



*Field Guides Tour Report*

**Holiday Costa Rica: Rancho Naturalista I 2018**

Dec 21, 2018 to Dec 29, 2018

Cory Gregory & Harry Barnard

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



*This Green-breasted Mango was one of 20+ species of hummingbirds we enjoyed on this Christmas tour to Costa Rica! Photo by guide Cory Gregory.*

I'm not sure there could have been a better way of escaping the winter from up north than by enjoying Christmas abroad with our friends at Rancho Naturalista! The warm hospitality, the amazing food and service, a relaxed pace, and fantastic birds made this tour a lot of fun! Not only did we luck out with weather (mostly), but you all made it a great bunch of birders to spend time with, and I know Harry and I really enjoyed sharing some of what Costa Rica has to offer with you.

We started out at the Hotel Bougainvillea where we quickly found some key species like Rufous-naped Wren, Hoffman's Woodpecker, Steely-vented Hummingbird, and Grayish Saltator. Once loaded up, we made our way up Volcan Irazu. Although the weather made birding a bit challenging, we came away with an impressive list of specialties like Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher, Volcano Hummingbird, Talamanca Hummingbird, Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush, Sooty Thrush, Flame-throated Warbler, Black-cheeked Warbler, Flame-colored Tanager, and more! Once down the mountain, we stopped briefly at Birris Reservoir where we added a few ducks and a few shorebirds, including the sporty Southern Lapwing.

The following day we explored our new home for the week, the famed Rancho Naturalista. The balcony birding was hopping with Lesson's Motmots, oropendolas, the bright Scarlet-rumped Tanagers, and Black-cheeked Woodpeckers, just to name a few. Birding down the driveway was also very productive, and we saw about 100 species on our slow meander down to Rancho Bajo! Of course, the stars of the show there were the 10+ species of hummingbirds including the tiny but stunning Snowcap, the hummingbird that helped put Rancho Naturalista on the map. An afternoon foray down to Casa Turire put us around a wealth of new trip birds like Least Grebe, Snail Kite, a variety of herons, Olive-crowned Yellowthroat, Keel-billed Toucan, and even an out-of-range Laughing Gull.

The next morning was a magical one! Harry led us to the very active La Marta area where we connected with some mega tropical flocks which kept us all delighted and busy. A surprise showing by a couple of Blue-and-gold Tanagers really got things started, and then we continued with tanagers like Black-and-yellow, Tawny-crested, White-shouldered, Emerald, Palm, Golden-hooded, Silver-throated, and Scarlet-rumped! Meanwhile, a Gray-headed Kite soared overhead, a sloth took a snooze in a treetop, and a Blue-black Grosbeak popped up for a few seconds. A stop at the Golden Bean coffee processing plant scored us some coffee, gifts, and birds like Gray-breasted Martin and Black Phoebe. That evening, the wonderful staff at Rancho put out an amazing Christmas Eve feast and we enjoyed it to the sounds of some festive live music!

An early start the next morning took us down in elevation to the lowlands around E.A.R.T.H., an agricultural school where students from around the world come to study and do fieldwork. The birding was top-notch, and we quickly found highlights like Cinnamon and Chestnut-colored woodpeckers, Pied and White-necked puffbirds, Plain-colored Tanagers, some cute Yellow Tyrannulets, Pale-vented Pigeons, a Long-tailed Tyrant, Broad-billed Motmots, and many many more.

We stayed closer to home the following day and started by visiting the moth cloth right at dawn. We were able to study the fine details of new species like Plain-brown, Cocoa, and Spotted woodcreepers, Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner, White-breasted Wood-Wren, Red-throated Ant-Tanager, and the special Tawny-chested Flycatcher. We did some trail exploring that morning at Rancho and our patience paid off with sightings of Dull-mantled Antbirds, Plain Xenops, 10-15 species of tanagers, gnatwrens, and 3 species of euphonias. That afternoon we wandered down the hill to CATIE, another agricultural school, where we added Boat-billed Heron and Purple Gallinule by the pond, an inquisitive hoard of aracarís inspecting a nest hole, and even some Gray-crowned Yellowthroats and Barred Antshrikes near the fenced, grassy area. A Great Potoo was on a day-roost, which also made for a top-notch highlight!

The next morning had us visiting the moth cloth once more where we continued studying foliage-gleaners, Plain Antvireos, and we even added a nice Kentucky Warbler as well. Our destination for the morning was Silent Mountain but before we even got there, we had a bunch of new species in a scrubby area Harry knew of. Included were the fancy (but sneaky) Slaty Spinetails, a White-throated Flycatcher, and even some dapper Thick-billed Seed-Finches. Farther up the road, we enjoyed the quintessential Sunbittern as it waltzed up the stream for a bit! Silent Mountain added a few Black-headed Saltators, another Sunbittern, Cabanis's Wren, and a treetop Olive-sided Flycatcher. We spent the afternoon exploring some trails at Rancho, visited the Hummingbird Pools where the Snowcaps and woodnymphs bathe, and we even did some night-birding where we scored a point-blank Mottled Owl!

Our final day of birding at Tapanti was some of the best birding of the trip! Before we even got there, we had a fun experience with a Tropical Screech-Owl in a city park, and a Spotted Barbtail, White-eared Ground-Sparrow, and White-naped Brushfinch along the entrance road leading up to Tapanti. Once in the park, we slowly birded our way up in elevation. We had an eye-opening encounter with some Ornate Hawk-Eagles, Gray-breasted Wood-Wrens foraged along the side of the road, Black-faced Solitaires and flycatchers were grabbing berries, and the color spectrum was well represented with Spangle-cheeked Tanagers, Golden-browed Chlorophonias, and Golden-bellied Flycatchers! After our lunch area was visited by an ambitious coati, we started our way downhill but kept on adding new things like Purple-throated Mountain-gem, more Black-bellied Hummingbirds, Dark Pewee, and a Lineated Foliage-gleaner.

A lot of people helped to make this tour a success. A huge thank you to our local guide Harry for his expertise, sharp ears, and unfaltering willingness to help get everyone on the birds. A big thanks also to William for being full of smiles, being a great driver, and having the van in tip-top shape every day! Thanks to Caroline who managed this tour from Austin and had everything laid out perfectly! And lastly, thanks to all of you for coming along and sharing the holidays with us from Field Guides. It was special trip and one that I hope you'll remember for years to come.

Until we meet again, good birding!

Cory Gregory

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#### KEYS FOR THIS LIST

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

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## BIRDS

### Tinamidae (Tinamous)

**GREAT TINAMOU** (*Tinamus major*) – A wonderful sound from a shy bird; these were heard several times at Rancho. [\*]

**LITTLE TINAMOU** (*Crypturellus soui*) – With a song that's higher pitched than the previous species, this was heard only once during our time at EARTH. [\*]

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

**BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK** (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – A few of these attractive ducks were spotted sitting in a pasture as we drove by. Turns out, those would remain our only ones.

**BLUE-WINGED TEAL** (*Spatula discors*) – A few of these wintering dabblers were spotted on the first day at Birris Reservoir and then the following day as well at Laguna Angostura.

**LESSER SCAUP** (*Aythya affinis*) – Similar to the previous species, these ducks, which are divers, were seen at Birris Reservoir and Laguna Angostura.

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

**GRAY-HEADED CHACHALACA** (*Ortalis cinereiceps*) – Prehistoric-looking, these boisterous birds came to the feeders at Rancho on a daily basis.

**CRESTED GUAN** (*Penelope purpurascens*) – Although heard more often than seen, this large species was eventually spotted by some on a hike with Harry near Rancho one afternoon.

### Podicipedidae (Grebes)

**LEAST GREBE** (*Tachybaptus dominicus*) – A tiny denizen of still water, these cute grebes were seen on Laguna Angostura on our second day of the tour.

### Ciconiidae (Storks)

**WOOD STORK** (*Mycteria americana*) – A big, black-and-white species; one of these was seen soaring high above EARTH.

### Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

**NEOTROPIC CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – This is the only cormorant species we'd expect to see and we had brief sightings at Angostura Reservoir and various river crossings.

### Anhingidae (Anhingas)

**ANHINGA** (*Anhinga anhinga*) – Locations with these "snakebirds" included Angostura Reservoir and CATIE.

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

**FASCIATED TIGER-HERON** (*Tigrisoma fasciatum*) – This sneaky tiger-heron can be hard to find sometimes, standing quietly on the rocks of rivers and streams. We lucked into a couple, including one in the river near Rancho and another at EARTH.

**BARE-THROATED TIGER-HERON** (*Tigrisoma mexicanum*) – Although not as tied to rushing streams as the previous species, one of these was spotted near the river during our birding at EARTH. Another was spotted as it strolled through the banana plantation.

**GREAT BLUE HERON** (*Ardea herodias*) – Our only sighting was of one near Laguna Angostura on our second day.

**GREAT EGRET** (*Ardea alba*) – This common, white heron was seen most days in a variety of wet habitats.

**SNOWY EGRET** (*Egretta thula*) – Another all-white heron, this slender species was seen on about half of our days.

**LITTLE BLUE HERON** (*Egretta caerulea*) – Not uncommon on this trip, these distinctive herons were seen several times.

**CATTLE EGRET** (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Our most commonly-seen heron on this trip, these were abundant in pastures alongside cattle and were tallied every day.

**GREEN HERON** (*Butorides virescens*) – A small and quiet heron, these are easy to overlook. However, we spotted them a couple of times including at the La Suiza bridge and again at EARTH.

**BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – Seen distantly across the lake at Laguna Angostura on our second day.

**YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** (*Nyctanassa violacea*) – Like the previous species, a few of these were sitting quietly in the vegetation across Laguna Angostura.

**BOAT-BILLED HERON** (*Cochlearius cochlearius*) – This big-eyed, strange heron was seen across the pond at CATIE during our afternoon visit there.

#### Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

**GREEN IBIS** (*Mesembrinibis cayennensis*) – We had a couple of sightings of this bizarre species sprinkled throughout our trip including one foraging on the lawn at Casa Turire!

#### Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

**BLACK VULTURE** (*Coragyps atratus*) – Common and widespread, tallied daily.

**TURKEY VULTURE** (*Cathartes aura*) – This familiar vulture was seen every day of tour.

**KING VULTURE** (*Sarcorampus papa*) – Wow, it was great seeing this huge and regal species! We had multiple sightings including two birds together high above EARTH and then another individual overhead as we started up Tapanti NP.

#### Pandionidae (Osprey)

**OSPREY** (*Pandion haliaetus*) – Tallied on about half of our days, these fish-eating raptors weren't uncommon.

#### Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

**WHITE-TAILED KITE** (*Elanus leucurus*) – A beautiful and graceful raptor! We watched as one hovered in place on our first day, and then again on our final day.

**HOOK-BILLED KITE** (*Chondrohierax uncinatus*) – Two of these paddle-winged raptors circled overhead at EARTH. A few folks saw this species a few more times just around Rancho as well.

**GRAY-HEADED KITE** (*Leptodon cayanensis*) – We had beautiful, extended looks at one soaring overhead in the valley during our morning at La Marta on Christmas Eve.

**ORNATE HAWK-EAGLE** (*Spizaetus ornatus*) – Voted the bird of the trip! And for good reason, we had a jaw-dropping experience with several of these regal raptors on our final day at Tapanti. It started out when one was spotted just overhead, circling lazily. Eventually it was joined by a second adult! Later in the day, we tracked down the calls of a begging juvenile that we were able to find in the scope. The pale head and feather tuft really made for a cool-looking bird!

**SNAIL KITE** (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*) – A couple of these snail-eating specialists were spotted at Laguna Angostura/Casa Turire on our second day.

**DOUBLE-TOOTHED KITE** (*Harpagus bidentatus*) – Yikes, it was WAY out there but we did scope one of these raptors on Christmas day at EARTH.

**COOPER'S HAWK** (*Accipiter cooperii*) – One of these accipiters bombed through during some roadside birding on the way to Silent Mountain.

**BICOLORED HAWK** (*Accipiter bicolor*) – It was a real treat having this species around at Rancho Naturalista during our stay. Although it was heard more often than seen, we were able to scope one in a treetop on our first morning from the balcony! A few folks got to see it later on in the week as well.

**ROADSIDE HAWK** (*Rupornis magnirostris*) – Our most-common raptor, these were spotted every day of the trip. As it happened, most of our sightings were indeed along roadsides, for whatever it's worth.

**GRAY HAWK** (*Buteo plagiatus*) – Although not common, these raptors did show up a couple of times for our group at Rancho and again at EARTH.

**BROAD-WINGED HAWK** (*Buteo platypterus*) – This wintering Buteo species was fairly common and we tallied them almost every day.

**SHORT-TAILED HAWK** (*Buteo brachyurus*) – Soaring high above the Golden Bean coffee processing plant, this sighting turned out to be our only one.

**RED-TAILED HAWK (COSTARICENSIS)** (*Buteo jamaicensis costaricensis*) – Although this is a familiar raptor for many birders in North America, the resident subspecies we saw in Costa Rica is a bit different. We spotted one in the highlands at Volcan Irazu on our first day.

#### Eurypygidae (Sunbittern)

**SUNBITTERN** (*Eurypyga helias*) – What a fantastic and unique species! We were fortunate to cross paths with several including one from the La Suiza bridge at dusk, another beautiful one in a stream near Rancho, and yet another in the stream at Silent Mountain!

#### Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

**WHITE-THROATED CRAKE** (*Laterallus albigularis*) – The loud churring sound was fairly common in the wet areas around Laguna Angostura, EARTH, and other spots. However, this tiny rail never came out into the open. [\*]

**RUSSET-NAPED WOOD-RAIL** (*Aramides albiventris*) – One of these handsome tropical wood-rails greeted us as we drove up the driveway to Rancho on Day 1! What a welcoming committee!

**PURPLE GALLINULE** (*Porphyrio martinica*) – Our best looks were had at CATIE where we studied the different ages as they strolled through the thick, waterside vegetation.

#### Aramidae (Limpkin)

**LIMPKIN** (*Aramus guarauna*) – At Laguna Angostura, we heard the distant wailing of this prehistoric swamp-dweller. [\*]

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings).

**SOUTHERN LAPWING** (*Vanellus chilensis*) – What a handsome shorebird! We had awesome looks at these in the horse pasture at Casa Turire and a few others the day before at Birris Reservoir.

**KILLDEER** (*Charadrius vociferus*) – Our only sighting of the trip came on Day 1 at Birris Reservoir where a few were poking around on the muddy edge.

Jacaniidae (Jacanas).

**NORTHERN JACANA** (*Jacana spinosa*) – A common but distinctive species that we got to study at length at several spots. Our best looks came from CATIE where we admired the super long toes as they waltzed on the floating veg right in front of us.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies).

**SPOTTED SANDPIPER** (*Actitis macularius*) – A denizen of rocky streams and muddy shore edges, this shorebird was seen at Birris Reservoir on our first day and then in various streams closer to Rancho.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers).

**LAUGHING GULL** (*Leucophaeus atricilla*) – This was a good sighting for the middle of the country! One was spending time swimming around at Laguna Angostura.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves).

**ROCK PIGEON** (*Columba livia*) – It wasn't until our final day, driving back into San Jose, that we tallied this introduced species! [I]

**PALE-VENTED PIGEON** (*Patagioenas cayennensis*) – These were abundant on the day we drove down to the lowlands around EARTH. In fact, one tree we were looking at had a couple dozen perched in it!

**RED-BILLED PIGEON** (*Patagioenas flavirostris*) – A common and widespread species for us, these big and dark pigeons were tallied every day.

**BAND-TAILED PIGEON** (*Patagioenas fasciata*) – We had the good fortune of finding a few of these on Volcan Irazu on our first day. Later that morning we found a couple of trees that were hosting half a dozen or so.

**RUDDY PIGEON** (*Patagioenas subvinacea*) – Heard only by some folks at Rancho a couple of times. This sister-species of the Short-billed Pigeon tends to be found at higher elevations. [\*]

**SHORT-BILLED PIGEON** (*Patagioenas nigrirostris*) – A common sound during our time at Rancho and surrounding habitats. We scoped one at EARTH which made for a nice Christmas treat.

**RUDDY GROUND-DOVE** (*Columbina talpacoti*) – A handsome little dove, these reddish guys were seen nicely along the road at EARTH and then again at CATIE.

**BLUE GROUND-DOVE** (*Claravis pretiosa*) – An excellent find by Harry on a side trail at EARTH on Christmas day. We all enjoyed extended looks through the scopes!

**WHITE-TIPPED DOVE** (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – Although common, this *Leptotila* dove usually sticks to the shadows. We did have a nice look at one out in the open at the Hotel Bougainvillea on our first morning though.

**GRAY-CHESTED DOVE** (*Leptotila cassinii*) – Heard only at EARTH and again near Rancho. [\*]

**WHITE-WINGED DOVE** (*Zenaida asiatica*) – Common and widespread throughout much of our trip, especially during our time near San Jose and the Central Valley.

**MOURNING DOVE** (*Zenaida macroura*) – Believe it or not, this is not a common bird in Costa Rica! We glimpsed a few as we drove down Volcan Irazu on our first day.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos).

**GROOVE-BILLED ANI** (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*) – A long-tailed denizen of overgrown, weedy areas. Nice looks were had at Casa Turire and a few other spots.

**SQUIRREL CUCKOO** (*Piaya cayana*) – Big and flashy, this fun species was spotted a few times. In fact, they weren't uncommon on the grounds of Rancho and some folks saw them from the balcony.

Strigidae (Owls).

**TROPICAL SCREECH-OWL** (*Megascops choliba*) – A worker in a park in Paraiso whistled us over and pointed up to a lump in a tree... it was a point-blank Tropical Screech-Owl! Wow! What a nice highlight from our final day of birding.

**CENTRAL AMERICAN PYGMY-OWL** (*Glaucidium griseiceps*) – Argh, this bird was whistling up a storm at EARTH before it went quiet. [\*]

**MOTTLED OWL** (*Ciccaba virgata*) – Rancho Naturalista is a great place to hear and see this beautiful, widespread owl. Some of us had one land on the balcony after dark, others encountered them during an owling adventure one night after dinner.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies).

**COMMON PAURAQUE** (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) – The pauraques near Rancho proved to be shy when we needed them. Still, some folks got to enjoy listening to them predawn. [\*]

Nyctibiidae (Potoos).

**GREAT POTOO** (*Nyctibius grandis*) – Wow, this was a surprise and a major highlight of the trip. Mercedes, a local guide at Rancho, joined us for a visit to CATIE where, it turns out, she had connections. We were all in for a treat when we pulled up and saw a potoo sitting motionless in a tree! Scopes went up, pictures taken, but it wasn't until a few hours later that we realized it was actually a Great instead of a Common!

Apodidae (Swifts).

**WHITE-COLLARED SWIFT** (*Streptoprocne zonaris*) – This huge swift species was fairly numerous high above the La Marta region on our 3rd day. Turns out, those would be our only ones of the trip.

**VAUX'S SWIFT** (*Chaetura vauxi*) – Much smaller than the previous species, a few of these were overhead at La Marta as well. We later saw another at the base of the hill near Rancho.

**GRAY-RUMPED SWIFT** (*Chaetura cinereiventris*) – After we descended into the lowlands around EARTH, we spotted a few of these cruising overhead. Note that these belong to the same genus as the previous species.



**LESSER SWALLOW-TAILED SWIFT** (*Panyptila cayennensis*) – A few lucky folks got to see this speedy, slender species right as we were leaving EARTH. Turns out, that was our only sighting.

*Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)*

**WHITE-NECKED JACOBIN** (*Florisuga mellivora*) – A bold and beautiful hummingbird that was abundant at the Rancho Naturalista feeders.

**BAND-TAILED BARBTHROAT** (*Threnetes ruckeri*) – One or two of these bombed through here and there but I think most people only heard them. [\*]

**GREEN HERMIT** (*Phaethornis guy*) – A big, albeit somewhat shy, hummingbird, these would come into feeders at Rancho once in a while. In the end, we had sightings (or heard onllys) of this long-billed species most days of the trip.

**LONG-BILLED HERMIT** (*Phaethornis longirostris*) – Glimpses here and there were what most people had at EARTH where this huge hummer would dart through, visit some flowers, and then dart off again.

**STRIPE-THROATED HERMIT** (*Phaethornis striigularis*) – It was a good trip for seeing this small, buffy hummingbird. Sometimes they were seen visiting the flowers in front of Rancho, other times down below at Rancho Bajo, etc.

**LESSER VIOLETEAR** (*Colibri cyanotus*) – At one of the first stops on our first day, as we ascended up the misty slopes of Volcan Irazu, a few of these hummers were seen visiting flowers. These used to be lumped and called Green Violetear.

**PURPLE-CROWNED FAIRY** (*Heliomythx barroti*) – A beautiful hummingbird that tends to be wary of feeders. We saw them visiting flowers at EARTH and then again several times at the hummingbird pools at Rancho.

**GREEN-BREADED MANGO** (*Anthracothorax prevostii*) – A common species at the Rancho Naturalista feeders. The females were very distinctive with the broad stripe down the breast.

**GREEN THORNTAIL** (*Discosura conversii*) – A dainty but striking hummingbird, this distinctive species was seen feeding at Rancho Bajo and then again right outside of Rancho Naturalista during one of the afternoon breaks. We admired the interesting white stripe across the rump at certain angles.

**GREEN-CROWNED BRILLIANT** (*Heliodoxa jacula*) – An uncommon visitor to the Rancho feeders during our visit, one would occasionally visit a corner feeder on the back balcony.

**TALAMANCA HUMMINGBIRD** (*Eugenes spectabilis*) – Recently, Magnificent Hummingbird was split into two species and one of the resulting species is this one, a big hummer that's limited to Costa Rica and Panama. We encountered these on our first day high up on the slopes of Irazu.

**FIERY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Panterpe insignis*) – A high-elevation specialist of Costa Rica and Panama, these were seen a few times on our first day on the slopes of Irazu. In fact, we even found a nest that was being attended intermittently.

**WHITE-BELLIED MOUNTAIN-GEM** (*Lampornis hemileucus*) – Once we reached the higher elevation forest in Tapanti on our final day, we saw a few of these hummers along the main road.

**PURPLE-THROATED MOUNTAIN-GEM** (*Lampornis calolaemus*) – This is another species of hummingbird we added the final day high in the forests of Tapanti.

**VOLCANO HUMMINGBIRD** (*Selasphorus flammula*) – A small but attractive Selasphorus species, a few of these were seen as we drove up the slopes of Irazu on our first day.

**VIOLET-HEADED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Klais guimeti*) – It was a brief appearance but one of these handsome little hummingbirds visited the flowers out front of Rancho one afternoon as we were getting ready to head out. The little white spot behind the eye was obvious to those of us who got bins on it.

**VIOLET SABREWING** (*Campylopterus hemileucurus*) – Big, flashy, and fast! This beautiful species is the largest species of hummingbird in Central America. These would come into the back feeders at Rancho every day but you had to be quick to see them.

**BRONZE-TAILED PLUMELETEER** (*Chalybura urochrysia*) – This uncommon hummingbird visited a corner feeder at Rancho briefly one morning. We later had a bit better look as one fed in a treetop along the road to La Marta.

**CROWNED WOODNYMPH** (*Thalurania colombica*) – A wonderful hummingbird that was thankfully abundant at the Rancho feeders! The males at the Hummingbird Pools just glowed!

**BLACK-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Eupherusa nigriventris*) – Our final day in Tapanti yielded several showings of this species and, by chance, most of our sightings were of females.

**SNOWCAP** (*Microchera albocoronata*) – A definite star of the show, this tiny and unique hummingbird was enjoyed by all on several occasions. Not only did they show well at the hummingbird pools, but they also fed on the flowers right on the Rancho grounds! One of the days, we had a special treat when we watched them at Rancho Bajo as they fed alongside Green Thorntails. This is an emblematic hummingbird and one that helped make Rancho Naturalista so well-known!

**BLUE-CHESTED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Amazilia amabilis*) – There was a very brief glimpse of one during our birding at EARTH but it didn't stick around for long.

**STEELY-VENTED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Amazilia saucerottei*) – This was a nice find on our first morning as we stepped outside of the Hotel Bougainvillea.

**RUFOUS-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Amazilia tzacatl*) – This abundant species may have been the only hummingbird that we tallied on every single day!

*Trogonidae (Trogons)*

**GARTERED TROGON** (*Trogon caligatus*) – What a spectacular trogon! We scoped one of these when it flew in and perched high above us just down below Rancho along the main road.

**COLLARED TROGON** (*Trogon collaris*) – Only a couple of folks saw this one afternoon on the Rancho grounds.

*Momotidae (Motmots)*

**LESSON'S MOTMOT** (*Momotus lessonii lessonii*) – Seen nearly every day, whether it was in the back garden at the Hotel Bougainvillea, or coming to the feeders at Rancho. Formerly included in the "Blue-crowned Motmot" complex.

**RUFOUS MOTMOT** (*Baryphthengus martii*) – Although it was mostly heard only, a few folks saw one on the Rancho grounds one afternoon.

**BROAD-BILLED MOTMOT** (*Electron platyrhynchum*) – A beautiful pair came in right overhead during our afternoon birding at EARTH in the lowlands.

*Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)*

**RINGED KINGFISHER** (*Megaceryle torquata*) – This big kingfisher did a distant fly-by at Casa Turire.

**AMAZON KINGFISHER** (*Chloroceryle amazona*) – A medium-sized, green kingfisher. These were spotted a few times at places like Casa Turire, EARTH, and a few times along our drives.

**GREEN KINGFISHER** (*Chloroceryle americana*) – A tiny kingfisher, this sometimes-secretive species was spotted a few times in La Suiza just below Rancho.

*Bucconidae (Puffbirds)*

**WHITE-NECKED PUFFBIRD** (*Notharchus hyperrhynchus*) – A fantastic puffbird that is often difficult to find! Thankfully, we had great luck with one at EARTH and we all enjoyed long scope looks at it perched high up in the trees above us.

**PIED PUFFBIRD** (*Notharchus tectus*) – This is another interesting species of puffbird we found at EARTH and enjoyed at length. This puffbird is considerably smaller than the previous species but they both are black-and-white in plumage.

*Galbulidae (Jacamars)*

**RUFOUS-TAILED JACAMAR** (*Galbula ruficauda*) – It took a little effort but we were rewarded with outstanding looks on the slopes above Rancho. Jacamars have long bills to safely deal with large, flying insect prey like cicadas.

*Semnornithidae (Toucan-Barbets)*

**PRONG-BILLED BARBET** (*Semnornis frantzii*) – A couple pairs crossed paths with us as we birded in Tapanti on our final day.

*Ramphastidae (Toucans)*

**COLLARED ARACARI** (*Pteroglossus torquatus*) – A handsome little toucan, these were tallied most days and we had especially nice looks at CATIE when we found some inspecting a possible nest hole.

**YELLOW-THROATED TOUCAN (CHESTNUT-MANDIBLED)** (*Ramphastos ambiguus swainsonii*) – This is the big toucan we found at EARTH during our birding in the lowlands.

**KEEL-BILLED TOUCAN** (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*) – Lucky for us, this toucan wasn't uncommon during our time at Rancho and we had several nice looks including some right from the balcony!

*Picidae (Woodpeckers)*

**ACORN WOODPECKER** (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) – This woodpecker was only spotted on our first day as we birded the higher elevations of Irazu.

**BLACK-CHEEKED WOODPECKER** (*Melanerpes pucherani*) – Quite common at Rancho including at the feeders every day.

**HOFFMANN'S WOODPECKER** (*Melanerpes hoffmannii*) – We enjoyed views of this woodpecker right on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea.

**SMOKY-BROWN WOODPECKER** (*Picoides fumigatus*) – Some folks had a brief encounter with this species on the grounds at Rancho on an afternoon hike with Harry.

**HAIRY WOODPECKER (COSTA RICAN)** (*Picoides villosus extimus*) – This familiar species of woodpecker was seen on our first day in the higher elevations around Irazu. Note the subspecies; these are endemic to the highlands of Costa Rica and Panama.

**RUFOUS-WINGED WOODPECKER** (*Piculus simplex*) – It took a bit of effort but we eventually saw this species at EARTH during our lowland birding.

**GOLDEN-OLIVE WOODPECKER** (*Colaptes rubiginosus*) – You never really know when/where these will show up! We tried and tried but to no avail... and then when we weren't expecting them, they just popped right in!

**CINNAMON WOODPECKER** (*Celeus loricatus*) – This big and handsome species was part of a flurry of woodpecker activity at EARTH that included the following species.

**CHESTNUT-COLORED WOODPECKER** (*Celeus castaneus*) – This uncommon woodpecker showed up near one of the bridges at EARTH that we were walking across. A species that is easy to miss, it's always a treat to find these.

**PALE-BILLED WOODPECKER** (*Campephilus guatemalensis*) – Some folks heard this species distantly during our time at Rancho towards the end of the trip. [\*]

*Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)*

**BARRED FOREST-FALCON** (*Micrastur ruficollis*) – Notoriously hard to see, this species was heard calling during the pre-dawn hours at Rancho on many mornings. [\*]

**CRESTED CARACARA** (*Caracara cheriway*) – Sightings of these came from EARTH and CATIE.

**YELLOW-HEADED CARACARA** (*Milvago chimachima*) – One of these distinctive raptors flew over during some roadside birding in Platanillo near the cemetery (en route to Silent Mountain).

**LAUGHING FALCON** (*Herpetotheres cachinnans*) – Heard only during our time at Rancho. [\*]

**BAT FALCON** (*Falco ruficularis*) – Well spotted by Harry during one of our drives! This fantastic falcon ranges from Mexico south into South America. And yes, they eat bats (along with birds and other aerial prey).

*Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots)*

**ORANGE-CHINNED PARAKEET** (*Brotogeris jugularis*) – We had a few looks at these small parakeets during our time at EARTH but that was the only day. The orange chin is a difficult fieldmark to see from most angles.

**BROWN-HOODED PARROT** (*Pyrilia haematotis*) – Although heard more often than seen, we did get a few glimpses of some flying over on our first day.

**WHITE-CROWNED PARROT** (*Pionus senilis*) – Among the parrots, these were the most-commonly seen on our tour. In the Pionus genus, these are fairly small parrots, quite different from the big Amazons.

**RED-LORED PARROT** (*Amazona autumnalis*) – Our only sighting came from the lowlands at EARTH where they were mostly fly-bys.

**OLIVE-THROATED PARAKEET (AZTEC)** (*Eupsittula nana astec*) – This is another parakeet that we only encountered on the day we spent at EARTH. Note that this subspecies is sometimes regarded as a separate species.

**CRIMSON-FRONTED PARAKEET** (*Psittacara finschi*) – Tallied every day! These were abundant both at the Hotel Bougainvillea and throughout our time at Rancho.

*Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)*

**BARRED ANTSHRIKE** (*Thamnophilus doliatus*) – A pair flew back and forth in front of us at CATIE but remained rather secretive.

**RUSSET ANTSHRIKE** (*Thamnistes anabatinus*) – A brownish antshrike, and quite different looking from the previous species, these were seen around Rancho on two of our days. One was seen as we birded down the road on our first day there, and another was seen along the trails in one of the mixed flocks.

**PLAIN ANTVIREO** (*Dysithamnus mentalis*) – These came in nicely to the Rancho moth cloth on both of our mornings there.

**CHECKER-THROATED ANTWREN** (*Epinecrophylia fulviventris*) – It was a treat having this species move in overhead during our first morning at the moth cloth. It didn't linger long though!

**SLATY ANTWREN** (*Myrmotherula schisticolor*) – Talled on both of our days that we attended the moth cloth.

**DOT-WINGED ANTWREN** (*Microrhopias quixensis*) – A few folks hiking with Harry caught a glimpse of this nicely-patterned antwren.

**DUSKY ANTBIRD** (*Cercomacroides tyrannina*) – Seen once near the moth cloth at dawn. Unfortunately it didn't linger for very long.

**CHESTNUT-BACKED ANTBIRD** (*Poliocrania exsul*) – A pair of these were creeping around (and hard to see!) in some of the shaded forest at EARTH.

**DULL-MANTLED ANTBIRD** (*Sipia laemosticta*) – It took a bit of work but we were all rewarded with outstanding looks at these as they crept up the hillside towards us. Those birds at Rancho were the only ones we encountered.

**ZELEDON'S ANTBIRD** (*Hafferia zeledoni*) – Although we all heard them circling around us on the trail at Rancho, only a few lucky folks caught a glimpse of this mostly-black antbird.

#### Grallariidae (Antpittas)

**THICKET ANTPITTA** (*Hyllopezus dives*) – Heard only by some hiking on the upper trails with Harry. [\*]

#### Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)

**TAWNY-THROATED LEAFTOSSER** (*Sclerurus mexicanus*) – A secretive bird of the shadows and creek-beds at Rancho, these were only heard on a couple of the mornings. [\*]

**PLAIN-BROWN WOODCREEPER** (*Dendrocincla fuliginosa*) – We enjoyed great looks when these came in to feed at the moth cloth. This species has a dark line down the malar which is a good fieldmark.

**WEDGE-BILLED WOODCREEPER** (*Glyphorhynchus spirurus*) – This tiny woodcreeper was seen once on the trails at Rancho and then again on our final day at Tapanti. With such a tiny bill, this species finds most of its food by simply picking things off the surface of trees instead of doing much probing.

**COCOA WOODCREEPER** (*Xiphorhynchus susurrans*) – Seen nicely at the moth cloth during our morning visits.

**SPOTTED WOODCREEPER** (*Xiphorhynchus erythropygius*) – This was another common woodcreeper at the moth cloth at Rancho. This species stood out from the others by having a bold, pale eyering.

**BROWN-BILLED SCYTHEBILL** (*Campylorhamphus pusillus*) – Heard only by some folks hiking with Harry. [\*]

**STREAK-HEADED WOODCREEPER** (*Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*) – A slender and attractive species, these were the most-commonly seen woodcreepers right around Rancho.

**SPOT-CROWNED WOODCREEPER** (*Lepidocolaptes affinis*) – The high-elevation counterpart to the previous species, this woodcreeper was only seen high up on the slopes of Irazu on our first day.

**PLAIN XENOPS** (*Xenops minutus*) – A tiny woodcreeper, a few of these were seen along the trails at Rancho and at EARTH.

**LINEATED FOLIAGE-GLEANER** (*Syndactyla subalaris*) – This was a great pick-up on our final day of birding at Tapanti. Although it was doing laps around us and calling quite a bit, this guy didn't like to sit out in the open.

**BUFF-THROATED FOLIAGE-GLEANER** (*Automolus ochrolaemus*) – Our best encounters came from the moth cloth at Rancho where these would sneak in and grab moths.

**SPOTTED BARBTAIL** (*Premnoplex brunnescens*) – We enjoyed beautiful looks at one right as we started to bird Tapanti National Park on our final day.

**RED-FACED SPINETAIL** (*Cranioleuca erythroptus*) – This was another nice bird to see on our morning at Tapanti. The reddish-colored cheeks really stood out!

**SLATY SPINETAIL** (*Synallaxis brachyura*) – Although it took a bit of work, we were eventually successful in finding these in the scrubby/cemetery area en route to Silent Mountain.

#### Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

**BROWN-CAPPED TYRANULET** (*Ornithion brunneicapillus*) – This is a small, tree-top tyrannulet that we found overhead once or twice at EARTH. From that angle, it was hard to appreciate the fieldmarks!

**YELLOW TYRANULET** (*Capsiempis flaveola*) – This attractive little flycatcher prefers open areas with scattered bushes. We had nice, close looks at a couple at EARTH.

**YELLOW-BELLIED ELAENIA** (*Elaenia flavogaster*) – A common sound throughout the tour. We saw several as well and we noted the big and bushy, two-parted crest.

**TORRENT TYRANULET** (*Serpophaga cinerea*) – Although they were absent through the first half of the tour, we eventually found one of these gray flycatchers catching flies from the rocks near a stream.

**OLIVE-STRIPED FLYCATCHER** (*Mionectes olivaceus*) – This fruit-tyrant was spotted a few times on tour including at Rancho and Tapanti. Even the little white spot behind the eye was seen well.

**OCHRE-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** (*Mionectes oleagineus*) – This is another flycatcher in the same genus as the previous species; we saw them just a couple of times at Rancho and again at EARTH.

**SLATY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER** (*Leptopogon superciliaris*) – We enjoyed especially nice views at the moth cloth at Rancho and along the stream near La Marta.

**PALTRY TYRANULET** (*Zimmerius vilissimus*) – This mistletoe-specialist has gone through some recent taxonomic changes and is now known as Mistletoe Tyrannulet (*Zimmerius parvus*). The call of this bird was one of the more common sounds throughout the tour.

**SCALE-CRESTED PYGMY-TYRANT** (*Lophotriccus pileatus*) – A truly tiny bird! These rusty-crowned flycatchers were seen a few times at Rancho and Tapanti National Park.

**NORTHERN BENTBILL** (*Oncostoma cinereigulare*) – An uncommon bird, it was a treat to find one of these near Laguna Angostura. From the roadside, this bird stayed hidden for most of us though.

- COMMON TODY-FLYCATCHER** (*Todirostrum cinereum*) – Although a fairly common bird, they can be fast and hard to track. We had our best luck with this yellow and black flycatcher below at Rancho Bajo.
- BLACK-HEADED TODY-FLYCATCHER** (*Todirostrum nigriceps*) – Also at Rancho Bajo, we found this calling bird from the driveway. They would go on to be a fairly common sound during our time at Rancho.
- EYE-RINGED FLATBILL** (*Rhynchoocyclus brevirostris*) – This is a plain-colored flycatcher with a bold, pale eyering. We had a nice look at one at Tapanti on our final morning of birding.
- YELLOW-OLIVE FLYCATCHER** (*Tolmomyias sulphureus*) – This flycatcher prefers forest edges but it was seen only a couple times at EARTH and at Rancho.
- YELLOW-MARGINED FLYCATCHER** (*Tolmomyias assimilis*) – Harry found one of these for us by sound during our morning at EARTH. We tried and tried to find it out in the open but most of us just saw it flying back and forth.
- WHITE-THROATED SPADEBILL** (*Platyrinchus mystaceus*) – Those hiking with Harry at Rancho got a look at this little, seemingly tailless flycatcher.
- RUDDY-TAILED FLYCATCHER** (*Terenotriccus erythrurus*) – We heard this tiny flycatcher on more than one occasion at Rancho but we never connected with it visually. [\*]
- SULPHUR-RUMPED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiobius sulphureipygius aureatus*) – We briefly encountered this distinctive flycatcher on our hike down the road from Rancho on one of our first mornings there. Turns out, that would remain our only sighting.
- TAWNY-CHESTED FLYCATCHER** (*Aphanotriccus capitalis*) – This is an uncommon species found mostly in Costa Rica. In fact, the birds that come into the moth cloth at Rancho are probably the most reliable/most-seen pair on the planet!
- TUFTED FLYCATCHER** (*Mitrephanes phaeocercus*) – This cute, buffy flycatcher was perched out in the open for us along a roadside of Tapanti on our final day.
- OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER** (*Contopus cooperi*) – Silent Mountain provided us our only sighting of this big-headed flycatcher. Note that this is in the same genus as the pewees.
- DARK PEWEE** (*Contopus lugubris*) – Favoring higher elevations than its relatives, this pewee showed nicely along the road at Tapanti National Park.
- TROPICAL PEWEE** (*Contopus cinereus*) – Unlike the wood-pewees most of us are familiar with, this species likes forest edges and especially sitting on fences. We had scattered sightings throughout the trip.
- YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax flaviventris*) – We found ourselves in the core of the wintering range of this colorful Empid. In fact, these were tallied nearly every day and were common on the Rancho grounds.
- ACADIAN FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax virescens*) – Heard only on the day we birded at EARTH. [\*]
- WHITE-THROATED FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax albigularis*) – This uncommon flycatcher was a treat to find! Harry knew of a brushy/wet spot along our route to Silent Mountain where we eventually found one of these tropical Empids.
- BLACK-CAPPED FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax atriceps*) – This flycatcher, a relative of our Empids back home, prefers the highlands of Costa Rica and Panama. We saw these several times on our first day as we birded the slopes of Volcan Irazu.
- BLACK PHOEBE** (*Sayornis nigricans*) – Water-loving, these were always seen on rocks and waterside vegetation.
- LONG-TAILED TYRANT** (*Colonia colonus*) – A wonderful highlight of our time at EARTH was finding this distinctive flycatcher as we finished up our visit.
- BRIGHT-RUMPED ATTLA** (*Attila spadiceus*) – Although a very common sound both at Rancho and at the surrounding destinations, it's often hard to see this species. We eventually caught glimpses at Rancho and then again at EARTH. The lemon-colored rump and big bill really stood out.
- RUFIOUS MOURNER** (*Rhytipterna holerythra*) – Heard only on one of our days at Rancho. [\*]
- DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) – The most common Myiarchus on our trip, these were often noticed by their melancholy "wheeer" call note.
- GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus crinitus*) – Hearing this species in Costa Rica reminded many of us of hearing them in the eastern US/Canada where they are a common breeder.
- GREAT KISKADEE** (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) – Widespread and common, these were tallied every day.
- BOAT-BILLED FLYCATCHER** (*Megarynchus pitangua*) – Although less common than the previous species, these too were recorded every day, although sometimes only by sound. These lack the bright rufous in the wings that kiskadees have.
- SOCIAL FLYCATCHER** (*Myiozetetes similis*) – Another widespread and common species. Tallied every day.
- GRAY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiozetetes granadensis*) – We eventually caught up to some of these at EARTH where we could see the pale eye and gray cap.
- GOLDEN-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiodynastes hemichrysus*) – A couple pairs performed quite nicely along the roadside of Tapanti on our final day.
- TROPICAL KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – Abundant, tallied every day.

#### Pipridae (Manakins)

- WHITE-RUFFED MANAKIN** (*Corapipo altera*) – In the end, I think we all ended up with nice looks at this distinctive manakin. These are mostly dark with a bright white throat. Some of our best looks came from the La Marta area where they were feeding on some small fruit.
- WHITE-COLLARED MANAKIN** (*Manacus candei*) – Not uncommon around Rancho and other destinations we visited. However, they do tend to stick to the shadows and many times we only heard them.
- WHITE-CROWNED MANAKIN** (*Dixiphia pipra*) – A tough bird to track down sometimes, a couple of these were heard both from the moth cloth one morning and then from the hummingbird pools later on. [\*]

#### Tityridae (Tityras and Allies)

- MASKED TITYRA** (*Tityra semifasciata*) – Tallied on about half of our days, this black and white species is related to becards. Although hard to predict where they might pop up, we had sightings at the Hotel Bougainvillea, Rancho Naturalista, EARTH, and CATIE.
- CINNAMON BECARD** (*Pachyrhamphus cinnamomeus*) – A fairly plainly-marked, tan becard, these were seen both at EARTH and Rancho.

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

- LESSER GREENLET** (*Pachysylvia decurtata*) – In the vireo family, this plain species was actually fairly common. However, the song isn't attention-grabbing and the birds tended to stay high up.



**YELLOW-THROATED VIREO** (*Vireo flavifrons*) – This handsome vireo was fairly common on this tour and is a familiar species for those of us from the southeastern US where they breed.

**PHILADELPHIA VIREO** (*Vireo philadelphicus*) – We had scattered sightings of this wintering species but our first one came right from the back gardens of the Hotel Bougainvillea.

**BROWN-CAPPED VIREO** (*Vireo leucophrys*) – It wasn't until our final day at Tapanti that we encountered this highland specialist. In fact, we first found them right by the entrance station.

*Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)*

**BROWN JAY** (*Psilorhynchus morio*) – Common, loud, and boisterous! These big jays were seen every day.

*Hirundinidae (Swallows)*

**BLUE-AND-WHITE SWALLOW** (*Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*) – Our most common swallow on the trip, these were recorded every day on our tour. The black undertail coverts were always a good ID mark.

**NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW** (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) – Another common swallow, and tallied almost every day, these direct-flyers are fairly plainly marked.

**SOUTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW** (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) – Similar to the previous species, the pale-rumps on these guys were noted at Silent Mountain and EARTH.

**GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN** (*Progne chalybea*) – A big swallow, these were scoped at the coffee processing plant.

**MANGROVE SWALLOW** (*Tachycineta albilinea*) – A few of these attractive swallows were sitting on some soccer goal nets at EARTH right after lunch.

**BARN SWALLOW** (*Hirundo rustica*) – Not abundant for us. In fact, just a couple were spotted flying overhead at Casa Turire.

*Troglodytidae (Wrens)*

**SCALY-BREASTED WREN (WHISTLING)** (*Microcerculus marginatus luscinioides*) – A skulky little wren, these were heard only a couple of times at Rancho, mostly down towards the creek. [\*]

**HOUSE WREN** (*Troglodytes aedon*) – A common species, these were heard or seen just about every day including right out back the Hotel Bougainvillea.

**OCHRACEOUS WREN** (*Troglodytes ochraceus*) – A buffy relative of the House Wren, this highland specialist was seen on both of our days that we went up to higher elevations; Volcan Irazu and Tapanti.

**TIMBERLINE WREN** (*Thryorhynchus browni*) – A few folks that braved the rain heard the chatter of this highland specialty at the peak of Irazu. Unfortunately, given the weather, the bird stayed hidden. [\*]

**BAND-BACKED WREN** (*Campylorhynchus zonatus*) – Although we gave them a good effort for much of the week, we didn't find these noisy wrens until our final day at Tapanti. A *Campylorhynchus* wren, like our Cactus Wren, this is an interesting species for sticking to treetops in forests.

**RUFOUS-NAPED WREN** (*Campylorhynchus rufinucha*) – It was great to see this big and colorful wren at Hotel Bougainvillea on our very first outing.

**BLACK-THROATED WREN** (*Pheugopedius atrogularis*) – A big and secretive wren, it took a little bit of luck to line up just right to see this shadow-loving species. They were actually rather widespread and we heard them at spots like Casa Turire, EARTH, and CATIE.

**STRIPE-BREASTED WREN** (*Cantorchilus thoracicus*) – We heard this species on the grounds at Rancho just about every day but it wasn't until the afternoon hike with Harry that one was seen.

**CABANIS'S WREN** (*Cantorchilus modestus*) – A gifted songster (and gifted skulker), these were hard for us to see for some reason this time around. Some folks got glimpses at the base of the Tapanti area but we also heard them at Silent Mountain.

**BAY WREN** (*Cantorchilus nigricapillus*) – We really lucked out when a pair of these beautiful wrens popped out into view right along the driveway of Rancho.

**WHITE-BREASTED WOOD-WREN** (*Henicorhina leucosticta*) – Although a widespread species of wren at Rancho, it wasn't until the predawn hours at the moth cloth that these really started to come out of the woodwork. They crept out into view, and then out in the open, sometimes right at our feet, as they scrounged around for things to munch on. It was a really cool experience!

**GRAY-BREASTED WOOD-WREN** (*Henicorhina leucophrys*) – This is the higher-elevation counterpart to the previous species. Our only encounters were in Tapanti on our final day but they gave us a great show as they worked around some of the roadside logs.

*Poliophtilidae (Gnatcatchers)*

**LONG-BILLED GNATWREN** (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) – A vine/tangle-loving species, this is a relative of gnatcatchers. We had a few glimpses on the trails at Rancho but they remained sneaky at times.

**TROPICAL GNATCATCHER** (*Poliophtila plumbea*) – Fairly common and widespread, these long-tailed insect-eaters were seen on most of our days in a variety of habitats.

*Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)*

**BLACK-FACED SOLITAIRE** (*Myadestes melanops*) – A beautiful songster, it was a treat to see these eating berries as we birded our way up Tapanti on our final morning.

**BLACK-BILLED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH** (*Catharus gracilirostris*) – The point-blank views we had of these in the drizzle high up on Irazu helped to brighten our spirits! Of all the *Catharus* thrushes, this species has the most limited range (highlands of Costa Rica and Panama only).

**ORANGE-BILLED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH** (*Catharus aurantiirostris*) – It took a little patience but many of us eventually caught a glimpse of this songster as it slunk back in the thicket right at the base of the Tapanti area.

**SLATY-BACKED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH** (*Catharus fuscater*) – Heard only by a few folks at the entrance station of Tapanti. [\*]

**SWAINSON'S THRUSH** (*Catharus ustulatus*) – A wintering species, these were detected (sometimes only heard) a few times at Rancho and again at EARTH.

**SOOTY THRUSH** (*Turdus nigrescens*) – A big thrush of the Costa Rica and Panama highlands. Our only sightings came from the upper elevations of Irazu on our first day.

**MOUNTAIN THRUSH** (*Turdus plebejus*) – Similar to Clay-colored Thrush but with a darker bill, these tend to stick to higher elevations. Our only glimpses were on our first day at Irazu.

**CLAY-COLORED THRUSH** (*Turdus grayi*) – The national bird of Costa Rica! These familiar thrushes were abundant and tallied every day.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

**TROPICAL MOCKINGBIRD** (*Mimus gilvus*) – Seen on two of our days, mostly in transit. This species has been increasing in Costa Rica over the last decade.

Ptiliognatidae (Silky-flycatchers)

**LONG-TAILED SILKY-FLYCATCHER** (*Ptiliognys caudatus*) – Harry spotted one of these excellent highland-specialists as we started up Irazu on our first day. This crested species, a relative of the Phainopepla, is limited to Costa Rica and Panama.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

**OVENBIRD** (*Seiurus aurocapilla*) – This wintering warbler was spotted at Rancho on our second morning.

**LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH** (*Parkesia motacilla*) – We were crossing one of the creeks at EARTH when we found this warbler hopping along the rocks in the streambed below us.

**NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH** (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – Heard more often than seen, these wintering warblers darted by once or twice but were never common.

**GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER** (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) – Our tour was right in the middle of the wintering range of this fantastic warbler and we enjoyed good looks on most of our days.

**BLUE-WINGED WARBLER** (*Vermivora cyanoptera*) – This is an uncommon wintering warbler that we scrounged up at Rancho during one of our hikes.

**BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER** (*Mniotilta varia*) – Fairly common, it's still always a treat to see this nuthatch-like warbler creeping along branches. This wintering species was spotted on most of our days.

**FLAME-THROATED WARBLER** (*Oreothlypis gutturalis*) – Only found in the highlands of Costa Rica and Panama, a couple of these showed nicely in the drizzle of Irazu on our first morning. It was hard to miss that bright orange throat!

**TENNESSEE WARBLER** (*Oreothlypis peregrina*) – A fairly common wintering warbler, these were seen on about half of our days in a variety of habitats.

**GRAY-CROWNED YELLOWTHROAT** (*Geothlypis poliocephala*) – We had a great session with one at CATIE when it popped up to the fence and then moved even closer where it watched us from bushtop!

**MOURNING WARBLER** (*Geothlypis philadelphia*) – Although they can be rather secretive, we detected a couple of these wintering warblers including under the Rancho feeders.

**KENTUCKY WARBLER** (*Geothlypis formosa*) – One of these showed up at the moth cloth one morning. Otherwise, they were hard to get a clean look at.

**OLIVE-CROWNED YELLOWTHROAT** (*Geothlypis semiflava*) – An attractive warbler of grassy areas, and somewhat similar to the Common Yellowthroat, these were seen at Casa Turire and EARTH.

**AMERICAN REDSTART** (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – A few of these were seen at Rancho during our stay but they weren't common. Like many other warblers, these were spending the winter in Costa Rica.

**TROPICAL PARULA** (*Setophaga pitiayumi*) – Fairly common, these were tallied most days.

**BAY-BREASTED WARBLER** (*Setophaga castanea*) – A great find, one of these uncommon wintering warblers was spotted during our morning at EARTH.

**BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER** (*Setophaga fusca*) – A wintering species of the mid- and higher elevations, it was fun seeing what this species enjoys during the winter months.

**YELLOW WARBLER** (*Setophaga petechia*) – Rather scarce on this tour, only one or two surfaced including one at Casa Turire and another at EARTH.

**CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER** (*Setophaga pensylvanica*) – One of the most common warblers on tour trip, this familiar species was seen nearly every day.

**TOWNSEND'S WARBLER** (*Setophaga townsendi*) – This was a nice find! Easily missable on this tour, this wintering warbler breeds in the NW USA and Canada. We found one in the mist of Irazu on our first day.

**BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER** (*Setophaga virens*) – We tallied this wintering species on just one day, our first day as we birded Irazu. On the wintering grounds, they prefer mid- to upper elevations.

**RUFIOUS-CAPPED WARBLER** (*Basileuterus rufifrons*) – Our first, and perhaps our best looks came from the Hotel Bougainvillea on our very first morning!

**BLACK-CHEEKED WARBLER** (*Basileuterus melanogenys*) – This highland specialty is only found in Costa Rica and Panama. We scored a couple on our first day as we birded the higher elevations of Irazu. We ended up with outstanding looks as a couple came right up to us, giving us eye-level looks.

**GOLDEN-CROWNED WARBLER** (*Basileuterus culicivorus*) – Surprisingly scarce on this trip, only a few were seen well including one from the hummingbird pools at Rancho.

**COSTA RICAN WARBLER** (*Basileuterus melanotis*) – Formerly part of the "Three-striped Warbler" complex, this specialty was tracked down on our final day at Tapanti.

**BUFF-RUMPED WARBLER** (*Myiothlypis fulvicauda*) – Creeping along the riverbanks at EARTH, this distinctive warbler has a habit of bobbing up and down like a waterthrush.

**WILSON'S WARBLER** (*Cardellina pusilla*) – Our best looks at this wintering species came from the slopes of Irazu. Even in the winter, most have that hint of a black cap.

**SLATE-THROATED REDSTART** (*Myioborus miniatus*) – Our final day at Tapanti netted us this widespread tropical warbler. In the southern part of their range, like in Costa Rica, the belly is yellow, not red like they are farther north in Mexico.

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

**WHITE-SHOULDERED TANAGER** (*Tachyphonus luctuosus*) – A nice flock of these showed well on the road up to La Marta. With this species, the white on the shoulder is almost always visible.

**TAWNY-CRESTED TANAGER** (*Tachyphonus delatrii*) – This species, known for forming monospecific flocks, was seen absolutely wonderfully near La Marta. We stood by the footbridge as an entire flock passed by right in front of us!

**WHITE-LINED TANAGER** (*Tachyphonus rufus*) – Not uncommon around the feeders at Rancho. The males look all black and the white in the wing is often not visible on perched birds.

**CRIMSON-COLLARED TANAGER** (*Ramphocelus sanguinolentus*) – It was very brief but a few of these were seen by some folks along the base of the Rancho driveway. Unfortunately, they didn't stick around for long.

**PASSERINI'S TANAGER** (*Ramphocelus passerinii*) – This species, which has recently been re-lumped with Cherrie's Tanager to form Scarlet-rumped Tanager, was common on tour and was tallied on each of the days we spent at Rancho. We especially enjoyed the show a male gave in the scrubby, roadside marsh en route to Silent Mountain.

**BLUE-AND-GOLD TANAGER** (*Bangsia arcaei*) – A rare species just about anywhere in Costa Rica, this fantastic tanager was a major highlight for many! We stumbled onto a couple of these at La Marta on our third day of tour. This species is only found in Costa Rica and Panama, and is considered Near Threatened by BirdLife International.

**BLUE-GRAY TANAGER** (*Thraupis episcopus*) – Widespread, this tropical tanager was tallied every day.

**PALM TANAGER** (*Thraupis palmarum*) – Although not the brightest tanager, these are still attractive once you start to look at the subtle details. Fairly common on tour, these were seen most days.

**SPECKLED TANAGER** (*Ixothraupis guttata*) – It took a little work but we eventually found one in a mixed flock at Rancho Naturalista.

**GOLDEN-HOODED TANAGER** (*Tangara larvata*) – There were no arguments with having this beautiful tanager be fairly common throughout!

**SPANGLE-CHEEKED TANAGER** (*Tangara dowii*) – This fancy tropical tanager took a little work but we successfully tracked them down on our final day at Tapanti. Whew!

**PLAIN-COLORED TANAGER** (*Tangara inornata*) – These almost look like a small Palm Tanager. With a somewhat limited range within Costa Rica, it was a treat seeing this species at EARTH. In fact, EARTH might be one of the best places in the country to try to find these.

**BAY-HEADED TANAGER** (*Tangara gyrola*) – This attractive tanager was common at a variety of locations and our best looks came from the La Marta area.

**EMERALD TANAGER** (*Tangara florida*) – You know it's going to be pretty with the word "emerald" in the name! A beautiful green tanager, these were seen a few times including at La Marta, Rancho, and Silent Mountain.

**SILVER-THROATED TANAGER** (*Tangara icterocephala*) – Fairly common throughout our tour, the pale throat stood out on this yellowish tanager. Our final day at Tapanti netted us more than half a dozen of these.

**SCARLET-THIGHED DACNIS** (*Dacnis venusta*) – Although they played tricky-to-find this time, at least one or two were seen on the trails near the Rancho HQ.

**BLUE DACNIS** (*Dacnis cayana*) – Our only sighting was of a young bird at EARTH that had us stumped for a few seconds.

**GREEN HONEYCREEPER** (*Chlorophanes spiza*) – Fairly common at Rancho and the La Marta area.

**BLACK-AND-YELLOW TANAGER** (*Chrysothlypis chrysomelas*) – This interesting tanager was seen very nicely near La Marta where we had flocks of females and some males. Found in Costa Rica and Panama, it has a fairly restricted range. A relatively small tanager, this is the sole member of the *Chrysothlypis* genus.

**SLATY FLOWERPIERCER** (*Diglossa plumbea*) – Our highland adventure on Irazu netted us this curious, hook-billed species.

**THICK-BILLED SEED-FINCH** (*Sporophila funerea*) – Both the scrubby area en route to Silent Mountain and Silent Mountain itself had this mostly black, big-billed tanager. Turns out, that was the only day we found these fantastic little guys.

**VARIABLE SEEDEATER** (*Sporophila corvina*) – These little, grass-loving tanagers were seen at a variety of spots like La Marta, EARTH, and Silent Mountain.

**BANANAQUIT** (*Coereba flaveola*) – Common in flowering trees and bushes throughout the trip, especially at Rancho Naturalista itself.

**YELLOW-FACED GRASSQUIT** (*Tiaris olivaceus*) – Fairly common in grassy, disturbed areas where they were often spotted pecking around on the ground.

**BUFF-THROATED SALTATOR** (*Saltator maximus*) – The most widespread saltator for our trip, these attractive tanagers were seen nearly every day in a variety of habitats including at fruit feeders.

**BLACK-HEADED SALTATOR** (*Saltator atriceps*) – This jumbo version of the previous species was seen briefly below Rancho Naturalista one day and then along Silent Mountain as well. Compared to the previous species, these have more black on the crown, a whiter throat patch, and a larger bill.

**GRAYISH SALTATOR** (*Saltator coerulescens*) – Perhaps our best look came from the Hotel Bougainvillea on our very first outing.

*Passerellidae (New World Buntings and Sparrows)*

**SOOTY-CAPPED CHLOROSPINGUS** (*Chlorospingus pileatus*) – This highland counterpart to the following species was seen nicely on Irazu on our first day. Considering that was our only time at that elevation, that was the only spot we expected to find them.

**COMMON CHLOROSPINGUS** (*Chlorospingus flavopectus*) – One of the most common birds during our birding in Tapanti. The small, white triangular spot behind the eye was a good fieldmark.

**BLACK-STRIPED SPARROW** (*Arremonops conirostris*) – Just a couple were seen including once at Rancho and then again at EARTH.

**ORANGE-BILLED SPARROW** (*Arremon aurantirostris*) – Seen most of our days at Rancho, these would sometimes come out to the feeder area but not usually far from cover.

**CHESTNUT-CAPPED BRUSHFINCH** (*Arremon brunneinucha*) – A denizen of shadows, this species was only heard during some trail birding at Rancho. [\*]

**SOOTY-FACED FINCH** (*Arremon crassirostris*) – Although we heard several pairs squeaking away as we birded up the road in Tapanti, they never came out for us. Darn. [\*]

**RUFIOUS-COLLARED SPARROW** (*Zonotrichia capensis*) – We had good numbers of this common species during our birding at Volcan Irazu and Silent Mountain. Although common, it's still a very nicely-patterned sparrow!

**LARGE-FOOTED FINCH** (*Pezopetes capitalis*) – Although they can be secretive at times, we ended up having great luck with a pair near the ravine we birded at on Irazu.

**WHITE-EARED GROUND-SPARROW** (*Melospiza leucotis*) – What a stunner for our final day of birding! We found a pair right as we started up towards Tapanti National Park.

**WHITE-NAPED BRUSHFINCH (YELLOW-THROATED)** (*Atlapetes albinucha gutturalis*) – At the same spot as the previous species, one or two of these briefly came into view across the street. They must have been feeling a bit shy though because they never came back out.

*Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)*

**SUMMER TANAGER** (*Piranga rubra*) – A common species on this tour, these were seen every day.

**FLAME-COLORED TANAGER** (*Piranga bidentata*) – We crossed paths with a pair of these highland specialties near our lunch spot on Irazu during our first day. The male is quite the stunner!

**RED-THROATED ANT-TANAGER** (*Habia fuscicauda*) – Rather common at Rancho although they often stick to the shadows. We had great looks as several came in to inspect the moth cloth on each of our mornings there.

**CARMIOL'S TANAGER** (*Chlorothraupis carmioli*) – A rather dull-colored species, these joined in with some mixed flocks along the trails at Rancho as well as at the hummingbird pools.

**BLUE-BLACK GROSBEAK** (*Cyanoloxia cyanooides*) – A very dark blue-colored grosbeak, these often look black in poor light. We saw them briefly in a grassy opening up the road near La Marta during our morning there.

*Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)*

**EASTERN MEADOWLARK** (*Sturnella magna*) – We found a couple of these familiar songsters en route to our morning destination one day along with a Tropical Mockingbird.

**RED-BREASTED MEADOWLARK** (*Sturnella militaris*) – Casa Turire is a great spot to look for this attractive meadowlark and we ended up having good luck with scoping a couple there.

**YELLOW-BILLED CACIQUE** (*Amblycercus holosericeus*) – Although we heard these a few times near Rancho, they never popped out into view for us. [\*]

**CHESTNUT-HEADED OROPENDOLA** (*Psarocolius wagleri*) – Rather common but usually less obvious than the abundant Montezuma Oropendola. We had nice looks at them, including their all-pale bills, as they would occasionally visit the banana feeders at Rancho.

**MONTEZUMA OROPENDOLA** (*Psarocolius montezuma*) – Easily one of the most abundant birds on the entire tour! These giants would munch on bananas every morning at Rancho and we easily tallied them every day. Once or twice, we got to watch them sing and do their odd, swinging display.

**SCARLET-RUMPED CACIQUE** (*Cacicus uropygialis*) – A trio of these were seen briefly at EARTH but didn't pose for many of us.

**BLACK-COWLED ORIOLE** (*Icterus prosthemelas*) – Our only encounter with this black-and-yellow oriole was along the driveway to Rancho on our second day. Thankfully they stuck to their tree and everyone got looks.

**BALTIMORE ORIOLE** (*Icterus galbula*) – A common wintering species. We started seeing these right away at the Hotel Bougainvillea and then continued to see them daily throughout the trip.

**BRONZED COWBIRD** (*Molothrus aeneus*) – Although many of our sightings were drive-bys, there was one at La Marta that some folks got bins on. This cowbird has a red eye and a very stocky neck.

**GIANT COWBIRD** (*Molothrus oryzivorus*) – A brood parasite that specializes in using oropendola nests! These big guys were seen at Casa Turire, EARTH, and along the driveway of Rancho.

**MELODIOUS BLACKBIRD** (*Dives dives*) – Common and widespread, this very vocal species was seen every day.

**GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE** (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) – Widespread and abundant.

*Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)*

**GOLDEN-BROWED CHLOROPHONIA** (*Chlorophonia callophrys*) – It was a pleasant surprise finding a couple of these colorful birds overhead at Tapanti!

**YELLOW-CROWNED EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia luteicapilla*) – This and the following species were both rather common at Rancho although they often tended to stay high up. This species has a dark throat/bib.

**YELLOW-THROATED EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia hirundinacea*) – The yellow on the breast of this species goes all the way up and reaches the bill. We tallied these most days on tour, mostly in fruiting trees.

**OLIVE-BACKED EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia gouldi*) – A fairly distinct euphonia, these aren't colored with the bright yellows and blacks that most euphonias are. Instead, these are deep green with some rufous on the belly. We saw these at La Marta, Rancho, and EARTH.

**WHITE-VENTED EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia minuta*) – Some of these showed nicely right from the Rancho balcony one morning. We went on to see them once or twice more but they were never the most common euphonia.

**TAWNY-CAPPED EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia anaeae*) – A mid-elevation euphonia that is found mostly in Central America. These distinct euphonias have a deep rufous cap which made for an easy ID. We saw these at spots like La Marta and Tapanti.

*Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)*

**HOUSE SPARROW** (*Passer domesticus*) – We saw this introduced species on our final day, en route back to San Jose. [I]

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## MAMMALS

**COMMON OPOSSUM** (*Didelphis marsupialis*) – One of these was tallied on our very first day of birding.

**LONG-NOSED BAT** (*Rhynchonycteris naso*) – These kept us company as we ate lunch at EARTH. As Mike pointed out, they were lined up and shaking like apps ready to be deleted from a smartphone. Brilliant!

**MANTLED HOWLER MONKEY** (*Alouatta palliata*) – We first heard, and then saw, this noisy primate at EARTH. With a diet heavy on leaves, these monkeys spend much of the day resting while they digest.

**CENTRAL AMERICAN SPIDER MONKEY** (*Ateles geoffroyi*) – A very lanky monkey! We had awesome looks at some as they crossed through the trees right in front of us at EARTH!

**HOFFMANN'S TWO-TOED SLOTH** (*Choloepus hoffmanni*) – Although it probably wasn't going to break any land speed records, the one we saw at EARTH was moving at a pretty good clip!

**BROWN-THROATED THREE-TOED SLOTH** (*Bradypus variegatus*) – We scoped one of these taking a snooze in a bare treetop at La Marta on our third day.

**VARIEGATED SQUIRREL** (*Sciurus variegatoides*) – A common but colorful squirrel that was seen at the Rancho feeders most days.



**RED-TAILED SQUIRREL** (*Sciurus granatensis*) – This was the other common squirrel at the Rancho feeders, often seen grabbing a whole banana and escaping with it!

**DUSKY RICE RAT** (*Melanomys caliginosus*) – Seen visiting the Rancho Naturalista feeders most days.

**CENTRAL AMERICAN AGOUTI** (*Dasyprocta punctata*) – One of these curious mammals visited the Rancho feeders one day!

**WHITE-NOSED COATI** (*Nasua narica*) – Seen most days below the balcony at Rancho, these guys probably know where to find a good banana (or bagged lunch) on a daily basis.

**TAYRA** (*Eira barbara*) – It was oh-so-brief but a few lucky folks saw this tropical mustelid gallop across the road on our EARTH day.

**NEOTROPICAL OTTER** (*Lontra longicaudis*) – Seen by a few folks on our second day.

#### Herps

**GREEN IGUANA** (*Iguana iguana*) – One of these was chilling on the lawn at EARTH as soon as we arrived.

**SPECTACLED CAIMAN** (*Caiman crocodilus*) – This tropical crocodilian was spotted, thankfully not too close, at the coffee processing plant.

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## **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

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**Totals for the tour: 325 bird taxa and 13 mammal taxa**