



*Field Guides Tour Report*

**Holiday Costa Rica: Rancho Naturalista II 2019**

Dec 28, 2019 to Jan 5, 2020

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*The hummingbird feeders on Rancho Naturalista's balconies give us the chance to get up-close and personal with many species of hummers, like this male Crowned Woodnymph. Photo by guide Megan Edwards Crewe.*

Sometimes it's nice to step out of the madness of modern day holiday preparations. To trade the clamor of post-Christmas shoppers squabbling over the last roll of on-sale wrapping paper for the racket of dozens of Crimson-fronted Parakeets arguing over their positions in a palm tree. To replace holiday lights with the brilliant reds and iridescent greens of Resplendent Quetzals glowing among among the mossy boughs of a wild avocado tree. To swap canned holiday music for the bubbling songs of courting Montezuma Oropendolas somersaulting from branches, the jolly whistles of a Rufous-collared Sparrow, the froggy croaks of a Keel-billed Toucan, or the dog-toy twitters of Tropical Kingbirds. To wake on a brilliantly blue morning to the sure surprise of a new place, with new trails to explore and new birds to see. Sometimes, it's nice to head south of the border to a place like the famously homey surroundings of Rancho Naturalista.

That's not to say that we didn't celebrate the holidays in Costa Rica -- far from it; we just had a different KIND of celebration! There was the traditional "New Year's feast" (which was more like a traditional Thanksgiving feast, if we're honest). The band sang "Feliz Navidad" and love songs (and plenty of Beatles and 1960s classics too) with enthusiastic accompaniment from many of our company. Snowmen and snowflakes and icicles dangled from tropical houses. While we hit a hiccup or two (the fatal crash further up the mountain that kept us from getting to the summit of Volcan Irazu, and the closure of parts of Universidad EARTH being two of the more notable), we had lovely weather and a fun trip. And there were birds -- lots and lots of birds.

Top of the hit parade for many people were the two male Resplendent Quetzals that we found right along the road on Volcan Irazu; they had attracted quite a crowd of admirers before we left. Also highly rated were the Snowcaps -- particularly the raspberry-colored males with their gleaming white heads -- that hovered around vervain hedges at Rancho Naturalista and Rancho Bajo. Then there were the Sunbitterns we found prowling the rocky edges of a mountain stream, flashing those gorgeous wings as they jumped across short gaps. And the handful of Purple-throated Fruitcrows that cartwheeled through roadside trees at Universidad EARTH, with the males flaring their maroon ruffs as they courted a couple of intent females. Some particularly liked the "Amigos de Hombre" (Friends of Man), the jaunty little Collared Redstarts that flitted through the understory of the highland forest. Others especially enjoyed the bold black and red of the male Scarlet-rumped Tanagers as well as their more subtly-plumaged mates. And, of course, true rarities like the unexpected Gray-headed Piprites that showed up along Rancho's Manakin trail one morning were just icing on the cake.

We reveled in plenty of other sightings too. A White Hawk gleamed against the blue sky. A little covey of Buffy-crowned Wood-Partridges sprinted back and forth along a gully edge. Not one, not two, but SIX female Snowy Cotingas nibbled fruits in a tall roadside tree. A colorful gang of Collared Aracaris swarmed over Rancho's banana feeders. Two Tropical Screech-Owls snuggled together on a day roost right in the middle of a busy town square, and two less touchy-feely Barn Owls did the same beside a nearby church. A Boat-billed Heron snoozed in a little stand of papyrus. A Lesson's Motmot hunted from a concrete picnic table. Spotted and Plain Brown woodcreepers crawled up the poles holding Rancho's insect cloth, while a Buffy-throated Foliage-gleaner rummaged through the vegetation, and Tawny-chested, Yellow-bellied and Dusky-capped flycatchers made repeated little sallies from nearby vines. We recorded 23 species of warblers, ranging from familiar North American visitors (like the omnipresent Chestnut-sided, Tennessee and Black-and-white warblers) to the exotic, like the striking Flame-throated Warbler and the showy Slate-throated Redstart. Dozens of hummingbird species -- including White-necked Jacobin, Black-crested Coquette, Green Thorntail, Green-fronted Lancebill, Purple-throated Mountain-gem and Fiery-throated Hummingbird -- jostled around feeders, vervain hedges and flowering vines. What a cornucopia for eyes and ears it was!

Thanks to Harry for his sharp eyes and ears and super local knowledge, to Vernon for his careful driving and keen spotting, to Mike for his plant knowledge, to Lisa and her staff for taking such good care of us, to Vinicio for keeping us so well fed (though ruining our New Year's dieting resolutions), and -- most of all -- to all of you for joining us. It was great fun sharing the holidays with you, and I hope to see you all in the field again soon.

-- Megan

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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

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

**MUSCOVY DUCK** (*Cairina moschata*) -- Most of the birds we saw undoubtedly had some domestic heritage, but we saw at least a handful in the middle of Laguna Angostura (the big reservoir near Casa Turire) that appeared to be wild birds.

**BLUE-WINGED TEAL** (*Spatula discors*) -- A few score floated on Birris Reservoir and dozens more poked along the edges of Laguna Angostura, with the males just starting to show traces of their distinctive breeding plumage. This is a winter visitor to Costa Rica. [b]

**LESSER SCAUP** (*Aythya affinis*) -- A big flock -- 91, according to Mike's count -- floated on Birris Reservoir, with most of them sound asleep, and we saw scores of others on Laguna Angostura. This is another winter visitor. [b]

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

**GRAY-HEADED CHACHALACA** (*Oreortyx cinereiceps*) -- Especially nice views of the regular visitors to Rancho's banana feeders.

**CRESTED GUAN** (*Penelope purpurascens*) -- We heard several calling from the forest around Rancho on several occasions, and Teri was lucky to be within hailing distance when Harry spotted one from the balcony. But the best views came for those who walked the track at La Mina, where Jim spotted a couple of birds high in the emergent trees on the far side of the river.

### Odontophoridae (New World Quail)

**BUFFY-CROWNED WOOD-PARTRIDGE** (*Dendrortyx leucophrys*) -- A noisy covey called several times from a highland pasture near Nochebuena, then trotted back and forth along the edge of the forest -- even venturing up to the top of a nearby brush pile -- as we tried for better views of Collared Redstarts. They looked a bit like speedy wind-up chickens on their first pass.

### Podicipedidae (Grebes)

**LEAST GREBE** (*Tachybaptus dominicus*) -- One (or perhaps two) floated among the ubiquitous Water Hyacinth on Laguna Angostura, occasionally diving under the surface.

### Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

**ROCK PIGEON** (*Columba livia*) -- A few mixed-color feral flocks around some of the bigger towns and cities. [I]

**PALE-VENTED PIGEON** (*Patagioenas cayennensis*) -- Quite common in the lowlands, sprinkled along roadside wires and on treetops, with good scope views of several in a big leafless tree near the entrance to Universidad EARTH.

**RED-BILLED PIGEON** (*Patagioenas flavirostris*) -- Seen daily, with especially nice looks at some perched in the treetops in the garden at Hotel Bougainvillea -- where we could clearly see the mostly-yellow bills of these large, dark pigeons.

**RUDDY PIGEON** (*Patagioenas subvinacea*) -- Heard on a couple of days on the Rancho property. The mournful "Hit the FOUL pole" call of this species is subtly different than that of the next. [\*]

**SHORT-BILLED PIGEON** (*Patagioenas nigrirostris*) -- Another bird that was heard-only, with its "up cup a COOOO" calling echoing from Rancho's forest on several days. Generally, this species is found at lower elevations than the previous, though there is a sizable overlap zone in the foothills. [\*]

**RUDDY GROUND DOVE** (*Columbina talpacoti*) -- Common in open areas across our tour route, though missing from the highest elevations. The confiding groups along the Silent Mountain road gave us good opportunity for study.

**BLUE GROUND DOVE** (*Claravis pretiosa*) -- A pair flew across the road at Universidad EARTH, with the distinctively blue male being particularly noticeable. This is the largest of the ground-doves we saw on this tour.

**WHITE-TIPPED DOVE** (*Leptotila verreauxi*) -- Small numbers on most days, including a few trundling around under the Rancho feeders. As we saw, the white tips on the tail are most obvious in flight.

**WHITE-WINGED DOVE** (*Zenaida asiatica*) -- Daily, typically perched on roadside wires, treetops or house roofs. This species, formerly restricted to the country's Pacific northwest, has spread through the Central valley and along the northern border to the Caribbean slope and is rapidly expanding its range in the east.

**MOURNING DOVE** (*Zenaida macroura*) -- A few scattered birds seen on the slopes of Volcan Irazu, the only place on our tour route where this species is regularly seen. It's far more common on Costa Rica's Pacific slope.

### Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

**GROOVE-BILLED ANI** (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*) – Dozens hovered around the horses in Casa Turire's pastures, watching for insects stirred by their hooves. We saw other noisy gangs at Universidad EARTH and at La Mina, including a few in tentative, gliding flight.

**SQUIRREL CUCKOO** (*Piaya cayana*) – Especially nice views of a couple along the park road at Tapanti, with others on Rancho's Pepper trail, and at Universidad EARTH (for a few); Charlotte spotted another from Rancho's balcony.

*Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)*

**COMMON PAURAUQUE** (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) – We flushed two along the Rancho entrance drive on our first arrival to the property, and some of the group heard another calling outside the cabins early one morning. The one we flushed in daylight along the Silent Mountain road was a surprise.

*Nyctibiidae (Potoos)*

**GREAT POTOO** (*Nyctibius grandis*) – Nice scope studies of a long-staying bird in the arboretum at CATIE, first discovered more than a year ago. This big species is typically found in the Caribbean lowlands and foothills up to 600m (1900'), so this individual is near the high end of its regular range.

*Apodidae (Swifts)*

**SPOT-FRONTED SWIFT** (*Cypseloides cherriei*) – At least one of these uncommon and poorly-known swifts winnowed over the entrance station at Universidad EARTH, seen shortly after our arrival. It can be tough to see the distinctive, small white spots on the bird's face, but it is darker and a bit larger than the *Chaetura* swifts and notably blocky-headed.

**CHESTNUT-COLLARED SWIFT** (*Streptoprocne rutila*) – At least one with a mixed flock of swifts swirling over the Platanillo cemetery. This species often flies with its wings held below the horizontal.

**WHITE-COLLARED SWIFT** (*Streptoprocne zonaris*) – The most common of the tour's swifts, recorded on about half the days -- including a big flock we heard go screaming past at Tapanti, but never saw! Our best views probably came at Universidad EARTH, where the birds were low enough and close enough that we could clearly see their white collars against the bamboos near the entrance gate.

**VAUX'S SWIFT** (*Chaetura vauxi*) – Scores in the sky over the Platanillo cemetery, looking small compared to the previous species, with others over the campus at Universidad EARTH.

**LESSER SWALLOW-TAILED SWIFT** (*Panyptila cayennensis*) – A few among the big swift flock over the entrance gate at Universidad EARTH, quickly picked out by their long, pointed tails and the big white patches on their throats, napes and flanks.

*Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)*

**WHITE-NECKED JACOBIN** (*Florisuga mellivora*) – Regular jousters around the hummingbird feeders on the Rancho balconies, with super views of both males and females resting on the twigs of one of the shrubs growing against the building.

**GREEN HERMIT** (*Phaethornis guy*) – Singles on several days around the Rancho feeders, with others along the Silent Mountain road (feeding at a vervain hedge) and Tapanti (where a female distracted us from our search for Green-fronted Lancebill). Our best views came at Wayne's feeders, where both a long-tailed female and a shorter-tailed male made repeated visits.

**STRIPE-THROATED HERMIT** (*Phaethornis striigularis*) – A few scattered birds, with especially nice studies of one feeding low in the vervain hedge at Kathy's Rancho Bajo. The overall rusty color of this tiny hermit is distinctive.

**GREEN-FRONTED LANCEBILL** (*Doryfera ludovicae*) – One near the visitor's center at Tapanti perched for a few moments in some twigs over the park sign before zipping off into the forest. Its very long bill is ever so slightly upturned.

**LESSER VIOLETEAR (COSTA RICAN)** (*Colibri cyanotus cabanidis*) – It took some patience, but I think we all got a good look at this highland species in the end -- either foraging at flowers in the gully near Nochebuena, or at the restaurant's feeders. This species was recently split from the former Green Violetear complex.

**PURPLE-CROWNED FAIRY** (*Heliodytes barroti*) – Our first flashed through a flowering tree along the Silent Mountain road, its signature long white outer tail feathers quickly drawing our attention. We saw another at Universidad EARTH, where its bright white belly and outer tail feathers again caught our eyes.

**GREEN-BREASTED MANGO** (*Anthracothorax prevostii*) – Regular at the Rancho feeders, where their flared their magenta tails (females with black and white tips) as they joust with the White-necked Jacobins. Females, with their bold, vertical breast stripe, were particularly distinctive.

**GREEN THORNTAIL** (*Discosura conversii*) – A few seen on scattered days, including a male hovering along the vervain hedge at Kathy's, and another feeding at vervain along the Silent Mountain road. We spotted others in the flowering eucalyptus near Tapanti and in the flowering tree right in front of the main building at Rancho. The adult male's long, wiry tail -- and the bold white bar across the rump -- is distinctive.

**BLACK-CRESTED COQUETTE** (*Lophornis helenae*) – A young male feeding at vervain flowers was one of the highlights of our visit to Kathy's Rancho Bajo. While he didn't have all his adult finery yet, he did have the first traces of his black crest plumes. This species typically feeds with its little tail cocked up.

**GREEN-CROWNED BRILLIANT** (*Heliodytes jacula*) – Singles of both sexes showed up at the Rancho feeders on most days, but never stayed for long. This highland species ranges from Costa Rica down into northern South America.

**TALAMANCA HUMMINGBIRD** (*Eugenes spectabilis*) – A few of these big hummers seen on Volcan Irazu, primarily around the restaurant (and nearby gully) in Nochebuena. This species was recently split from the former Magnificent Hummingbird complex.

**FIERY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Pantherpe insignis*) – A few seen on the flanks of Volcan Irazu. With patience (and a bit of luck), most of us caught a dazzling glimpse or two of those fiery throats before we left the mountain -- though a frustrating number of our sightings were at the wrong angle to see them at their finest.

**WHITE-BELLIED MOUNTAIN-GEM** (*Lampornis hemileucus*) – The more common of the mountain-gems we spotted at Tapanti, with a few showing their gleaming bellies among the dangling flowers in tangles along the park road. Males of this species have purple on the throats as well.

**PURPLE-THROATED MOUNTAIN-GEM** (*Lampornis calolaemus*) – The darker of Tapanti's mountain-gems, with both an all-dark male (sporting his namesake purple gorget) and a rusty-bellied female seen nicely along the park road.

**VOLCANO HUMMINGBIRD** (*Selasphorus flammula*) – Quite common on the flanks of Volcan Irazu, where most of the birds we saw seemed to be females or young males. We got some nice perched views of a couple of these tiny hummers.

**VIOLET SABREWING** (*Campylopterus hemileucurus*) – A couple of these big, flashy hummers were regular visitors to Rancho's balcony feeders -- one was a fully purple adult, while the other still showed significant amounts of green.

**CROWNED WOODNYMPH** (*Thalurania colombica*) – Daily at the feeders, often in good numbers. The dark purple males, with their flashing teal throats, were certainly eye-catching!

**STRIPE-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Eupherusa eximia*) – One zipped around in the flowering eucalyptus we checked en route to Tapanti on our last morning. It perched repeatedly on the same few branches, giving some the chance to see it in the scopes. Its rusty wing patch was pretty obvious,

even with binoculars.

**BLACK-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Eupherusa nigriventris*) – A few -- surprisingly scarce this year -- along the park road in Tapanti, including a very cooperative black-bellied male. This is another species that shows a distinctive rusty wing patch.

**COPPERY-HEADED EMERALD** (*Elvira cupreiceps*) – All-too-brief views of a male in the flowering eucalyptus on the drive in to Tapanti; unfortunately, it zoomed off before everybody got a look. This species is endemic to Costa Rica.

**SNOWCAP** (*Microchera albocoronata*) – Gratifyingly great looks at this distinctive little hummer -- both males and females -- with especially good views of those feeding along the vervain hedges at Kathy's. This uncommon species is a Central American endemic, found from Honduras to Panama.

**BLUE-CHESTED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Amazilia amabilis*) – Great views of several males perched in a flowering tree at Universidad EARTH. It's always a treat to get repeated views of a hummingbird in the scope!

**RUFUS-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Amazilia tzacatl*) – Very common and widespread, recorded on every day of the tour -- including a good 8-10 on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea.

*Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots).*

**RUSSET-NAPED WOOD-RAIL** (*Aramides albiventris*) – Some great spotting by Harry netted us one in a trashy little stream in Tuis. It stepped out of the reeds behind a group of Blue-winged Teal and walked right out into the open, its pale bill and orangey-pink legs gleaming in the shadows. Those who visited La Mina had even better views of another pair, which prowled along the tangled edge of the stream and then moved to a big open rock for a lengthy preen. This species was split from the former Gray-necked Wood-Rail.

**GRAY-COWLED WOOD-RAIL** (*Aramides cajaneus*) – Those who arrived early for our first pre-breakfast walk heard two calling from somewhere beyond the garden walls at Hotel Bougainvillea. [✱]

**AMERICAN COOT** (*Fulica americana*) – One floated among the Water Hyacinth on Lake Angostura, seen on the day we visited the Florencia side. This is a resident species in Costa Rica, with numbers augmented in the winter by migrants from further north.

**PURPLE GALLINULE** (*Porphyrio martinica*) – Best seen at CATIE, where a handful of scruffy brownish youngsters strode across the lily pads while a brighter adult skulked in some weeds at arm's length. We had others on each of our visits to Laguna Angostura.

**WHITE-THROATED CRAKE** (*Laterallus albigularis*) – Heard on a trio of days (at Cara Turire, CATIE and Florencia) but never seen -- despite Harry's best efforts when he tiptoed along a muddy channel edging Laguna Angostura to plant his speaker in the reeds. [✱]

*Aramidae (Limpkin).*

**LIMPKIN** (*Aramus guarauna*) – After hearing a couple calling in the half-light as we left the lakeshore at Casa Turire, we got nice looks at several along the edge of Laguna Angostura near Florencia. These snail eaters are relatively new arrivals to the area, discovering the reservoir (and its snails) several years after it was built.

*Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings).*

**SOUTHERN LAPWING** (*Vanellus chilensis*) – Four trotted along the edge of the Birris Reservoir, and a few others pattered across the pastures at Casa Turire. This species was first recorded in Costa Rica in 1997, but has now become fairly widespread in the lowlands of both slopes.

**KILLDEER** (*Charadrius vociferus*) – A couple of these North American migrants along the edge of the Birris Reservoir. [b]

*Jacaniidae (Jacanas).*

**NORTHERN JACANA** (*Jacana spinosa*) – Our best views came at CATIE, where adults and youngsters tiptoed across the lily pads -- showing the incredibly long toes that help them balance on floating vegetation. We saw plenty of others on the Water Hyacinth at Laguna Angostura.

*Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies).*

**SPOTTED SANDPIPER** (*Actitis macularia*) – Small numbers along streams, lakes and reservoirs throughout, including a trio bobbing along the concrete edge of the Birris Reservoir and a few with the Greater Yellowlegs on the mudflats at Laguna Florencia. [b]

**GREATER YELLOWLEGS** (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – At least one (and possibly two) foraged along the muddy edge of Laguna Angostura late one afternoon. This is a winter visitor to Costa Rica. [b]

*Eurypygididae (Sunbittern).*

**SUNBITTERN** (*Eurypyga helias*) – Yahoo! No sooner had we arrived at the bridge near the sugar mill on the Silent Mountain road than we spotted our first, walking quietly away along the stream; it gave us quick glimpses of its magnificently patterned wings as it jumped from rock to rock. We quickly spotted two others further downstream (including one distracting us briefly from the Torrent Tyrannulet nest), and found another in the trashy little stream in La Suisa, not far from our first Russet-naped Wood-Rail. We saw still another -- under its newly-constructed nest -- at La Mina. [N]

*Ciconiidae (Storks).*

**WOOD STORK** (*Mycteria americana*) – A couple wandered along the edge of the Laguna Angostura, dwarfing their neighbors. This species is found in most open bodies of waters in lowland Costa Rica; they're resident but wander widely.

*Anhingidae (Anhingas).*

**ANHINGA** (*Anhinga anhinga*) – Single birds at CATIE and the Florencia side of Laguna Angostura.

*Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags).*

**NEOTROPIC CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – A few in flight over Laguna Angostura (seen from both sides of the reservoir) with others perched and preening high in trees along the water's edge late in the afternoon. This is the only expected species of cormorant in Costa Rica.

*Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns).*

**FASCIATED TIGER-HERON** (*Tigrisoma fasciatum*) – An adult seen hunting in the middle of Rio Tuis, seen as we pulled out of the Rancho driveway one afternoon, with a gingery youngster spotted briefly along the shore near the Sunbittern at La Mina. This tends to be the higher-elevation tiger-heron, though Bare-throated Tiger-Herons are beginning to venture higher.

**BARE-THROATED TIGER-HERON** (*Tigrisoma mexicanum*) – One hunting in the swampy field near Platanillo was well above the typical upper elevation at which this species found.

**GREAT BLUE HERON** (*Ardea herodias*) – One flew ponderously past the first Wood Stork we spotted at Laguna Angostura. This is another winter visitor to Costa Rica, though a few birds persist in the country year-round. [b]



**GREAT EGRET** (*Ardea alba*) – A few dozen sprinkled among the Water Hyacinth at Laguna Angostura, with small numbers of others in various rivers and wetlands across our tour route. The birds on Costa Rica's Caribbean slope are northern migrants; the country does have a resident population, but only around the Nicoya peninsula. [b]

**SNOWY EGRET** (*Egretta thula*) – Scattered birds, including a few at Laguna Angostura, one roosting atop the papyrus stand at CATIE, and another with its head plumes standing erect as it interacted with a Little Blue Heron in a trashy little stream in the middle La Suisa. As with the previous species, the birds found on the Caribbean slope are winter visitors. [b]

**LITTLE BLUE HERON** (*Egretta caerulea*) – Small numbers on scattered days, including a couple of white youngsters in the papyrus stand at CATIE and a mix of adults and youngsters around Laguna Angostura. This is a winter visitor to Costa Rica. [b]

**CATTLE EGRET** (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Common throughout, typically hovering around the hooves of various livestock like anxious maitre-d's. This species was first reported in Central America in the 1950s, but has expanded rapidly since then.

**GREEN HERON** (*Butorides virescens*) – Best seen at CATIE, where we found one standing stock-still on a nearby lily pad. We had others along both sides of Laguna Angostura, and hunting from a rock in the Platanillo River near La Mina.

**BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – Vernon spotted one for us as it stood on a rock near a little waterfall in the Rio Tuis, waiting for a passing snack. We saw another adult in the papyrus stand at CATIE, and scoped another wary bird in a tree over the road at La Mina.

**YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** (*Nyctanassa violacea*) – Two youngsters, identified by their stocky, all dark bills and the small white speckles on their plumage, huddled among the papyrus stems at CATIE, and we watched an adult stalk along the edge of an island in Laguna Angostura.

**BOAT-BILLED HERON** (*Cochlearius cochlearius*) – One tucked among the papyrus stand at CATIE started out quite hidden, but some careful maneuvering on our part got us to a place where we could see it nicely. That shovel-shaped beak is presumably useful for hunting or mashing up its favorite foods -- amphibians, small fish, crustaceans, insects, and small vertebrates.

#### Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills).

**GREEN IBIS** (*Mesembrinibis cayennensis*) – Our first were barely visible in the gloom as we left Casa Turire after dark one evening. Fortunately, we had much better views of others hunting the waste pile at the sugar plant near the start of the Silent Mountain road. This species is different enough from other ibis species that it's in a monotypic genus.

#### Cathartidae (New World Vultures).

**KING VULTURE** (*Sarcoramphus papa*) – Two -- an adult and a chocolate-brown youngster -- soared high over Universidad EARTH, and another adult sailed over Tapanti.

**BLACK VULTURE** (*Coragyps atratus*) – Daily, except for our first afternoon in the gardens of the Hotel Bougainvillea. Easily the most common of the tour's vultures.

**TURKEY VULTURE** (*Cathartes aura*) – Also daily, except for our first afternoon, when we somehow missed them. There is a resident population of birds in Costa Rica (distinguished by a broad white band on the nape) but during the winter they are far outnumbered by migrants from further north.

#### Pandionidae (Osprey).

**OSPREY** (*Pandion haliaetus*) – One circled over the house at Casa Turire, headed for the reservoir. This is a common winter visitor to Costa Rica.

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

**WHITE-TAILED KITE** (*Elanus leucurus*) – Our first were a couple of birds hanging in the skies near a power substation in San Jose, but our best views came near Florencia, when we found a pair tangling over a field.

**HOOK-BILLED KITE** (*Chondrohierax uncinatus*) – Singles on several days, always in flight. The heavy head (mostly bill!) and paddle-shaped wings are distinctive. This species is a snail specialist, but will also take insects, amphibians and small mammals.

**GRAY-HEADED KITE** (*Leptodon cayanensis*) – One flapped past overhead as we birded along the main road at Universidad EARTH, giving us time to note its pale gray body, black wing linings and heavily patterned flight feathers. This is an uncommon resident of Costa Rica's lowlands.

**SNAIL KITE** (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*) – An adult male perched on a snag only feet above the water on the far side of the Turire reservoir. This is a relatively recent arrival to the Tuis valley, arriving only after the reservoir was created; it doesn't show for the area on maps in the older field guides.

**DOUBLE-TOOTHED KITE** (*Harpagus bidentatus*) – Two circled in the skies over Universidad EARTH, looking vaguely like shorter-tailed accipiters. The white "flank patches" (in reality, very fluffy undertail coverts that lap over onto the bird's rump) can be a good ID feature.

**BICOLORED HAWK** (*Accipiter bicolor*) – One sat perched up on a dead snag visible from the Rancho balcony on our first couple of mornings there, and it (or another) did the same on another dead stick near Wayne's place. This ambush hunter is pretty rare in Costa Rica, but a pair has nested for years at Rancho.

**BARRED HAWK** (*Morphnarchus princeps*) – Two glided over one of the ridges along the Silent Mountain road fairly early on our day there.

**ROADSIDE HAWK** (*Rupornis magnirostris*) – Common and widespread, recorded on most days in a variety of open and edge habitats. The calling bird perched along Rancho's entrance drive and those perched along the main drive at Universidad EARTH were particularly memorable.

**WHITE HAWK** (*Pseudastur albicollis*) – Lovely views of one soaring over Universidad EARTH, its white plumage gleaming against the blue sky.

**GRAY HAWK** (*Buteo plagiatus*) – Several at Universidad EARTH -- mostly in flight, though at least one was perched -- with another from the Rancho balcony toward the end of our stay.

**BROAD-WINGED HAWK** (*Buteo platypterus*) – Singles on scattered days, including one soaring with the next two species over a Cartago supermarket's parking lot. This is a passage migrant through and winter visitor to Costa Rica. [b]

**SHORT-TAILED HAWK** (*Buteo brachyurus*) – One circled over a Cartago supermarket's parking lot, in nice comparison with the next species, and we saw others over the Silent Mountain road. All of the birds we saw were light-morph.

**RED-TAILED HAWK** (*Buteo jamaicensis*) – A pair soaring over the supermarket parking lot in Cartago were particularly obliging. We saw another gliding along a ridge on the Silent Mountain road. The resident subspecies found in Costa Rica (named, appropriately enough, *costaricensis*) is distinctively rusty-bellied.

#### Tytonidae (Barn-Owls).

**BARN OWL** (*Tyto alba*) – Two snoozing in a palm tree near the church in Paraiso gave us a great chance to study them in the scope. This pair has been nesting on the church grounds for years.

#### Strigidae (Owls).

**TROPICAL SCREECH-OWL** (*Megascops choliba*) – Two snuggled side by side on a low branch in a tree in the middle of Paraiso's main square made a nice start to our day at Tapanti.

**CRESTED OWL** (*Lophotrix cristata*) – Harry spotted one snoozing on a day roost along Rancho's Pepper trail, allowing us fabulous scope studies.

**CENTRAL AMERICAN PYGMY-OWL** (*Glaucidium griseiceps*) – One of these tiny, fierce predators tooted from the trees along the main road at Universidad EARTH -- and with a little patience, Vernon managed to track it down. We had super scope views of it, watching us!

**FERRUGINOUS PYGMY-OWL** (*Glaucidium brasilianum*) – A wide-eyed, calling bird capped our pre-dinner outing at Hotel Bougainvillea nicely -- seen thanks to Teri's good ears as we walked back to the hotel. We all had super scope views of it singing, its white throat patch pulsing with each toot.

**MOTTLED OWL** (*Ciccaba virgata*) – One flashed across the road in front of our bus as we drove up the track to Ranch on our first evening.

Fortunately, it landed right beside the road and then stayed there, even as Vernon carefully drew the bus up beside it. Wow! We heard it (or another) calling from the forest around Rancho during several nights.

#### Trogonidae (Trogons)

**RESPLENDENT QUETZAL** (*Pharomachrus mocinno*) – WOW! What an excellent way to get our first morning on Volcan Irazu off to a good start, with not one but TWO adult males (with full tail plumes) gobbling avocados right over the road -- nice spotting, Dawn! Our excitement definitely got the attention of passersby. There was quite a jam of people enjoying the spectacle by the end!

**SLATY-TAILED TROGON** (*Trogon massena*) – We heard one calling from the forest edging the main road at Universidad EARTH, but couldn't find the singer. Then (just as we turned to leave) Jim spotted it fly past, and some careful searching turned up a male perched high overhead. It was amazing how tough he was to spot, considering that bright red belly!

**GARTERED TROGON** (*Trogon caligatus*) – Two males at CATIE alternated between sitting quietly in a tree (or on a wire) and flashing up to a nearby branch to grab a berry. Some of the group saw another on the Florencia side of Laguna Angostura. This species was split from the former Violaceous Trogon.

**COLLARED TROGON** (*Trogon collaris*) – Those who climbed Rancho's Manakin trail heard one calling from the surrounding forest, but we didn't actually see one until we spotted a female along the park road at Tapanti.

#### Momotidae (Motmots)

**LESSON'S MOTMOT** (*Momotus lessonii lessonii*) – Lovely looks at one sitting on (and under) the concrete picnic table in the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea, seen on our pre-breakfast walk there. We heard the soft call of another at Rancho. This was considered to be a subspecies of the former Blue-crowned Motmot.

**RUFIOUS MOTMOT** (*Baryphthengus martii*) – Those who climbed Rancho's upper trail to the mirador saw (and heard) one in the forest near the top of the hill.

**BROAD-BILLED MOTMOT** (*Electron platyrhynchum*) – One on a mossy branch along the main road at Universidad EARTH was a nice find late on our warm morning there. Its smaller size and bluish chin help to separate this from the previous species.

#### Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

**RINGED KINGFISHER** (*Megaceryle torquata*) – We heard the loud, rattling call of this, largest of the New World kingfishers, from the shores of Laguna Angostura at Casa Turire, but we didn't see one until we visited CATIE, where we found one perched near the pond.

**AMAZON KINGFISHER** (*Chloroceryle amazona*) – We spotted our first along the edges of Laguna Angostura, but our best views came at La Mina, where one hunted for long minutes along the Platanillo River, not far from the preening Rufous-naped Wood-Rails. This species is considerably larger than the next, and lacks the white speckles on the wings.

**GREEN KINGFISHER** (*Chloroceryle americana*) – We spotted one of these little kingfishers perched on a stick by a concrete wall edging the little creek in La Suisa -- fortuitously on the opposite side of the bus from the Russet-naped Wood-Rail and Sunbittern Harry had just spotted.

#### Bucconidae (Puffbirds)

**WHITE-NECKED PUFFBIRD** (*Notharchus hyperrhynchus*) – Two perched in a leafless tree at Universidad EARTH proved most cooperative, with one showing its front and the other its back -- nice spotting, Mike! Several of the former subspecies of this widespread puffbird are now distinct species.

#### Galbulidae (Jacamars)

**RUFIOUS-TAILED JACAMAR** (*Galbula ruficauda*) – We heard one calling from the scrub along the Rancho entrance drive, and -- with a bit of effort -- clambered up an overgrown track to a clearing behind one of the cabins, where we managed to see it as it sallied repeatedly out after insects. It's easy to see how this species gets the folk name "King Hummingbird"!

#### Ramphastidae (Toucans)

**COLLARED ARACARI** (*Pteroglossus torquatus*) – Regular on the Rancho grounds, including a family group that swarmed over the banana feeders on a couple of occasions, with others at Universidad EARTH. This species is fairly common in the Caribbean lowlands and foothills.

**YELLOW-THROATED TOUCAN (CHESTNUT-MANDIBLED)** (*Ramphastos ambiguus swainsonii*) – Scattered birds at Universidad EARTH, including a few in a big leafless tree right near the entrance gate. This species was formerly called Chestnut-mandibled Toucan, but was recently demoted to subspecies status and lumped with the Black-mandibled Toucan of Colombia.

**KEEL-BILLED TOUCAN** (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*) – Easily the most common of the tour's toucans, recorded every day but our first afternoon. We had plenty of good views, including some right from Rancho's balcony. That huge lime-green beak -- with a surprising range of other colors -- is mighty impressive!

#### Picidae (Woodpeckers)

**ACORN WOODPECKER** (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) – Quite common around Nochebuena, with some occasionally noisy (but generally surprisingly silent) birds flicking into and out of a big dead tree near where we found our Resplendent Quetzals.

**BLACK-CHEEKED WOODPECKER** (*Melanerpes pucherani*) – Several seen well along the main road at Universidad EARTH, with others at La Mina and along Rancho's Manakin trail. This species is common in the Caribbean lowlands and foothills -- generally at elevations lower than the Hoffman's Woodpecker, which has been spreading eastward through the Central valley from the Pacific slope.

**HOFFMANN'S WOODPECKER** (*Melanerpes hoffmannii*) – Regular throughout much of the tour, with especially nice studies of some on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea. This is far plainer-faced than the previous species.

**SMOKY-BROWN WOODPECKER** (*Dryobates fumigatus*) – Those who hiked Rancho's Manakin trail found one with a mixed flock along the way.

**LINEATED WOODPECKER** (*Dryocopus lineatus*) – One along the Rancho entrance drive proved somewhat elusive on our walk down the hill -- showing well for some but not for all. Fortunately, we spotted a couple of others in flight as we birded near La Mina, and they landed in some nearby trees, giving most the chance to catch up with views in the scope. We heard another calling near the Florencia side of Laguna Angostura.

**RUFIOUS-WINGED WOODPECKER** (*Piculus simplex*) – One along the main road at Universidad EARTH played hard to get initially, but with some patience, most got a good scope view or two before it disappeared back into thicker vegetation. The rufous wing patches can be surprisingly tough to see.

**GOLDEN-OLIVE WOODPECKER** (*Colaptes rubiginosus*) – One with a mixed flock along Rancho's Pepper trail was nicely cooperative, spending long minutes tapping at open branches, and giving all the chance to study it in the scopes.

*Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras).*

**BARRED FOREST-FALCON** (*Micrastur ruficollis*) – The early birds on the Rancho balcony one morning heard one calling quietly (rather poodle-like) from the nearby forest. [\*]

**CRESTED CARACARA** (*Caracara cheriway*) – Scattered birds seen on half the days of the tour, including one striding around in the horse pasture near Casa Turire (and a couple of others spiraling over the fields nearby), with others seen from the bus as we headed to various birding sites.

**YELLOW-HEADED CARACARA** (*Milvago chimachima*) – Singles seen on scattered days, with especially nice views of one Jim spotted for us near the lake at CATIE. This is a relatively recent arrival to Costa Rica, spreading across the country as forests were cleared for cattle pastures.

**LAUGHING FALCON** (*Herpetotheres cachinnans*) – We heard these snake-eaters on several occasions -- one chuckling from somewhere below the Rancho balcony on our first morning there, and another pair in full-throated, howling "laughter" on the hillside across from the Casa Turire horse pastures. [\*]

**PEREGRINE FALCON** (*Falco peregrinus*) – A big female soared over the pond at CATIE, creating more than a bit of panic among the jacanas there. This is a winter visitor to Costa Rica.

*Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots).*

**ORANGE-CHINNED PARAKEET** (*Brotogeris jugularis*) – Our first were a LOOOOONG way away in some distant trees visible from the horse pastures at Casa Turire. Fortunately, we had much better views of others at Universidad EARTH (where they're expected) and La Mina (where they may be descendants of escaped cage birds). The bronzy shoulder on this short-tailed parakeet is distinctive.

**BROWN-HOODED PARROT** (*Pyrilia haematotis*) – We had flyby groups over the Silent Mountain road and Universidad EARTH (near the entrance gate), and those who climbed Rancho's Manakin trail spotted others there. This species is more associated with forest interiors than are Costa Rica's other parrots.

**WHITE-CROWNED PARROT** (*Pionus senilis*) – The tour's most common parrot, seen on most days -- often in big, noisy flocks. We had some good scope studies of birds along the Silent Mountain road.

**YELLOW-NAPED PARROT** (*Amazona auropalliata*) – Two in the garden of the Hotel Bougainvillea on the pre-breakfast outing our first morning were a bit of a surprise. This species is primarily found in the country's northwestern corner, but is slowly expanding up into the central valley.

**SULPHUR-WINGED PARAKEET** (*Pyrrhura hoffmanni*) – A screeching flock of a dozen or so went over as we "pit-stopped" near the end of the Silent Mountain road. The bright yellow underwings of this highland species are diagnostic.

**OLIVE-THROATED PARAKEET (AZTEC)** (*Eupsittula nana astec*) – A calling pair rocketed past us along the main road at Universidad EARTH.

**CRIMSON-FRONTED PARAKEET** (*Psittacara finschi*) – Common throughout, with some lovely looks at a noisy flock in the palm trees around a church in Paraiso -- and in a gap in the louveres of a building across the street from the bakery there. This is the largest and longest-tailed of the tour's parakeets.

*Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds).*

**RUFIOUS-RUMPED ANTWREN** (*Euchrepomis callinota*) – A lucky few got on one of these rare foothill residents along the Silent Mountain road, part of a mixed flock that boiled through the top of one of the big emergent trees below us. The male's red rump can be pretty eye-catching.

**FASCIATED ANTSHRIKE** (*Cymbilaimus lineatus*) – A rather skulking male with a mixed flock along Rancho's Pepper trail, with another on the Manakin trail for those who climbed the hill. The deep red eyeball helps to separate this species from the next.

**BARRED ANTSHRIKE** (*Thamnophilus doliatus*) – Whitney was the lucky one who saw a male as he slipped in for a look at us in a bit of rough scrub near the horse pastures at Casa Turire. The rest of us just heard him singing (and singing and singing). We heard another at CATIE a few days later. [\*]

**RUSSET ANTSHRIKE** (*Thamnistes anabatinus*) – A few with mixed flocks at Rancho and along the Silent Mountain road, with our best views coming at Tapanti. This is a common species in Costa Rica's foothills.

**PLAIN ANTIVIREO** (*Dysithamnus mentalis*) – A female for some with a mixed flock along Rancho's Pepper trail, with others heard by those who climbed the Manakin trail.

**CHECKER-THROATED STIPPLETHROAT** (*Epinecrophylia fulviventrtris*) – At least two investigated vine tangles along Rancho's Pepper trail, part of a big mixed flock we found there. Formerly Checker-throated Antwren.

**SLATY ANTWREN** (*Myrmotherula schisticolor*) – Three or four with a mixed flock on Rancho's Pepper trail, with others on the Manakin trail. Females of this species are exceptionally plain.

**DOT-WINGED ANTWREN** (*Microrhopias quixensis*) – A small group along Rancho's Manakin trail for those who climbed the hill.

**DUSKY ANTIBIRD** (*Cercomacroides tyrannina*) – Heard on a couple of days, but not seen. [\*]

**DULL-MANTLED ANTIBIRD** (*Sipia laemosticta*) – Arg! Though we heard this one singing (and singing) on several days, only those who climbed Rancho's Manakin trail actually caught up with one. Though fairly common in the Caribbean foothills, this species often sticks to dense vegetation in tangled gullies.

**ZELEDON'S ANTIBIRD** (*Hafferia zeledoni*) – Another species heard on several days but seen only by those who climbed Rancho's Manakin trail. This was formerly considered to be a subspecies of the now-split (and defunct) Immaculate Antbird.

*Grallariidae (Antpittas).*

**THICKET ANTPIITA** (*Hylopezus dives*) – Some of the group heard one calling from the forest below the Rancho balcony before breakfast one morning. This skulking species is far more regularly heard than seen. [\*]

*Rhinocryptidae (Tapaculos).*

**SILVERY-FRONTED TAPACULO** (*Scytalopus argentifrons*) – We heard the staccato calls of this species echoing from the dense forest in several places along the road in Tapanti. [\*]

*Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)*

**OLIVACEOUS WOODCREEPER** (*Sittasomus griseicapillus*) – Those who explored Rancho's Manakin trail heard one on their climb. [\*]

**PLAIN-BROWN WOODCREEPER** (*Dendrocincla fuliginosa*) – Fine views of at least four carefully checking trunks -- and shed poles -- around Rancho's moth sheet. We saw others at Universidad EARTH and in Wayne's yard. As its name suggests, this species is quite plain, with no streaks or speckles.

**WEDGE-BILLED WOODCREEPER** (*Glyphorhynchus spirurus*) – One along Rancho's Manakin trail for those who climbed the hill, with a couple of others in mixed flocks along the park road at Tapanti. The tiny size -- and tiny bill -- of this species are distinctive.

**COCOA WOODCREEPER** (*Xiphorhynchus susurrans*) – After hearing them calling on several days (at Rancho and CATIE), we finally connected with a couple of these large, speckled woodcreepers as they chased each other around in an open stretch of forest along the main road at Universidad EARTH. Those who climbed Rancho's Manakin trail had another there.

**SPOTTED WOODCREEPER** (*Xiphorhynchus erythropygius*) – Another species seen by those who climbed Rancho's Manakin trail. The rest of the gang caught up with this very speckled species (particularly speckly on the belly) at Tapanti.

**BROWN-BILLED SCYTHERBILL** (*Campylorhamphus pusillus*) – A calling bird alerted us to its presence along the Tapanti park road, and -- with some patience and persistence -- we finally caught glimpses of it and its distinctively long, sickle-shaped bill.

**STREAK-HEADED WOODCREEPER** (*Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*) – Good views of these medium-sized woodcreepers on several days, including one in the same grove of trees as the Cocoa Woodcreepers (showing well its smaller size and shorter, paler bill) with others at Wayne's, CATIE and La Mina.

**SPOT-CROWNED WOODCREEPER** (*Lepidocolaptes affinis*) – Two climbed trunks in the gully at Nochebuena, seen before we ventured through the gate into the farm field. This is the high-elevation replacement for the previous species.

**PLAIN XENOPS** (*Xenops minutus*) – Those who climbed Rancho's Manakin trail saw one with a mixed flock there. This small species behaves a lot like a chickadee, often clinging to the underside of branches or upside-down on leaf clusters while foraging.

**STREAKED XENOPS** (*Xenops rutilans*) – One of these uncommon birds -- the high-elevation replacement for the previous species -- moved with a mixed flock along the Tapanti park road. This species is more patterned than its lowland cousin.

**BUFF-THROATED FOLIAGE-GLEANER** (*Automolus ochrolaemus*) – Great studies of one foraging low around the Rancho moth sheet, moving slowly and deliberately only inches off the ground. We saw another at Wayne's and heard them on several additional days around Rancho.

**RUDDY TREERUNNER** (*Margarornis rubiginosus*) – Small numbers of these bright rusty birds crept their way along mossy branches beside the Tapanti park road, part of a big mixed flock. Their bright white eyebrow is a good field mark.

**RED-FACED SPINETAIL** (*Cranioleuca erythrops*) – Another regular species in mixed flocks at Tapanti; we also saw one of last year's nests -- a sizable tangled wad of dried vegetation -- hanging from a branch over the road there.

**SLATY SPINETAIL** (*Synallaxis brachyura*) – Fine studies of a pair twitching through a bush right beside the barbed wire fence around the marshy field near the Platanillo cemetery.

*Pipridae (Manakins)*

**WHITE-RUFFED MANAKIN** (*Corapipo altera*) – A male gobbled berries in a roadside tree along the Silent Mountain road, and those who climbed Rancho's Manakin trail spotted more there.

**WHITE-COLLARED MANAKIN** (*Manacus candei*) – A few along the Silent Mountain road -- including several flashy males -- with others in a lek along Rancho's Manakin trail. We heard the snaps of lekking birds at several places, including from the porch at Wayne's.

**WHITE-CROWNED MANAKIN** (*Dixiphia pipra*) – We spotted a female along the Silent Mountain road (in the same fruiting trees as the male White-ruffed), and those who climbed Rancho's Manakin trail found a single male on the long-standing lek there. Their dark red eyes help to distinguish the females from Costa Rica's other female manakins.

*Cotingidae (Cotingas)*

**PURPLE-THROATED FRUITCROW** (*Querula purpurata*) – What fun! A noisy gang of five boiled across the main road at Universidad EARTH, clearly flirting. The three males puffed out their magenta ruffs and chortled while the females alternated between showing interest and ignoring them completely.

**SNOWY COTINGA** (*Carpodectes nitidus*) – At least SIX dove-gray females flicked through a fruiting tree along the main road at Universidad EARTH, occasionally sitting still for long enough that we could get them in the scope. This is typically a fairly uncommon species in lowland Costa Rica.

*Tityridae (Tityras and Allies)*

**BLACK-CROWNED TITYRA** (*Tityra inquisitor*) – Best seen along the Silent Mountain road (where we found one perched right over the road) and at Universidad EARTH (where we spotted a pair along the main road). Charlotte also saw one from Rancho's balcony, and some of the group saw another near the parking lot there on our first morning's outing. This species is far less common than the next in Costa Rica.

**MASKED TITYRA** (*Tityra semifasciata*) – Our first was a female on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea, quickly distinguished by her distinctive red facial skin. We found others around Rancho (including a pair in the pasture) and at Universidad EARTH. This widespread species is found from Mexico down into South America.

**CINNAMON BECARD** (*Pachyrhamphus cinnamomeus*) – Best seen at Universidad EARTH, where a whistling pair flicked through some roadside trees around us. We saw another at Wayne's. This uniformly rusty species is certainly well-named!

**WHITE-WINGED BECARD** (*Pachyrhamphus polychopterus*) – One called from the forest around Wayne's yard on the morning we visited there. [\*]

*Oxyruncidae (Sharpbill, Royal Flycatcher, and Allies)*

**RUDDY-TAILED FLYCATCHER** (*Terenotriccus erythrurus*) – A very responsive little bird sailed in right over our heads along Rancho's Pepper trail, giving us the chance to study it well. This species has recently been moved to the family Oxyruncidae -- along with the Royal Flycatcher and Sharpbill.

*Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)*

**GRAY-HEADED PIPRITES** (*Piprites griseiceps*) – Those who ventured up the Manakin trail at Rancho were rewarded with one of these very rare birds, which was moving with a mixed flock. It started quite a twitch, with Costa Rica's listers soon flocking to Rancho to search for it. This is a



regional endemic, found from eastern Guatemala to Costa Rica.

**WHITE-THROATED SPADEBILL** (*Platyrinchus mystaceus*) – One flicked in and out of view in the understory of a hillside at a corner of Rancho's Pepper trail. It perched in the open repeatedly, but never stayed in one place for long.

**OCHRE-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** (*Mionectes oleagineus*) – The crew that climbed Rancho's hill on the Manakin trail heard one calling from the forest during an encounter with a mixed flock. [✱]

**SLATY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER** (*Leptopogon superciliosus*) – Our first flitted through the same trees (along Kathy's driveway) as our Yellow-billed Caciques -- though lower and more obliging than those skulkers proved to be. We had another with a mixed flock along Rancho's Pepper trail and a third in the trees visible from Wayne's porch. The little dark "ear muffs" on the sides of its head are distinctive.

**SCALE-CRESTED PYGMY-TYRANT** (*Lophotriccus pileatus*) – Our first was an all-too-brief glimpse of one along Rancho's Pepper trail. Fortunately, we had much better views of another along the edge of the Tapanti park road; it returned again and again to the same little group of branches over the road, singing lustily.

**COMMON TODY-FLYCATCHER** (*Todirostrum cinereum*) – One creeping through the vervain hedge at Kathy's house was nicely obliging, as was another pair along the Silent Mountain road. We found a final one along the track at La Mina.

**BLACK-HEADED TODY-FLYCATCHER** (*Todirostrum nigriceps*) – One flitted through the treetops visible from the Rancho balcony before breakfast on our first morning there, and we heard another calling somewhere near the Rancho pasture.

**EYE-RINGED FLATBILL** (*Rhynchocyclus brevirostris*) – Splendid views of one hunting in the trees at Wayne's, visible for long minutes from the porch there. This well-named species is found from southern Mexico right through to northern South America.

**YELLOW-OLIVE FLYCATCHER** (*Tolmomyias sulphurescens*) – As usual, this was heard far more frequently than seen; they're often right up in the canopy! Fortunately, this year we found one that stayed at eye-level for long minutes as it foraged along the edge of the forest at Wayne's. Its pale eye is distinctive.

**YELLOW TYRANNULET** (*Capsiempis flaveola*) – Our first sang -- repeatedly -- from a stumpy palm tree along the road at Universidad EARTH, and another pair showed well along a field edge there. We saw others near the Florencia side of Laguna Angostura.

**YELLOW-BELLIED ELAENIA** (*Elaenia flavogaster*) – Our first were a territorial pair along the edge of the road at the Platanillo cemetery, shouting their challenges into the wind. We saw others along the Silent Mountain road and at La Mina.

**TORRENT TYRANNULET** (*Serpophaga cinerea*) – Two adults ferried mouthfuls of food to some tiny chicks in a riverside nest along the Silent Mountain road, and another hunted from big rocks in the middle of the Rio Platanillo near La Mina. As suggested by its name, this one is found in riparian areas, particularly in hilly areas. [N]

**MISTLETOE TYRANNULET** (*Zimmerius parvus*) – Regular throughout in small numbers, with especially nice studies of one preening and foraging in a little tree beside the Silent Mountain road. This small species has been split from the former Paltry Tyrannulet complex; the bright yellow edgings to the wing feathers and the pale eye are distinctive.

**TAWNY-CHESTED FLYCATCHER** (*Aphanotriccus capitalis*) – We worked hard to get looks at our first -- a wary bird that skulked through the bushes along Wayne's driveway. One at the Rancho moth sheet proved far more accommodating, perching right in the open on little swinging vines while digesting the insects it ate. Those who climbed Rancho's Manakin trail found another on their way. This rare, range-restricted species is found only in the Caribbean lowlands and foothills from Honduras to Costa Rica.

**TUFTED FLYCATCHER** (*Mitrephanes phaeocercus*) – Some fine views at Tapanti, where we found several hunting from the mid-canopy of big trees over the park road, returning again and again to the same perches.

**OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER** (*Contopus cooperi*) – Vernon and Charlotte spotted one from the bus while the rest of us walked the Tapanti park road. Most Olive-sided Flycatchers overwinter in South America, but a few stop in the Costa Rican highlands and foothills each year. [b]

**DARK PEWEE** (*Contopus lugubris*) – One returned again and again to the same dead sticks atop a tall tree along the Tapanti park road. This is another Chiriqui highland endemic, found only in Costa Rica and western Panama.

**TROPICAL PEWEE** (*Contopus cinereus*) – One along the road at Universidad EARTH and another in the little village of La Mina with others heard around Rancho. This is the only regularly-occurring small pewee in Costa Rica; both Eastern and Western wood-pewees migrate through Central America, but typically overwinter further south.

**YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax flaviventris*) – Scattered individuals, including one right near the parking lot at the top of Rancho's driveway and another cleaning moths off the moth sheet early one morning. This is a common winter resident across the whole of Costa Rica. [b]

**WHITE-THROATED FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax albigularis*) – One flitted through the reeds in a marshy field near Platanillo, perching repeatedly in the open. This species often shivers its wings and tail after landing -- a useful behavioral field mark!

**BLACK-CAPPED FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax atriceps*) – Fine views of several of these distinctively dark-headed flycatchers on the flanks of Volcan Irazu.

**BLACK PHOEBE** (*Sayornis nigricans*) – Regular throughout, including one hunting around the Birris reservoir, a few in and around the little stream running along the Silent Mountain road (or on pasture fences nearby) and others along the Tapanti park road. This species is seldom found far from water.

**BRIGHT-RUMPED ATTLA** (*Attila spadiceus*) – As usual, we heard this species far more regularly than we saw it, but one along the main road at Universidad EARTH proved obliging, flying in to work through some nearby trees. The sulphury yellow rump, heavy bill and pale, staring eye -- and that maniacally laughing song -- are distinctive.

**DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) – Common throughout, with particularly nice views of a couple around Rancho's moth sheet. This is the smallest of Costa Rica's *Myiarchus* flycatchers.

**GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus crinitus*) – The rising "wreep" call of this widespread winter visitor was heard on about half the days of the tour. We spotted one in the botanical garden at CATIE, and others along the main road at Universidad EARTH. [b]

**GREAT KISKADEE** (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) – Very common and widespread in open areas of the lowlands and foothills, including several hunting from telephone wires along the edge of the Birris reservoir and others in the pastures at Casa Turire. One pair was building a nest on a pole atop the security hut at the entrance gate to Universidad EARTH. [N]

**BOAT-BILLED FLYCATCHER** (*Megarynchus pitangua*) – Another common species, seen (and heard) on many days. We had particularly nice studies of the heavy bills of the "Cyrano de Bergerac" of flycatchers along the Rancho entrance drive on our first full day there. They lack the rufous in the wings and tail that the similarly-plumaged Great Kiskadee shows.

**SOCIAL FLYCATCHER** (*Myiozetetes similis*) – Plenty of these noisy flycatchers throughout, including a few hunting from the big leafless tree in the Hotel Bougainvillea's garden and several busy gangs along the Silent Mountain road.

**GRAY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiozetetes granadensis*) – Seen on most days this year, including one hunting from a shrubby bush across the road from the Birris reservoir, several along the Silent Mountain road and a very close bird at La Mina. The distinctively gray head helps to separate it from the other kiskadee lookalikes.

**TROPICAL KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – Abundant in unforested areas throughout, particularly in gardens and on roadside wires.

*Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis).*

**RUFIOUS-BROWED PEPPERSHRIKE** (*Cyclarhis gujanensis*) – We heard one singing from the Rancho balcony one morning. [\*]

**TAWNY-CROWNED GREENLET** (*Tunchiornis ochraceiceps*) – Those who climbed Rancho's Manakin trail found a few with a mixed flock encountered on the hike. This species gleans insects from foliage, vine tangles and dead leaf clusters.

**LESSER GREENLET** (*Pachysylvia decurtata*) – The more common of the tour's greenlets, with particularly good looks at those foraging in the vine tangles at Wayne's. We saw others with mixed flocks on the Silent Mountain road and at Tapanti.

**YELLOW-THROATED VIREO** (*Vireo flavifrons*) – Some of the group got a look at one with a mixed flock over the main building at Rancho, as we waited for the group to gather for our first walk there, while other saw one along the main road at Universidad EARTH. We spotted others along the Florencia side of Laguna Angostura, on Rancho's Manakin trail, and with a mixed flock at Tapanti. This is a winter visitor to Costa Rica. [b]

**PHILADELPHIA VIREO** (*Vireo philadelphicus*) – Small numbers on scattered days, including a couple foraging low in a flowering tree in the garden of the Hotel Bougainvillea. This is yet another winter visitor. [b]

*Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies).*

**BROWN JAY** (*Psilorhinus morio*) – Daily, including a noisy family group around Rancho's main building most days. A few showed the yellow beaks and eye rings that signify they're youngsters.

*Hirundinidae (Swallows).*

**BLUE-AND-WHITE SWALLOW** (*Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*) – Daily, including a little group of ten or so swooping low over the gardens of the Hotel Bougainvillea on our first afternoon's walk. This is a common resident species in the foothills and highlands of Costa Rica.

**NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW** (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) – Particularly common in the lowlands of Universidad EARTH, where they coursed back and forth over the grassy roadside verges and perched on roadside wires. We saw others from the Rancho balcony, in the pasture there, and along the Silent Mountain road. This species has a resident population bolstered by the winter arrival of migrants from further north.

**SOUTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW** (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) – Surprisingly scarce this year, with just a handful among the far more common Northern Rough-wings at Universidad EARTH. The pale rump patch and butterscotch-colored face and breast help to separate them from their northern cousins.

**GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN** (*Progne chalybea*) – Most common in the lowlands, with a few seen in the Central valley around San Jose. Those over CATIE -- and the ones sprinkled along roadside wires on our drive to Universidad EARTH -- probably gave us our best looks.

*Poliophtilidae (Gnatcatchers).*

**LONG-BILLED GNATWREN** (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) – We heard the "fingers on the comb's edge" song of this widespread tropical species on several days around the Rancho property, but never laid eyes on it. [\*]

**TROPICAL GNATCATCHER** (*Poliophtila plumbea*) – A male flicked among the trees with a mixed flock along the Silent Mountain road, showing his jaunty dark cap as he posed on the occasional open branch.

*Troglodytidae (Wrens).*

**SCALY-BREASTED WREN (WHISTLING)** (*Microcerculus marginatus luscini*) – We heard the clear descending whistles of this forest skulker on several days around Rancho, and on Volcan Irazu. [\*]

**HOUSE WREN** (*Troglodytes aedon*) – Common and widespread, from the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea to the shrubbery around the Rancho buildings to the road edges of Universidad EARTH and the pastures of La Mina.

**OCHRACEOUS WREN** (*Troglodytes ochraceus*) – One of these little charmers crawled along the trunk of a big oak in a gully on the slopes of Volcan Irazu, giving us some excellent views. We saw another with a mixed flock at Tapanti.

**RUFIOUS-NAPED WREN** (*Campylorhynchus rufinucha*) – We had a fine encounter with these big, social wrens in the garden of the Hotel Bougainvillea as they moved through some nearby shrubs. They have distinctively gruff calls.

**BLACK-THROATED WREN** (*Pheugopedius atrogularis*) – Lovely views of two low in the tangled vegetation near the porch at Wayne's on our pre-breakfast visit there.

**STRIPE-BREASTED WREN** (*Cantorchilus thoracicus*) – We heard the cheery duet of a pair along the track at La Mina, but couldn't entice them in for a view. [\*]

**CABANIS'S WREN** (*Cantorchilus modestus*) – Two bounced along a wall of bushes in the garden of the Hotel Bougainvillea, not far from where we had our first glimpses of White-eared Ground-Sparrow, and we heard others chortling from dense vegetation on most days of the tour. This species was split from the former Plain Wren complex; it's typically found at higher elevations than its sister species, the Canebrake Wren.

**BAY WREN** (*Cantorchilus nigricapillus*) – After hearing the rich songs of this handsome species for days, we finally caught up with a showy pair along the track at La Mina.

**WHITE-BREASTED WOOD-WREN** (*Henicorhina leucosticta*) – What cuties! The pair mooching along the ground at Wayne's was especially confiding, sometimes approaching to within a yard or two of where we stood. We saw another pair twitching through the low vegetation along Rancho's Pepper trail, and heard more elsewhere on the property.

**GRAY-BREASTED WOOD-WREN** (*Henicorhina leucophrys*) – A pair under the big bridge on Volcan Irazu showed well for some and played hard to get for others, but another pair at Tapanti proved gratifyingly cooperative as they rummaged along the roadside. This is the higher-elevation replacement for the previous species.

*Cinclididae (Dippers).*

**AMERICAN DIPPER** (*Cinclus mexicanus*) – Some of the group got quick views of a pair that flew past us at the bridge near the Tapanti entrance gate. They zipped past, calling, landed briefly on the rocks and then disappeared around a bend in the stream. It was such a quick encounter that if you weren't looking in the right direction, you probably missed them completely!

*Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers).*

**TROPICAL MOCKINGBIRD** (*Mimus gilvus*) – A couple of birds flicked around the Platanillo cemetery across the road from the marsh where we found our White-throated Flycatcher. They sat on various mausoleums, occasionally breaking into song.

*Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)*

**BLACK-FACED SOLITAIRE** (*Myadestes melanops*) – We heard the distant, ethereal, flute-like song of this species a few times on Volcan Irazu. [\*]

**BLACK-BILLED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH** (*Catharus gracilirostris*) – Superb views of one on a fence post at the bottom of the gully near Nochebuena, making its distinctive brown breast band -- and that dark beak -- easy to see.

**SLATY-BACKED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH** (*Catharus fuscater*) – It took some patience, but we all finally got a look at a singing bird low in the vegetation at Tapanti. It perched repeatedly just a few inches off the ground, just down the hill from the road's grassy edge.

**RUDDY-CAPPED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH** (*Catharus frantzii*) – One below the big bridge on Volcan Irazu showed very well when it flicked out onto an open sandbar edging the river to forage. This species is common in Costa Rica's highlands.

**WOOD THRUSH** (*Hylocichla mustelina*) – Some on Rancho's balcony heard the bubbling call of this North American migrant before breakfast one morning. [b\*]

**WHITE-THROATED THRUSH** (*Turdus assimilis*) – One called several times from high over our heads along the path near Rancho's forest feeders, but we just couldn't spot the bird. [\*]

**CLAY-COLORED THRUSH** (*Turdus grayi*) – Abundant throughout, seen on every day of the tour -- sometimes (as in the fruiting trees in the gardens of the Hotel Bougainvillea) in good numbers. This is Costa Rica's national bird.

**SOOTY THRUSH** (*Turdus nigrescens*) – A few around Nochebuena, including one perched partway up one of the big trees at the edge of the gully we birded, and a few others ducking in and out of the flowering trees closer to the nearby restaurant. The pale eye of this species is distinctive. This is a Chiriqui endemic, found only in the highlands of Costa Rica and nearby western Panama.

*Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)*

**HOUSE SPARROW** (*Passer domesticus*) – A few seen bouncing along roadsides in one of the towns we drove through on our way from Volcan Irazu to Rancho, with others in La Suisa one morning. This introduced species is widespread but relatively uncommon in much of Costa Rica, with most individuals found in urban settings. [I]

*Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)*

**GOLDEN-BROWED CHLOROPHONIA** (*Chlorophonia callophrys*) – A male dazzled in a tree uphill from the Silent Mountain road -- great spotting, Whitney! We later spotted an only slightly drabber female in the same group of trees. This species is found primarily above 900m, but wanders to lower elevations outside the breeding season.

**YELLOW-CROWNED EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia luteicapilla*) – A female with a mixed flock in the Rancho pasture, and another female at Universidad EARTH. This is the yellowest of Costa Rica's female euphonias, with no trace of white on the belly or vent.

**YELLOW-THROATED EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia hirundinacea*) – Especially good studies of a little group in a treetop below the Rancho driveway on our first morning's walk there, with others in the nearby pasture and along the Manakin trail. The yellow on the front of the males goes right up to the beak.

**OLIVE-BACKED EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia gouldi*) – The bird nibbling berries in a bush near the Rancho dining room was almost ridiculously confiding, staying put even when people walked past within inches of where she sat. We saw others with a mixed flock in the Rancho pasture.

**WHITE-VENTED EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia minuta*) – A few with the more numerous Yellow-throated Euphonias in a treetop near the Rancho driveway our first morning showed the distinctive white belly and vent of this species -- and the dark blue "bibs" of the males.

**TAWNY-CAPPED EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia anneae*) – Scattered birds, including a female with a mixed flock along Rancho's Pepper trail and a male with a mixed flock on the Silent Mountain road. The rusty cap of this species is distinctive.

*Passerellidae (New World Sparrows)*

**ASHY-THROATED CHLOROSPINGUS** (*Chlorospingus canicularis*) – A couple, seen briefly as they moved through the canopy of some downhill trees along the Silent Mountain road, part of a big mixed flock, with others on the Manakin trail for those who climbed the hill at Rancho.

**SOOTY-CAPPED CHLOROSPINGUS** (*Chlorospingus pileatus*) – One danced across a tangle of branches piled along a grassy track on the flanks of Volcan Irazu, not far from where we found our wood-partridges. This species used to be called Sooty-capped Bush-Tanager.

**COMMON CHLOROSPINGUS** (*Chlorospingus flavopectus*) – Almost ridiculously abundant at Tapanti, making up the bulk of every mixed flock we encountered.

**BLACK-STRIPED SPARROW** (*Arremonops conirostris*) – Good views of one along the edge of the marshy spot near the Platanillo cemetery, with another heard at Universidad EARTH.

**ORANGE-BILLED SPARROW** (*Arremon aurantiostris*) – Fine studies of a pair flitting along under the hedges at the edge of the lawn at Rancho most mornings. That orange beak glows in the half-light of pre-dawn!

**CHESTNUT-CAPPED BRUSHFINCH** (*Arremon brunneinucha*) – Those who climbed Rancho's Manakin trail heard one on their way to the manakin leks. [\*]

**RUFOS-COLLARED SPARROW** (*Zonotrichia capensis*) – A common species throughout most of the tour (though missing from the lowlands), including some singing right on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea.

**LARGE-FOOTED FINCH** (*Pezopetes capitalis*) – Super views of a couple flicking through the leaf litter at the edge of a gully on the slopes of Volcan Irazu. Their stripey gray and black heads and olive-gray backs helped to ID them -- though we sadly could never really see the size of their feet as they shuffled through the dead leaves.

**WHITE-EARED GROUND-SPARROW** (*Melospiza leucotis*) – A pair on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea eluded us, but fortunately, we found a couple of much more obliging birds along Tapanti's park road. This species is found in small disjunct populations from Mexico south to Costa Rica.

**YELLOW-THIGGED BRUSHFINCH** (*Atlapetes tibialis*) – One rummaged through the leaf litter at the edge of the gully near Nochebuena, providing good comparison with the nearby Large-footed Finches. This one was smaller and slimmer, with more uniformly gray plumage; those yellow thighs went unseen! Formerly known as Yellow-thighed Finch.

*Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)*

**EASTERN MEADOWLARK** (*Sturnella magna*) – One or two on fence posts along the road on Volcan Irazu, seen by a few who were looking in the right direction, but we had better encounters with some singing birds at Casa Turire. This should really be called SOUTHERN Meadowlark, since its found right down to South America -- and on both the east and west slopes.



**RED-BREASTED MEADOWLARK** (*Leistes militaris*) – A snazzy male perched up on several bushes and fence posts in a pasture at Casa Turire, circling around a couple of photographers in the field.

**YELLOW-BILLED CACIQUE** (*Amblycercus holosericeus*) – A couple moved through the canopy of some of the big trees over the driveway to Rancho Bajo, occasionally popping out into the open. As usual, we heard more of these than we saw.

**CHESTNUT-HEADED OROPENDOLA** (*Psarocolius wagleri*) – Some great views of this smaller oropendola at Rancho's banana feeders.

**MONTEZUMA OROPENDOLA** (*Psarocolius montezuma*) – Daily (other than our first afternoon at the Hotel Bougainvillea), often in good numbers. We had fine views of many at Rancho's feeders, and watched a male doing his somersault courtship display (yellow tail in the air and wings quivering) in a tree near the restrooms at CATIE. As we saw, males can be considerably larger than females!

**SCARLET-RUMPED CACIQUE** (*Cacicus uropygialis*) – A trio swirled across the main road at Universidad EARTH, then landed briefly in a tree. Their red rumps can be hard to see when the birds aren't in flight.

**BLACK-COWLED ORIOLE** (*Icterus prosthemelas*) – A pair showed well in a flowering tree along the main road at Universidad EARTH. This species ranges from southern Mexico through much of eastern Central America.

**BALTIMORE ORIOLE** (*Icterus galbula*) – Common and widespread, seen on most days of the tour -- with a few bright adult males sprinkled among the more numerous females/youngsters. This is a winter visitor to Costa Rica. [b]

**BRONZED COWBIRD** (*Molothrus aeneus*) – A good-sized flock huddled together on telephone wires near Birris Reservoir -- with scarcely a paper's width between the birds. We saw others at CATIE and along the Silent Mountain road. The males look particularly thick-necked thanks to a distinctive "mane" of feathers.

**GIANT COWBIRD** (*Molothrus oryzivorus*) – A dozen or more milled under the hooves of the horses in a pasture at Casa Turire, distinguished from nearby Groove-billed Anis by their shinier plumage and bright red eyes. This species is a brood parasite on caciques and oropendolas.

**MELODIOUS BLACKBIRD** (*Dives dives*) – A few on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea, with others around the Birris reservoir. This species was first recorded in northern Costa Rica in 1987, and has been extending its range steadily southwards through the country.

**GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE** (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) – Common and widespread, seen in good numbers every day of the tour -- including some males sky-pointing on the concrete apron around the Birris reservoir.

*Parulidae (New World Warblers)*

**OVENBIRD** (*Seiurus aurocapilla*) – A lucky few spotted one on the ground under the vervain hedge during the break on our last full day at Rancho. [b]

**NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH** (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – Heard more frequently than seen, though some of us did get brief views of one wagging along under a vervain hedge on the Silent Mountain road. [b]

**GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER** (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) – Regular throughout, with some lovely looks at both males and females around Rancho's property -- including one in the birdbath just outside the dining room on our first full day there. This declining species is a regular part of mixed flocks during Costa Rica's winters. [b]

**BLUE-WINGED WARBLER** (*Vermivora cyanoptera*) – One of these rare winter visitors flitted among a mixed flock on Rancho's Pepper trail. [b]

**BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER** (*Mniotilta varia*) – Another reasonably regular species, though only ever seen singly. They crawled up and down branches and trunks with mixed flocks on most days -- including a very close bird near Wayne's feeders. [b]

**PROTHONOTARY WARBLER** (*Protonotaria citrea*) – We heard one calling from the tangled growth around the lake at CATIE, but couldn't locate the bird itself. [b\*]

**FLAME-THROATED WARBLER** (*Oreothlypis gutturalis*) – Fine views of at least two twitching through the trees in a little mountain pasture near Nochebuena. That red-orange throat is certainly an eye-catcher! This is another endemic of the Chiriqui highlands of Costa Rica and western Panama.

**TENNESSEE WARBLER** (*Leiothlypis peregrina*) – Very common with mixed flocks throughout, seen daily except for our first afternoon together. [b]

**GRAY-CROWNED YELLOWTHROAT** (*Geothlypis poliocephala*) – One in the little marsh across from the Platanillo cemetery was very cooperative, sitting for long minutes atop some scruffy bushes and allowing good scope studies.

**MOURNING WARBLER** (*Geothlypis philadelphia*) – We heard one calling from the bushes near our noisy Barred Antshrike at Casa Turire, but didn't lay eyes on one until much later. Fortunately, one at Wayne's was much more obliging, mooching its way along the edge of the forest, at times only inches off the ground.

**OLIVE-CROWNED YELLOWTHROAT** (*Geothlypis semiflava*) – A fired-up bird flicked along the edge of a cane stand near the sugar factory on the Silent Mountain road, occasionally popping into view for a burst of song. The all-yellow underparts and (on males) the lack of a pale edge to the black mask help to distinguish it from wintering Common Yellowthroats -- as do its song and calls, of course!

**AMERICAN REDSTART** (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – Surprisingly scarce this year, with only a few scattered birds seen -- including a bright male flitting through the trees visible from Wayne's porch. [b]

**TROPICAL PARULA** (*Setophaga pitiayumi*) – Reasonably common, including one seen working through the flower clusters on the Cecropias visible from Rancho's balcony on several mornings. This is a fairly common species in the foothills and highlands of Costa Rica's Caribbean slope, less common on the Pacific slope.

**BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER** (*Setophaga fusca*) – Scattered birds seen on about half the days of the tour, including one flicking through the treetops visible from Rancho's balcony, a bright male with a mixed flock along the Silent Mountain road, one in Wayne's yard and another along the road in Tapanti. [b]

**YELLOW WARBLER** (*Setophaga petechia*) – Singles on many days of the tour, including a female in a fruiting tree on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea and a few along the road at Universidad EARTH. Most of the birds we saw appeared to be females, though a few showed the male's distinctive maroon chest streaks. There are resident birds in Costa Rica, but they're found only along the coast and are of a different subspecies; male show an all-red head, and females have little rusty caps. [b]

**CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER** (*Setophaga pensylvanica*) – Now we know where every Chestnut-sided Warbler from North America spends its winter! [b]

**RUFIOUS-CAPPED WARBLER** (*Basileuterus rufifrons*) – One twitching through some low hedging at the Hotel Bougainvillea was a bit of challenge to see, but one in the birdbath at Rancho -- and others in the vines near Wayne's porch -- were a lot more obliging. We saw others on the Silent Mountain road.

**BLACK-CHEEKED WARBLER** (*Basileuterus melanogenys*) – A handful worked through the understory in the gully near Nochebuena, not far from where we saw our first Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush. This is a Chiriqui endemic, found only in highlands of Costa Rica and nearby western Panama.



**GOLDEN-CROWNED WARBLER** (*Basileuterus culicivorus*) – Probably seen best at Wayne's, where one flicked through the trees above the feeders, with others on the driveway up to Kathy's, on the Pepper trail and from the Rancho balcony.

**COSTA RICAN WARBLER** (*Basileuterus melanotis*) – Arg! We could hear a little group calling just up the hill from the park road in Tapanti -- and could even see the bushes moving as the birds flicked through -- but only a lucky few caught a glimpse of this Chiriqui endemic.

**WILSON'S WARBLER** (*Cardellina pusilla*) – Regular in the foothills and highlands, including some with mixed flocks on the flanks of Volcan Irazu. Like most of the warbler species we saw, this is a winter visitor to Costa Rica. [b]

**SLATE-THROATED REDSTART** (*Myioborus miniatus*) – Especially nice looks at several pairs with mixed flocks along the park road at Tapanti; they proved pretty showy, flirting their white-tipped tails as they flashed after insects. Birds in Costa Rica have yellow bellies, while those further north have red ones.

**COLLARED REDSTART** (*Myioborus torquatus*) – Lovely views of a pair foraging in eye-level trees just in front of us in a pasture near Nochebuena. This obliging species has the wonderful folk name of "Amigo de Hombre" -- or "Friend of Man".

#### Mitrospingidae (Mitrospingid Tanagers).

**DUSKY-FACED TANAGER** (*Mitrospingus cassinii*) – We heard a small group calling as they moved along the wooded edge of the main road at Universidad EARTH, but they were far enough back that we couldn't see them -- despite vocal enticements! [\*]

#### Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies).

**SUMMER TANAGER** (*Piranga rubra*) – Seen on most days, including a trio of females on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea, a splotchy young male at CATIE, and a handsome adult male along the park road at Tapanti.

**WHITE-WINGED TANAGER** (*Piranga leucoptera*) – Jim and Mike tag-teamed to spot us a busy gang of these uncommon birds in the canopy of some trees below the park road in Tapanti. The females proved more showy, but with some patience, we all finally saw at least one male as well.

**RED-THROATED ANT-TANAGER** (*Habia fuscicauda*) – We encountered a few noisy groups of this forest species, including several below the mixed flock on Rancho's Pepper trail and a pair mooching around the feeders at Wayne's.

**CARMOL'S TANAGER** (*Chlorothraupis carmioli*) – We heard a small group of these drab tanagers calling from downslope in a gully along Rancho's Pepper trail, but couldn't entice them upslope for a look. [\*]

**ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK** (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) – Dozens of these winter visitors foraged near the Birris Reservoir, including some sprinkled like Christmas ornaments through some low bushes, and others foraging with Variable Seedeaters in some tall grasses.

**BLUE GROSBEAK** (*Passerina caerulea*) – A female among the seedeaters and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks in the weedy field near the Birris Reservoir was a bit of a surprise. This is resident on Costa Rica's Pacific slope but only a fairly rare North American migrant on the Caribbean slope.

#### Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies).

**WHITE-SHOULDERED TANAGER** (*Tachyphonus luctuosus*) – A pair with a mixed flock along the Silent Mountain road, with others in the trees along the Florencia side of Laguna Angostura.

**WHITE-LINED TANAGER** (*Tachyphonus rufus*) – A few spotted one from the Rancho balcony on our first afternoon there, but most didn't catch up with this widespread species until we birded along the Silent Mountain road. The "white line" refers to a patch of white -- which is rarely seen --- on the male's lesser coverts. His all-white wing linings are considerably more obvious when he flies, or lifts his wings in a threat display (which he does when defending a food source or female).

**CRIMSON-COLLARED TANAGER** (*Ramphocelus sanguinolentus*) – Wow! At least one of these handsome tanagers lurked in a dense bush along the Silent Mountain road, and we spotted another near La Mina.

**SCARLET-RUMPED TANAGER** (*Ramphocelus passerinii*) – Abundant in many places, with dozens fleeing before our vehicle every time we drove down the Rancho driveway. This species was recently recreated with two subspecies: *passerinii* (which we saw) and *costaricensis*, which is found on the Pacific slope. These subspecies were formerly given full-species status as *Passerini's* and *Cherrie's* tanagers.

**BLUE-GRAY TANAGER** (*Thraupis episcopus*) – Regular throughout the tour, always in pairs -- including a couple on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea on our first afternoon, and others in the pasture area at Rancho.

**PALM TANAGER** (*Thraupis palmarum*) – Another common and widespread species, typically seen in small groups.

**SPECKLED TANAGER** (*Ixothraupis guttata*) – Two near the Rancho parking lot on our first morning were surprisingly hard to pick out among the Cecropia leaves. Those who climbed Rancho's Manakin trail saw others in a mixed flock there.

**GOLDEN-HOODED TANAGER** (*Stilpnia larvata*) – Another regular sighting, typically as part of mixed flocks -- including some nibbling berries in some fruiting trees along the Silent Mountain road and others at Universidad EARTH.

**SPANGLE-CHEEKED TANAGER** (*Tangara dowii*) – Lovely views of several with mixed flocks at Tapanti. This highland species is endemic to Costa Rica and western Panama.

**PLAIN-COLORED TANAGER** (*Tangara inornata*) – A handful of these small, drab tanagers at Universidad EARTH, where we first noticed them thanks to their staccato, spluttering calls.

**BAY-HEADED TANAGER** (*Tangara gyrola*) – Top views came along the Silent Mountain road, where bright sunshine brought out their best colors, with others along Rancho's Pepper and Manakin trails. The subspecies found in Costa Rica -- *bangsi* -- is blue-bellied.

**EMERALD TANAGER** (*Tangara florida*) – Multiple encounters with this gorgeous bird along the Silent Mountain road, where they poked and prodded their way along moss-covered branches. This uncommon resident is found in disjunct populations from Costa Rica down into northern South America.

**SILVER-THROATED TANAGER** (*Tangara icterocephala*) – Best seen with mixed flocks along the Silent Mountain road, with others on the grounds at Rancho.

**SCARLET-THIGHED DACNIS** (*Dacnis venusta*) – Common throughout, including a male perched up atop a bush across from the gas station we stopped at on our way down from Volcan Irazu. We never did see those scarlet thighs though, despite multiple close encounters.

**GREEN HONEYCREEPER** (*Chlorophanes spiza*) – A few with mixed flocks on the Silent Mountain road, and along Rancho's Pepper and Manakin trails.

**BLACK-AND-YELLOW TANAGER** (*Chrysothlypis chrysomelas*) – A few of these handsome little tanagers seen with the first mixed flock we found along the Silent Mountain road; the males look remarkably like Prothonotary Warblers. This is a regional endemic, restricted to Panama and Costa Rica.

**SLATY FLOWERPIERCER** (*Diglossa plumbea*) – Seen -- and heard -- on the slopes of Volcan Irazu, including one robbing flowers near the gate where we spotted our wood-partridges.

**BLUE-BLACK GRASSQUIT** (*Volatinia jacarina*) – Best seen at Universidad EARTH -- including some males demonstrating their endearing little display jumps -- with others foraging in the weedy field across the road from the Birris Reservoir.

**THICK-BILLED SEED-FINCH** (*Sporophila funerea*) – A female among the seedeater/grassquit/grosbeak flock at the Birris reservoir was easily distinguished by her large bill and rich, uniformly brown color. We saw others at CATIE and La Mina, and along the Silent Mountain road. This species nests in marshy or wet areas, but often moves to drier areas in other seasons.

**VARIABLE SEEDEATER** (*Sporophila corvina*) – Common throughout. Males of the subspecies on the Caribbean slope (*corvina*) are all black with a small white "pocket handkerchief" at the base of the primaries.

**MORELET'S SEEDEATER** (*Sporophila moreletii*) – A few with the mixed flock feeding in the tall grasses across the road from the Birris reservoir, with another male seen well in a row of trees near the Platanillo cemetery. This species was recently split from the former "White-collared Seedeater" complex.

**BANANAQUIT** (*Coereba flaveola*) – Small numbers on scattered days, with particularly good views of a couple in the hedge outside Kathy's house.

**YELLOW-FACED GRASSQUIT** (*Tiaris olivaceus*) – A dozen or so in the tall grasses across the road from the Birris reservoir (including a very handsome male), with a paler young male on one of Rancho's platform feeders before breakfast one morning.

**BUFF-THROATED SALTATOR** (*Saltator maximus*) – Small numbers on many days, including two in bushes near the Birris reservoir, a few visiting the Rancho feeders, and one in the garden at Wayne's. This is the smallest of Costa Rica's saltators.

**BLACK-HEADED SALTATOR** (*Saltator atriceps*) – A noisy gang along the Silent Mountain road gave us especially nice looks. We saw others near the Birris reservoir, and at Universidad EARTH and La Mina. This is the largest of Costa Rica's saltators.

**GRAYISH SALTATOR** (*Saltator coerulescens*) – Two in a fruiting tree in the gardens at Hotel Bougainvillea showed their bold white eyebrows and peachy undertail coverts nicely.

## MAMMALS

**LONG-NOSED BAT** (*Rhynchonycteris naso*) – A dozen or so of these larger, darker bats clung on the concrete "chimney" of the outdoor church at Universidad EARTH, separated out by a few feet from their nearest neighbors. Through the scopes, we could see their long, pointy noses.

**GREATER WHITE-LINED BAT** (*Saccopteryx bilineata*) – A dozen or so of these smaller bats clung in a little cluster on the wooden ceiling of the outdoor chapel at Universidad EARTH, showing nicely the distinctive, wavy, white lines on their backs.

**MANTLED HOWLER MONKEY** (*Alouatta palliata*) – A trio -- mom, dad and junior -- rummaged in a Cecropia treetop along the main road at Universidad EARTH. The male gave a few roaring calls while we were within earshot; their calls can be heard more than 2 km!

**HOFFMANN'S TWO-TOED SLOTH** (*Choloepus hoffmanni*) – One hung in a tree near the campus buildings at Universidad EARTH, looking a bit like a bundled up bit of old carpet -- until it raised its head for a look around. This is the shorter-limbed and silkier of the country's two sloths.

**VARIEGATED SQUIRREL** (*Sciurus variegatoides*) – Regular throughout, including several on the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea, and others around Rancho -- including one with a missing bit of tail, presumably the result of a near-miss with a predator. As its name suggests, this one comes in several color morphs.

**RED-TAILED SQUIRREL** (*Sciurus granatensis*) – Another common squirrel, seen in good numbers around Rancho's feeders, with others on the slopes of Volcan Irazu. This is smaller than the previous species, with a more uniformly dark pelage.

**MONTANE SQUIRREL** (*Syntheosciurus brochus*) – One of these dark-pelaged squirrels scampered along a branch beside the track in Tapanti NP. This species has much smaller ears than do the larger Variegated and Red-tailed squirrels.

**DUSKY RICE RAT** (*Melanomys caliginosus*) – One made repeated raids on the cracked corn piled under one of the feeders at Rancho, flashing in and out of view. Unlike most rice rats, this terrestrial species is diurnal.

**CENTRAL AMERICAN AGOUTI** (*Dasyprocta punctata*) – At least two made repeated visits to the bananas and piles of cracked corn under the Rancho balcony on most days, often sitting on their haunches while they munched.

**COYOTE** (*Canis latrans*) – One trotted across the garden at the Hotel Bougainvillea our first morning, then later trotted back the other way. Pretty wild to see this adaptable species in the middle of the city!

**WHITE-NOSED COATI** (*Nasua narica*) – A solitary male was a regular visitor to the Rancho feeders, making off with a banana or two each day around lunchtime. Adult males are loners, while females and youngsters hang around in big groups.

**TAYRA** (*Eira barbara*) – One of these lithe predators slipped into view under the Rancho feeders one lunchtime, then just as swiftly disappeared. It made two quick return visits before vanishing completely.

**WHITE-TAILED DEER** (*Odocoileus virginianus*) – A female (or perhaps a male without antlers) picked her way through a little grove of trees along the main road at Universidad EARTH, melting back into the deeper forest when we stopped for a look.

## Herps

**GREEN IGUANA** (*Iguana iguana*) – Small numbers on several days, including a huge, orange, adult male sprawled out on a limb at Universidad EARTH and smaller green females or young males at CATIE and Casa Turire.

**COMMON HOUSE GECKO** (*Hemidactylus frenatus*) – Surprisingly, not seen this year -- though we certainly heard a few calling from hidden spots around the buildings at Rancho. [\*]

**GREEN SPINY LIZARD** (*Sceloporus malachiticus*) – One clinging to the concrete back wall of the garden at Hotel Bougainvillea was a highlight of our first afternoon's walk there. The play of sunlight on his myriad colors was really striking!

**EYELASH VIPER** (*Bothriechis schlegelii*) – Some great spotting by Jim netted us a tiny, gorgeously patterned individual coiled on a rocky wall along the Platanillo River in La Mina. What a beauty!

**GODMAN'S BROWN SNAKE** (*Rhadinella godmani*) – Based on its markings, the small dark snake that we saw along the trail back from the Rancho forest feeders late one morning was probably this species -- though it might also have been the very similar Striped Litter Snake (*Rhadinella serperaster*).

**CLOUDED SNAKE** (*Sibon nebulatus*) – We found one of these small, slender snakes squashed on the road at Universidad EARTH. Like other members of their genus, they feed on slimy, gooey prey such as frog eggs, earthworms, snails, and slugs.

**WET FOREST TOAD** (*Incilius melanochlorus*) – One seen by those who climbed Rancho's Manakin trail to the leks. The particularly long first "finger" is a useful field mark for this rainforest species.

**WARSEWITSCH'S (OR BRILLIANT FOREST) FROG** (*Lithobates warszewitschii*) – One along the roadside at Tapanti quickly buried itself in the leaf litter.

**MASKED TREE FROG** (*Smilisca phaeota*) – One seen in the birdbath under the feeders at Rancho by a few folks during one afternoon's break.  
**SMOOTH-SKINNED (OR LITTER) TOAD** (*Rhaebo haematiticus*) – One seen along the Manakin trail by those who climbed the hill at Rancho.

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## **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

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**Totals for the tour: 317 bird taxa and 13 mammal taxa**