – Especially nice views of several at Rancho -- one hunting right near the parking lot (using a big fern as its launching point) and another in nice comparison with a nearby Tawny-chested Flycatcher at the moth sheet. This is another winter visitor to Costa Rica.

BLACK-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax atriceps*) – Common on Mount Irazu, where they hunted from fence posts and wires and tree branches all along the road up to the park. Their overall dark color -- particularly on the top of the head -- was distinctive.

BLACK PHOEBE (*Sayornis nigricans*) – Pairs on many days, including two along the fence in a cow pasture along Silent Mountain road and several hurling themselves skyward from rocks in various little streams.

BRIGHT-RUMPED ATTLA (*Attila spadiceus*) – We heard the distinctive maniacal laugh of this species while we birded the moth cloth one morning at Ranch, and later saw it catch at huge moth and bash it to death on a low branch.

RUFOUS MOURNER (*Rhytipterna holerythra*) – One flicked back and forth in some trees high over the road at Tapanti, in the company of some Common Chlorospingus. Unfortunately, only a few people caught a glimpse before it disappeared over the hill.

DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) – Liz spotted our first -- seen in Rancho's pasture as we searched for the jacamars -- but our best views came at the moth cloth, where one came within feet of us while searching for moths.

GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus crinitus*) – We heard one calling from the forest near where we started our walk down to the river at EARTH. This is another winter visitor to Costa Rica. [*]

GREAT KISKADEE (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) – Common and widespread, typically perched on roadside wires or treetops. This species has considerable rustiness in the wings and tail.

BOAT-BILLED FLYCATCHER (*Megarynchus pitangua*) – Fewer in number than the previous species, but still common and widespread. A pair with the big mixed flock over the main buildings called and chased each other around, perching repeatedly in the open. That big beak is certainly distinctive!

SOCIAL FLYCATCHER (*Myiozetetes similis*) – Again, a common and widespread species, usually in small, noisy gangs -- including the handful stripping berries from the mistletoe clumps over the main building at Rancho on our first morning there.

GRAY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiozetetes granadensis*) – Great studies of multiple pairs along the Silent Mountain road; they seemed particularly fond of perching on telephone wires!

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – One of the few species that we saw every single day of the tour, with scope studies of the chattering pair we found in the garden of the Hotel Bougainvillea.

Cotingidae (Cotingas)

SNOWY COTINGA (*Carpodectes nitidus*) – An appropriately snowy-white male sat atop one of the big trees along the forest track at EARTH -- great spotting, Mike!

Pipridae (Manakins)

WHITE-RUFFED MANAKIN (*Corapipo altera*) – We heard the trilling call of several while waiting for the White-crowned Manakin to return to its lek. [*]

WHITE-COLLARED MANAKIN (*Manacus candei*) – A male with the big mixed flock near the main buildings on our first morning at Rancho perched where we could get him in the scopes -- or at least bits and pieces of him, as he kept wiggling through the leaves. We heard the snapping of several males performing on leks along Rancho's trail system -- unfortunately, all too far up or down the hill!

WHITE-CROWNED MANAKIN (*Dixiphia pipra*) – After standing in the lek area for long minutes with no luck, we finally retreated for lunch -- and found a male gobbling berries from a tree right in the pasture.

Tityridae (Tityras and Allies)

BLACK-CROWNED TITYRA (*Tityra inquisitor*) – A pair in one of the big trees near the pond at CATIE moved higher and higher before finally flying off up the hill.

MASKED TITYRA (*Tityra semifasciata*) – A couple with the big mixed flock we found above the Rancho parking lot on our first morning there allowed nice scope views. The bare red skin on their faces quickly helps to separate them from the previous species.

NORTHERN SCHIFFORNIS (*Schiffornis veraepacis*) – Super studies of this soberly-plumaged forest bird along the Rancho trail near the forest feeders. Once we found it -- always a challenge when you're looking for an olive-y understory bird that likes to sit still -- it stayed put for quite a while, allowing nice scope views. It's "hey Ricky" whistle is distinctive -- and invites immediate imitation!

CINNAMON BECARD (*Pachyramphus cinnamomeus*) – A few folks got on one in the Rancho pasture, but for most, the first good view came along the Silent Mountain road, where we found a noisy pair whistling shrilly in trees along the edge of a pasture. We saw others at EARTH.

WHITE-WINGED BECARD (*Pachyramphus polychopterus*) – One in a front yard at CATIE -- not far from that crazy ground-level wasp nest.

BLACK-AND-WHITE BECARD (*Pachyramphus albogriseus*) – I think Ernesto and Mike may have been the only ones to get one this one near the fork in the forest trail at EARTH. Unfortunately, there were just a few too many things happening at once with that mixed flock!

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

LESSER GREENLET (*Pachysylvia decurtata*) – A trio of these small vireos swirled through some of the trees along the forest track at EARTH, in the company of Cinnamon Becards and White-shouldered Tanagers.

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO (*Vireo flavifrons*) – Individuals seen on most days, including one with the big mixed flock right outside the main building at Rancho our first morning. This is another winter visitor to Costa Rica.

PHILADELPHIA VIREO (*Vireo philadelphicus*) – Two with the big mixed flock at our picnic spot on Volcan Irazu showed nicely.

WARBLING VIREO (*Vireo gilvus*) – A drab individual flitted through branches in one of the big trees near the main building at Rancho Naturalista, part of that big mixed flock.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

BROWN JAY (*Psilorhynchus morio*) – Raucous flocks of these big birds were seen nearly every day, including a noisy gang checking out the Cecropia trees over the feeders at Rancho on a couple of mornings.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

BLUE-AND-WHITE SWALLOW (*Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*) – Common throughout, particularly zooming over the houses along Silent Mountain road. This is the common swallow of the mountains and foothills in Costa Rica.

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) – Seen on scattered days, typically coursing low over some roadside field or waterway. This species has a solidly brown back, and a creamy belly with a dirty gray wash at the throat.

SOUTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) – This resident species was also seen on scattered days, with particularly nice views along the Silent Mountain road on both of our visits. Unlike the previous species, this one has a pale rump and a buffy wash to the face and throat.

GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN (*Progne chalybea*) – Abundant in the lowlands, particularly around the entrance gate at EARTH.

MANGROVE SWALLOW (*Tachycineta albilinea*) – Small numbers at various locations at EARTH, with especially good studies of a half-dozen or so coursing back and forth over a recently cut lawn near the college buildings. We saw others over the pond at CATIE.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

SCALY-BREASTED WREN (WHISTLING) (*Microcerculus marginatus luscini*) – We heard the lovely, clear, descending whistles of this forest species on many days at Rancho, including some from just across the gully while we birded the hummingbird pools. [*]

HOUSE WREN (*Troglodytes aedon*) – Seen or heard most days, with good looks at one little male singing his heart out from atop a stump on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea. The subspecies here, *intermedius*, would become Southern House Wren if the species were split.

BAND-BACKED WREN (*Campylorhynchus zonatus*) – A busy group of these social wrens poured through a big tree behind one of the house's at CATIE, investigating every branch and bromeliad.

RUFIOUS-NAPED WREN (*Campylorhynchus rufinucha*) – A chortling few on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea entertained us on our first afternoon's walk -- though they didn't hang around nearly long enough for everyone to be completely satisfied. We found a few of their messy nests tucked between the huge leaves of some exotic plant.

STRIPE-BREASTED WREN (*Cantorchilus thoracicus*) – Two along the Rancho driveway played hard to get, flitting through the very densest bits of vegetation and giving great looks to some and no looks at all to others. We certainly all heard their raucous song though!

- CABANIS'S WREN** (*Cantorchilus modestus*) – Our first bounced through some vegetation at Ujarra, but we had better looks at another in scruffy fields near Paraiso, seen as we searched for ground-sparrows.
- BAY WREN** (*Cantorchilus nigricapillus*) – A loud pair twitching at eye-level along the forest track at EARTH got our early morning explorations off to a good start.
- WHITE-BREASTED WOOD-WREN** (*Henicorhina leucosticta*) – Two bouncing under the benches at the moth cloth -- and in the surrounding brush - couldn't have gotten much closer unless they'd landed on one of us! What fabulous little birds...
- GRAY-BREASTED WOOD-WREN** (*Henicorhina leucophrys*) – One near our lunch stop at Prusia (on Volcan Irazu) was seen only by Mike; the rest of us had to be content with hearing it sing. A few folks got on one (or both) of another pair that twitched along the side of the road at Tapanti. This is the higher-elevation replacement for the previous species. [*]
- Poliotilidae (Gnatcatchers)*
- TROPICAL GNATCATCHER** (*Poliotila plumbea*) – Some of the group spotted one among a host of small birds swarming along the forest track at EARTH, but our best views came along the Silent Mountain road, where we found another one with a big mixed flock. The dark cap (male) and eyeline of this species are distinctive.
- Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)*
- SOOTY THRUSH** (*Turdus nigrescens*) – Regular in the highlands, where their bold orange beaks and legs looked particularly bright against the fog.
- MOUNTAIN THRUSH** (*Turdus plebejus*) – Scope views of one sitting, eye-level, in a moss-draped tree beside the road got our morning on Mount Irazu off to a good start.
- CLAY-COLORED THRUSH** (*Turdus grayi*) – Common and widespread throughout, seen every day in virtually every habitat. This is Costa Rica's national bird.
- Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)*
- GRAY CATBIRD** (*Dumetella carolinensis*) – We heard one mewing from the bushes edging the lake at Casa Turire. This is a winter visitor to Costa Rica. [*]
- Ptilionotidae (Silky-flycatchers)*
- BLACK-AND-YELLOW SILKY-FLYCATCHER** (*Phainoptila melanoxantha*) – A pair skulked in the dense, moss-covered trees along the road near our quetzal stakeout; we heard them calling for quite a while before we finally figured out where they were hiding! Fortunately, they sat quite still for a while, allowing nice scope studies.
- Parulidae (New World Warblers)*
- LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH** (*Parkesia motacilla*) – One along the far shore at La Mina, seen as we walked along the curve beyond where we watched the Sunbittern. We flushed it a few more times as we walked along; unfortunately, it never stayed for long. [b]
- NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH** (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – We heard one calling just as we reached the boat dock at Casa Turire, and heard another in the forest at EARTH. Like the previous species, this is a winter visitor to Costa Rica. [b*]
- GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER** (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) – Costa Rica can be a great place to see this uncommon winter visitor. We saw at least three different birds nicely -- a male with the big flock along the Rancho driveway, another one in the pasture, and a third with a mixed flock along the Manakin trail. [b]
- BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER** (*Mniotilta varia*) – Singles on scattered days, though seemingly less common than in previous years. A male investigating branches above the Rancho parking lot gave us super, eye-level views.
- FLAME-THROATED WARBLER** (*Oreothlypis gutturalis*) – One male mooched around in the trees above the bank near our Volcan Irazu picnic spot, part of that wonderful big mixed flock. He appeared and disappeared as he worked through the middle canopy, but I think we all got him in the end!
- TENNESSEE WARBLER** (*Oreothlypis peregrina*) – Among the most common of the tour's warblers, with multiples seen on most days. As several people commented, they're considerably yellower in nonbreeding plumage -- but still pretty
- MOURNING WARBLER** (*Geothlypis philadelphia*) – An adult male flashed in to land in one of the flowering verbena bushes at the back edge of Ernesto's hummingbird feeding station at Ujarras just as we were getting ready to leave. It twitched through the bush, showing in fits and starts, before flying into a hedge row of Canna Lilies and disappearing completely.
- KENTUCKY WARBLER** (*Geothlypis formosa*) – Super views of one striding around under the Rancho moth cloth, gobbling up small moths from the ground and low weeds.
- OLIVE-CROWNED YELLOWTHROAT** (*Geothlypis semiflava*) – One in the water hyacinth at Casa Turire sang challenges from his leafy perch. Though it strongly resembled the familiar Common Yellowthroat, it lacked pale edges to its inky black mask -- and its song was far more musical.
- AMERICAN REDSTART** (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – One bright male twitched through the big trees near Rancho's main building on a couple of mornings, part of a big mixed flock that moved through.
- TROPICAL PARULA** (*Setophaga pitiayumi*) – Splendid views of this colorful resident warbler on most mornings from the Rancho balcony, with others seen elsewhere on most days of the tour.
- MAGNOLIA WARBLER** (*Setophaga magnolia*) – A single bird among a mixed flock of warblers in Rancho's pasture was a surprise; this species isn't a common winter visitor to Costa Rica. Unfortunately, it played hard to get, repeatedly ducking out of view nearly as quickly as it was relocated.
- BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER** (*Setophaga fusca*) – One in the big tree near the main building at Rancho initially caused some confusion with the Yellow-throated Vireo, but I think everyone got on the right bird in the end! We found another one along the Silent Mountain road on our second visit there.
- YELLOW WARBLER** (*Setophaga petechia*) – Small numbers on most days, including a bright male in a little tree near the horse pastures at Casa Turire.
- CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER** (*Setophaga pensylvanica*) – Probably the most common warbler of the trip, seen in good numbers on most days -- and in just about every nonbreeding plumage possible!
- RUFOUS-CAPPED WARBLER** (*Basileuterus rufifrons*) – Jan got a great picture of one from the Rancho balcony during the break one afternoon.
- BLACK-CHEEKED WARBLER** (*Basileuterus melanogenys*) – One rummaged through the weeds and leaf litter along the bank near our picnic lunch spot on Volcan Irazu, giving us fabulous views.

GOLDEN-CROWNED WARBLER (*Basileuterus culicivorus*) – Our best views definitely came at Rancho's moth sheet, where a pair twitched across the top of the cloth frame, or darted up to grab things off the sheet. They were so busy finding tasty tidbits that sometimes they landed in bushes only feet from where we stood.

COSTA RICAN WARBLER (*Basileuterus melanotis*) – Several in a mixed flock foraged low in the dense vegetation just uphill from the road through Tapanti, flicking in and out of view. It was a bit challenging finding them among the multitude of Common Chlorospingus, but we got there in the end! This species was recently (2016) split from the widespread Three-striped Warbler.

BUFF-RUMPED WARBLER (*Myiothlypis fulvicauda*) – One along the stream at La Mina was a bit of a challenge; we certainly heard it chipping loudly, but dusk was falling, and it was getting so dark that actually SEEING it was proving difficult. Fortunately, we found another at Tapanti that proved far more obliging.

WILSON'S WARBLER (*Cardellina pusilla*) – Quite common on Volcan Irazu (including one with the big flock near our picnic lunch spot at Prusia) with another seen from the Rancho balcony one morning.

SLATE-THROATED REDSTART (*Myioborus miniatus*) – At least two individuals seen in mixed flocks along the road through Tapanti. The birds in Costa Rica are yellow-bellied, as opposed to the red-bellied ones found further north.

COLLARED REDSTART (*Myioborus torquatus*) – Two along the bank at our lunch stop put on quite a show, flirting their white-tipped tails, sallying out after prey, and dropping down practically at our feet to snatch small insects we were (inadvertently) flushing. The latter habit gives them their folk name, "Amigo de Hombre" -- Friend of Man.

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

WHITE-SHOULDERED TANAGER (*Tachyphonus luctuosus*) – One of these small tanagers flitted through the trees near the start of the Rancho pasture during our muddy walk there. We saw another pair in the big forest patch at EARTH, and still more with a big mixed flock at Tapanti.

WHITE-LINED TANAGER (*Tachyphonus rufus*) – A male munched on rice thrown under the fruit feeders at Rancho, showing his white wing linings as he nervously wing-flicked. Jan spotted a female from the balcony later in the week.

CRIMSON-COLLARED TANAGER (*Ramphocelus sanguinolentus*) – One perched up on a little snag in the side yard of a house along the Silent Mountain road attracted plenty of admiring attention -- and put a nice cap on the morning.

PASSERIN'S TANAGER (*Ramphocelus passerinii*) – Quite common throughout, with especially nice views of both males and females along the Rancho driveway our first morning there. The brilliant red rumps of the males against their velvet-black body plumage is striking!

BLUE-GRAY TANAGER (*Thraupis episcopus*) – Seen every day but one, typically in pairs. These were among the regular visitors to the banana feeders at Rancho.

PALM TANAGER (*Thraupis palmarum*) – Another common species, usually seen in noisy groups, and often among mixed flocks.

GOLDEN-HOODED TANAGER (*Tangara larvata*) – Plenty of fine views of this handsome tanager, including a couple with the big mixed flock over the Rancho driveway on our first morning there.

SPECKLED TANAGER (*Tangara guttata*) – One sat quietly in a fruiting tree along the Silent Mountain road, apparently digesting its breakfast -- nice spotting, Mike!

SPANGLE-CHEEKED TANAGER (*Tangara dowii*) – After a false alarm or two, we finally found a little group of these fancy tanagers working along the edge of the road at Tapanti.

PLAIN-COLORED TANAGER (*Tangara inornata*) – A trio swirled through a tree in a front yard at CATIE, moving steadily higher and then flying off. This is like a small, even plainer, version of the Palm Tanager.

BAY-HEADED TANAGER (*Tangara gyrola*) – A couple with the big mixed flock near the driveway at Rancho our first morning there "played nice", showing for everybody as they checked a big tree over the main building for fruits. Some of the group saw them again from the balcony several days later, and we found more among a mixed flock at Tapanti.

SILVER-THROATED TANAGER (*Tangara icterocephala*) – Quick looks at several along the Silent Mountain road.

SCARLET-THIGHED DACNIS (*Dacnis venusta*) – A little gang of them swarmed across the top of a tree downhill from where we stood in Rancho's pasture, allowing good scope studies -- and even some red thigh flashes for a lucky few! We saw others at CATIE and along the Silent Mountain road.

GREEN HONEYCREEPER (*Chlorophanes spiza*) – A male gobbled fruits over the Rancho parking lot on a couple of mornings, and we saw others -- both male and female -- along the Silent Mountain road.

SLATY FLOWERPIERCER (*Diglossa plumbea*) – A few of these small nectar thieves buzzed around the flowers on Volcan Irazu -- including one male that demonstrated its "flower pecking" moves.

VARIABLE SEEDEATER (*Sporophila corvina*) – Small numbers rummaged in weedy grass patches on several days, including some seen well along Silent Mountain road. This species is called "Variable" because the Pacific slope birds look so different from those of the Caribbean slope.

BANANAQUIT (*Coereba flaveola*) – Scattered individuals with especially nice views of a couple visiting the vervain flowers in the hedge below the Rancho balcony.

YELLOW-FACED GRASSQUIT (*Tiaris olivaceus*) – A male on the metal roof ridge of a house along the Silent Mountain road showed his bright yellow chin and eyebrows to perfection. We saw others outside Paraiso on our last afternoon.

BUFF-THROATED SALTATOR (*Saltator maximus*) – A few "early birds" saw one in the Cecropia tree off the Rancho balcony one morning, but our best views came along the Silent Mountain road on our second visit, when we found a pair in some nearby flowering trees -- the first of three saltator species we found in the same spot.

BLACK-HEADED SALTATOR (*Saltator atriceps*) – And this was the last of our saltator species. We spotted a pair in the same Cecropia as our Hoffman's Woodpecker. That yellow-green mantle color is unique!

GRAYISH SALTATOR (*Saltator coerulescens*) – A couple of these open-country birds flipped up into the same trees as the previous species, shortly after the former arrived. This was the plain one with the bold white eyebrow.

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

SOOTY-CAPPED CHLOROSPINGUS (*Chlorospingus pileatus*) – A little gang of them swirled through the foggy trees on Volcan Irazu, and what was probably the same group did the same thing through the same trees -- though sun-drenched this time -- later in the day.

COMMON CHLOROSPINGUS (*Chlorospingus flavopectus*) – Almost ridiculously common at Tapanti, where every flock we encountered seemed to have double fistfuls of them. This was formerly known as Common Bush-Tanager.

- ORANGE-BILLED SPARROW** (*Arremon aurantirostris*) – A regular visitor to the ground under the hedges below the Rancho balcony (where it seemed particularly fond of the thrown rice), even occasionally taking a quick dip in the birdbath there.
- RUFIOUS-COLLARED SPARROW** (*Zonotrichia capensis*) – A highland species, seen especially well on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea, where they were hopping around in the grass nearly at our boot tips! Its lovely song was a regular background sound throughout the tour.
- PREVOST'S GROUND-SPARROW (PREVOST'S)** (*Melospiza biarcuata biarcuata*) – Arg! We came so, so close to getting great looks for everybody! Unfortunately, though some of the group had fine views when it perched briefly on a rock right beside the road in Paraiso, others missed it there entirely -- and so only saw it as it bounced across a distant hillside, quickly obscured by long grass.
- YELLOW-THIGHED FINCH** (*Pselliophorus tibialis*) – One twitched through a bush at our picnic spot on Volcan Irazu, part of a big mixed flock. Those yellow thigh puffs were certainly eye-catching!

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

- SUMMER TANAGER** (*Piranga rubra*) – Every day but our first, including a few "in transition" young males around the main building at Rancho.
- RED-THROATED ANT-TANAGER** (*Habia fuscicauda*) – Superb studies of a confiding pair at Rancho's moth sheet; we could study just about every conceivable angle as they searched for tasty morsels!

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

- RED-BREASTED MEADOWLARK** (*Sturnella militaris*) – One in a roadside field, singing from the top of a crop plant, with others bouncing through an overgrown pasture at Casa Turire. This species was, until quite recently, known as Red-breasted Blackbird.
- MELODIOUS BLACKBIRD** (*Dives dives*) – Two birds duetted from the top of a bush just over the wall at the Hotel Bougainvillea on the first morning of the tour, seen as we headed in to breakfast. We saw others atop a palm tree as we walked towards the lake at Casa Turire, conveniently close to some bigger Giant Cowbirds.
- GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE** (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) – Common and widespread, with raucous numbers of them seen daily.
- BRONZED COWBIRD** (*Molothrus aeneus*) – Our best views came just outside the little town of La Suisa, where we found scores perched along some roadside telephone wires. The thick-necked "maned" look of the males is distinctive.
- GIANT COWBIRD** (*Molothrus oryzivorus*) – Our best views came at Casa Turire, where a handful trundled around in the horse pastures. We saw others flying past while we birded in Ujarra.
- BLACK-COWLED ORIOLE** (*Icterus prothemelas*) – Small numbers on scattered days, including a few along the road at EARTH, and a calling bird in a garden on the Silent Mountain road.
- BALTIMORE ORIOLE** (*Icterus galbula*) – A common winter visitor to Costa Rica, seen daily -- including the handful of regular visitors to Rancho's fruit feeders.
- CHESTNUT-HEADED OROPENDOLA** (*Psarocolius wagleri*) – Great comparative views of this species with its bigger cousin on the feeders at Rancho. Though less numerous than the Montezuma Oropendolas, they were still very common, seen every day but our first afternoon.
- MONTEZUMA OROPENDOLA** (*Psarocolius montezuma*) – Abundant throughout (except that first afternoon), including dozens swarming over the feeders at Rancho, and a few doing their amusing "somersault" courtship displays (sadly, with no apparent interest from their targets) in the trees nearby.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

- YELLOW-THROATED EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia hirundinacea*)
- OLIVE-BACKED EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia gouldi*) – The most widespread of the tour's euphonias, particularly on our visits to the lowlands. A pair munching berries in a garden at CATIE showed especially well.
- WHITE-VENTED EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia minuta*) – A pair in the dead twigs at the top of a tree near the main building at Rancho allowed us to see the distinctively white (rather than yellow) vent of this appropriately-named species.
- TAWNY-CAPPED EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia annae*) – At least one male along the road at Tapanti showed the distinctive rusty cap for which the species is named.
- LESSER GOLDFINCH** (*Spinus psaltria*) – One called from a treetop near the hummingbird feeders at Ujarra, and we saw others along the road we walked in Paraiso, while looking for ground-sparrows.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

- HOUSE SPARROW** (*Passer domesticus*) – Gratifyingly rare (given that they're an introduction with a predilection for expansion), though we did find an attended nest at EARTH. Kathy spotted some along the road on our drive back to San Jose too. **[IN]**

MAMMALS

- COMMON OPOSSUM** (*Didelphis marsupialis*) – One high in a tree on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea froze in the beam of our spotlight, presumably hoping we'd overlook it.
- LONG-NOSED BAT** (*Rhynchonycteris naso*) – A little group hung, snoozing, on the ceiling of the chapel where we had our lunch at EARTH.
- GREATER WHITE-LINED BAT** (*Saccopteryx bilineata*) – A few of these larger bats roosted among the previous species on the ceiling of EARTH's chapel.
- MANTLED HOWLER MONKEY** (*Alouatta palliata*) – A small family group along the forest track at EARTH -- and some musical howling from the forest -- were our only encounters with this species.
- CENTRAL AMERICAN SPIDER MONKEY** (*Ateles geoffroyi*) – A few folks got on one or more of these long-limbed monkeys as they swung through the trees along the forest track at EARTH, but most just saw shaking leaves and heard the crash of falling fruits and branches as they passed out of view.
- HOFFMANN'S TWO-TOED SLOTH** (*Choloepus hoffmanni*) – Finding one hanging from telephone wires right beside the road -- for all appearances sound asleep despite the cacophony of the nearby utility company employees cutting back tree branches -- was a real surprise on our drive up Volcan Irazu. When we came down hours later, it was gone.
- BRAZILIAN RABBIT** (*Sylvilagus brasiliensis*) – One shot across the road in front of our bus as we drove towards La Mina.
- VARIEGATED SQUIRREL** (*Sciurus variegatoides*) – Several on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea, with others around the houses at CATIE. This was the larger of the two squirrels we found: the grayish one with the rusty belly.

- RED-TAILED SQUIRREL** (*Sciurus granatensis*) – A couple of these little thieves made daring raids of the feeding station at Rancho, occasionally hauling off entire bananas -- some of which were nearly as long as they were!
- DUSKY RICE RAT** (*Melanomys caliginosus*) – One scuttled along the edge of the lawn at Rancho (visible from the balcony), occasionally darting out to snatch some of the cooked rice sprinkled for the birds.
- WHITE-NOSED COATI** (*Nasua narica*) – One snuffled around under the Rancho feeders most days, and we saw others along the edge of the road at Tapanti.
- NEOTROPICAL OTTER** (*Lontra longicaudis*) – A quicksilver flash of one slithering through the over the rocks and through the rapids of La Mina, little more than a sleek head or a shadow under the water for the few that happened to be looking in the right direction -- nice spotting Mercedes!

Herps

- SLENDER ANOLE** (*Anolis limifrons*) – These slender little brown lizards are probably the most common of the anoles in lowland Costa Rica, and we saw plenty of them at EARTH, and along the trails we walked at Rancho.
- GREEN IGUANA** (*Iguana iguana*) – A big green male slumbered in a tree near the student buildings at EARTH, blending in marvelously with the leaves around it.
- CENTRAL AMERICAN WHIPTAIL** (*Ameiva festiva*) – This little speedster was particularly common in the leaf litter at EARTH, where we saw a number of blue-tailed youngsters.
- FER-DE-LANCE** (*Bothrops asper*) – A big one stretched across the trail as we came back from Rancho's forest feeders one morning was a bit hair-raising, particularly as it didn't seem in any hurry to move very far down the hill. It lurked along the edges for long minutes, hunting through the leaf litter -- and keeping us all waiting well up the path!
- SPECTACLED CAIMAN** (*Caiman crocodilus*) – A little one floated just offshore in the big pond at CATIE, little more than a pair of eyeballs and the barest hint of a snout.
- COMMON SNAPPING TURTLE** (*Chelydra serpentina*) – We saw the wickedly hooked snout of one of these big turtles poking from the pond at CATIE. This is the same species as that found across much of North America.
- YELLOW-SPOTTED GLASS FROG** (*Cochranella albomaculata*) – We heard the high metallic chip of this species from the darkening forest at La Mina as night fell. [*]
- GRANULAR GLASS FROG** (*Cochranella granulosa*) – And the trilling "police whistle" calls of this tiny frog provided a counterpoint to the previous species at La Mina as dusk fell. [*]

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 265 bird taxa and 12 mammal taxa