

# **SHORT COSTA RICA: TOUCANS TO QUETZALS**

**February 26 - March 6, 2011**



*Resplendent Quetzal* © David Wolf

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*Even after many trips over many years, Costa Rica continues to amaze me. There is such a wealth of things for the naturalist to see and do in this one small, friendly, efficient country! We took full advantage of this abundance for an action-packed week of birding from the foothills to the Caribbean lowlands to the high mountains. Every day brought highlights, and by the end of the week we had seen some of the most special and rare birds of Central America, plus representatives of most of the Neotropical families. And, we had seen them well.*

*An exhilarating first day gave us a great introduction, with good finds at every stop and nearly 100 species for the day. Perhaps the best were the Prong-billed Barbets eyeing us at close range and the Black Guan feeding in a fruiting fig, but we certainly enjoyed all of the hummingbirds, tanagers, and wintering warblers too.*

*During the next two days clouds hung low over the Caribbean lowlands and we dodged rain showers, but the wet weather did not dampen our spirits, and in fact made for a very successful visit to the Sarapiquí lowlands. Temperatures remained pleasantly cool, the birds responded by maintaining high levels of activity all day long, and in the end we saw a fantastic selection of the birds of this rich area. Our visits to the world-famous La Selva Field Station were amazing, with a seemingly endless feast of birds like colorful parrots, toucans, trogons, and tanagers. Between studies of the commoner species we had highlights like a pair of Gray-necked Wood-Rails sneaking out to puddles in the road; a male Snowy Cotinga teed-up in a bare tree; Chestnut-colored Woodpeckers sitting motionless for long scope studies; sparkling Rufous-tailed Jacamars hawking insects when the sun came out; a Vermiculated Screech-Owl at its well-hidden day roost; nest-building Bronzy Hermits; a calm Rufous Motmot at close range; a Semiplumbeous Hawk perched quietly in the midstory; a stunning Black-striped Woodcreeper foraging at the forest edge; a tiny male White-collared Manakin in a fruiting bush; and a brilliant Yellow-tailed Oriole rummaging around in a Heliconia. Who would have guessed that Turkey Vultures would provide a trip highlight, but as the heavy clouds broke up and the thermals rose, so did the vultures. Apparently a huge migration of them had been grounded by the rains, but once they got going we estimated that at least 15,000 passed by us in under two hours!*

*Even more amazing were the more endangered birds of the region. Crested Guans were seen so often they became almost ho-hum, while on our first morning here we thrilled to a courting pair of Great Curassows that seemed oblivious to the human foot traffic around the footbridge. Later we watched two females in a serious scuffle over a male calmly watching nearby. This spectacular game bird is highly threatened in most of its fragmented range, and it has taken decades for it to re-colonize the La Selva property. On a walk into the primary forest we found a Great Tinamou boldly foraging at a small army ant swarm, almost too close to focus binoculars upon. Tinamous are notoriously difficult to see, and have been over-hunted in many areas, but this one seemed oblivious to us. As if that weren't enough, while we watched the tinamou, a pair of secretive Olive-backed Quail-Doves walked out onto the path next to it! A wonderful surprise again this year was the presence of Great Green Macaws in the region.*

*This spectacular bird is highly endangered, and the small number remaining in Costa Rica wander widely over a large area, so we were indeed very lucky to have a close pair perched in a bare tree for scope studies. Pure luck played a role in our success too. After checking the bridge near our lodge daily and finding nothing of note along the stream, on our third day a beautiful adult Fasciated Tiger-Heron was there, calmly standing on a log on the banks. It was only after we had gotten out of the bus to scope the heron that we discovered a stunning Sunbittern right below us. Such serendipity!*

*It was hard to leave the lowlands, but when we did our morning began with a flock of 7 Green Ibis strolling around a small pasture, their iridescent colors gleaming in the sunlight. Then, in the extravagantly lush foothill forests, we had sightings of almost all of the specialty tanagers of the region, including a male White-throated Shrike-Tanager perched right in front of us, a Blue-and-gold Tanager high in the forest canopy, and Emerald, Speckled, and Black-and-Yellow tanagers in the mixed-flocks that foraged low at the roadside edge.*

*From the foothills we moved to the delightful mountains, descending through the oak forests of Cerro de la Muerte to our lodging along a rushing stream in a deep valley. In these pleasant surroundings we found a flower-filled garden swarming with hummingbirds, and mixed-flocks with a totally new set of birds, including beauties like the Ruddy Treerunner, Long-tailed Silky-flycatcher, Flame-throated Warbler, and Spangle-cheeked Tanager. The charming Collared Redstarts (“amigos de hombre”) seemed to like us, landing right at our feet as they searched the leaf litter for insects, while the Buffy Tuftedcheek rummaging through the bromeliads high overhead challenged our necks to see it.*

*At the highest elevations we tracked down endemics of very restricted range, including a bold Timberline Wren; odd-looking Large-footed Finches lurking in the stunted vegetation; stunning Fiery-throated Hummingbirds with their full rainbow of colors; and a pair of fierce-eyed Volcano Juncos. Best of all were the fabulous Resplendent Quetzals, considered by many to be the most beautiful bird in the world. It took a while to find them our first morning, but then we enjoyed long scope looks at a male quietly perched in the understory. That afternoon we stumbled onto another pair and watched them taking turns digging a nest hole, the female doing more of the work while the truly resplendent male guarded her. This is perhaps the ultimate Costa Rican bird experience! All too soon it was time to head back to San Jose, our week in Costa Rica over but certainly not forgotten.*

## **ITINERARY**

**February 26:** arrival in San Jose, Costa Rica.

**February 27:** morning at the La Paz Waterfall Garden and then after lunch we birded our way down through the foothills to the Sarapiquí lowlands, arriving at La Quinta in the late afternoon.

**February 28:** morning and afternoon excursions to the La Selva Field Station of the Organization of Tropical Studies (OTS), with a midday break at La Quinta.

**March 1:** morning at La Selva and then afternoon birding around the grounds at La Quinta.

**March 2:** morning at La Selva and an afternoon excursion to El Tigre marsh.

**March 3:** morning in the foothills in the Quebrada Gonzalez area of Braulio Carrillo National Park continuing on to Savegre Lodge on Cerro de la Muerte after a picnic lunch.

**March 4:** morning in the beautiful Savegre Valley and then an afternoon excursion to the higher elevations on Cerro de la Muerte.

**March 5:** morning hike down from the old-growth oak forest above Savegre Lodge and then back to San Jose after lunch.

**March 6:** departure for flights home.

## KEY

MC = Meseta Central

CS = Caribbean slope, from La Paz Waterfall Garden down through the foothills (Feb 27) and then again in the Quebrada Gonzalez area of Braulio Carillo National Park (March 3)

CL = Caribbean lowlands from La Quinta area to the La Selva Field Station and nearby.

CM = Cerro de la Muerte area, in particular the Savegre Valley and nearby.

e = endemic to Costa Rica only

eh = endemic to the highlands of Costa Rica and western Panama

ec = endemic to the Caribbean lowlands and foothills centered on Costa Rica but in some cases extending as far as se. Honduras and central Panama.

el = endemic to both the Caribbean and Pacific lowlands and foothills of Costa Rica & Panama.

BIRD LIST: Follows “*The A.O.U. Check-list of North American Birds, Seventh Edition*” and subsequent supplements. A few of our many highlights are **bolded**.

**Great Tinamou** (*Tinamus major*) - CL (incredibly close study inside the La Selva forest).

Little Tinamou (*Crypturellus soui*) - CL (heard only)

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) - CL

**Crested Guan** (*Penelope purpurascens*) - CL (seen often, at close range).

**Black Guan** (*Chamaepetes unicolor*) - CS (feeding at a fruiting fig at the La Paz Garden).

**Great Curassow** (*Crax rubra*) - CL (two fantastic experiences with this threatened species).

**Brown Pelican** (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) - CS (flock of 8 “lost in the fog” over the mountains, after a stormy period in the Caribbean lowlands).

Neotropic Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) - CL

**Fasciated Tiger-Heron** (*Tigrisoma fasciatum*) - CL (sunning on a log over the stream at La Quinta).

Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) - CS

Great Egret (*Ardea alba*) - CL

Little Blue Heron (*Egretta caerulea*) - CL

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) - CS, CL, MC

Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*) - CL

**Green Ibis** (*Mesembrinibis cayennensis*) - CL (7 in one marshy field, a great find).

Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*) - all regions

**Turkey Vulture** (*Cathartes aura*) - all regions (including a huge and impressive flight of 15,000+ migrants moving on after several days of intermittent rain held them up).

King Vulture (*Sarcoramphus papa*) - CL (Will only).

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) - CL

**Gray-headed Kite** (*Leptodon cayanensis*) - CL (perched pair in the forest understory, one of them extracting the larvae from a wasp nest it had seized).

Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*) - CS, CM

White-tailed Kite (*Elanus leucurus*) - CL, MC

Barred (Black-chested) Hawk (*Leucopternis princeps*) - CS

**Semiplumbeous Hawk** (*Leucopternis semiplumbeus*) - CL (an inconspicuous forest raptor seen perched low inside the riverine forest at the base of the La Selva footbridge).

Roadside Hawk (*Buteo magnirostris*) - CL

Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*) - CS, CL  
 Gray Hawk (*Buteo nitidus*) - CL  
 Short-tailed Hawk (*Buteo brachyurus*) - CS  
 Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) - CL  
 Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) - CM  
 Yellow-headed Caracara (*Milvago chimachima*) - MC  
 Crested Caracara (*Caracara cheriway*) - CL  
**Laughing Falcon** (*Herpetotheres cachinnans*) - CL (a bad hair day for this bird).  
 Merlin (*Falco columbarius*) - CM (by a few).  
 Bat Falcon (*Falco ruficularis*) - CL  
 White-throated Crake (*Laterallus albigularis*) - CL (heard only).  
**Gray-necked Wood-Rail** (*Aramides cajanea*) - CL (repeated out-in-the-open looks).  
 Purple Gallinule (*Porphyrio martinica*) - CL (glimpsed in flight).  
**Sunbittern** (*Eurypyga helias*) - CL (a very close – and very lucky – sighting at the entrance bridge to La Quinta).  
 Northern Jacana (*Jacana spinosa*) - CS, CL  
 Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularius*) - CL  
 Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*) - feral birds in cities and towns  
 Pale-vented Pigeon (*Patagioenas cayennensis*) - CL  
 Red-billed Pigeon (*Patagioenas flavirostris*) - MC, CS, CL  
 Band-tailed Pigeon (*Patagioenas fasciata*) - CM  
 Ruddy Pigeon (*Patagioenas subvinacea*) - CM  
 Short-billed Pigeon (*Patagioenas nigrirostris*) - CL  
 White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*) - MC  
 Inca Dove (*Columbina inca*) - MC  
 Ruddy Ground-Dove (*Columbina talpacoti*) - CL  
 Blue Ground-Dove (*Claravis pretiosa*) - CL (quick look at a close male in flight).  
 White-tipped Dove (*Leptotila verreauxi*) - CL  
**Gray-chested Dove** (*Leptotila cassini*) - CL (a long close study in direct comparison with the preceding was an unusually good sighting).  
**Olive-backed Quail-Dove** (*Geotrygon veraguensis*) - CL (a pair that walked out into the trail as we stood motionless watching the Great Tinamou).  
eh Sulphur-winged Parakeet (*Pyrrhura hoffmanni*) - CM  
 Crimson-fronted Parakeet (*Aratinga finschi*) - MC, CL (in flight only).  
 Olive-throated Parakeet (*Aratinga nana*) - CL  
**Great Green Macaw** (*Ara ambiguus*) - CL (fabulous pair of this highly-threatened species, sitting in an open tree preening).  
 Orange-chinned Parakeet (*Brotogeris jugularis*) - CL  
 Brown-hooded Parrot (*Pionopsitta haematotis*) - CS  
 White-crowned Parrot (*Pionus senilis*) - CS, CL  
 Red-lored Parrot (*Amazona autumnalis*) - CL  
 Mealy Parrot (*Amazona farinosa*) - CL  
 Squirrel Cuckoo (*Piaya cayana*) - CL  
 Groove-billed Ani (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*) - CL  
**Vermiculated Screech-Owl** (*Megascops guatemalae*) - CL (at it's day roost at La Selva).  
 Spectacled Owl (*Pulsatrix perspicillata*) - CL (heard only).

Chestnut-collared Swift (*Streptoprocne rutila*) - CM  
 White-collared Swift (*Streptoprocne zonaris*) - CL, CS, CM  
 Gray-rumped Swift (*Chaetura cinereiventris*) - CL, CS  
 Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift (*Panyptila cayennensis*) - CL  
**Bronzy Hermit** (*Glaucis aeneus*) - CL (two nests found at La Quinta gave us exceptionally good studies of this fast-moving hummingbird).  
 Long-billed Hermit (*Phaethornis longirostris*) - CL (formerly lumped with Long-tailed Hermit).  
 Stripe-throated Hermit (*Phaethornis striigularis*) - CL (formerly lumped with Little Hermit).  
 Scaly-breasted Hummingbird (*Phaeochroa cuvieri*) - CL  
 Violet Sabrewing (*Campylopterus hemileucurus*) - CS  
 White-necked Jacobin (*Florisuga mellivora*) - CL  
 Brown Violet-ear (*Colibri delphinae*) - CS  
 Green Violet-ear (*Colibri thalassinus*) - CM  
 Violet-headed Hummingbird (*Klais guimeti*) - CS  
**Green Thorntail** (*Discosura conversii*) - CS (great looks at this tiny foothill specialty).  
 Violet-crowned Woodnymph (*Thalurania colombica*) - CS  
eh **Fiery-throated Hummingbird** (*Panterpe insignis*) - CM (stunning endemic of the highest elevations, but it takes a while to see all of the colors light up).  
 Rufous-tailed Hummingbird (*Amazilia tzacatl*) - MC, CS, CL  
 Stripe-tailed Hummingbird (*Eupherusa eximia*) - CM  
e **Coppery-headed Emerald** (*Elvira cupreiceps*) - CS (a distinctive species known only from Costa Rica).  
ec Snowcap (*Microchera albocoronata*) - CS (female seen by some in Braulio Carillo NP).  
 Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer (*Chalybura urochrysis*) - CS  
eh Purple-throated Mountain-gem (*Lampornis calolaemus*) - CS  
eh White-throated (Gray-tailed) Mountain-gem (*Lampornis castaneoventris*) - CM  
 Green-crowned Brilliant (*Heliodoxa jacula*) - CS  
 Magnificent Hummingbird (*Eugenes fulgens*) - CM  
 Purple-crowned Fairy (*Heliothryx barroti*) - CL, CS  
eh Magenta-throated Woodstar (*Calliphlox bryantae*) - CS  
eh Volcano Hummingbird (*Selasphorus flammula*) - CM  
eh Scintillant Hummingbird (*Selasphorus scintilla*) - CM  
 Violaceous Trogon (*Trogon violaceus*) - CL  
**Black-throated Trogon** (*Trogon rufus*) - CL (a beautiful male seen twice at the same spot).  
 Slaty-tailed Trogon (*Trogon massena*) - CL  
**Resplendent Quetzal** (*Pharomachrus mocinno*) - CM (two different pairs amidst the oak forests of the beautiful Savegre Valley).  
**Rufous Motmot** (*Baryphthengus martii*) - CL (an especially calm bird that posed for scope studies).  
 Broad-billed Motmot (*Electron platyrhynchum*) - CL  
 Ringed Kingfisher (*Megaceryle torquatus*) - CL  
 Amazon Kingfisher (*Chloroceryle amazona*) - CL  
 Green Kingfisher (*Chloroceryle americana*) - CL  
**American Pygmy Kingfisher** (*Chloroceryle aenea*) - CL (a tiny gem).  
 White-necked Puffbird (*Notharchus hyperrhynchus*) - CL  
**Rufous-tailed Jacamar** (*Galbula ruficauda*) - CL (hawking insects when the sun came out).

**Prong-billed Barbet** (*Semnornis frantzii*) - CS (close pair as the mist descended).  
Emerald Toucanet (*Aulacorhynchus prasinus*) - CS, CM (the endemic “Blue-throated”  
Toucanet (*Aulacorhynchus caeruleogularis*) is sometimes split as a separate species).  
Collared Aracari (*Pteroglossus torquatus*) - CL  
Keel-billed Toucan (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*) - CL  
**Chestnut-mandibled Toucan** (*Ramphastos swainsoni*) - CL, CS (hd) (common and  
conspicuous; sometimes lumped with the Black-billed Toucan (*Ramphastos  
ambiguus*) of the Andes).  
Acorn Woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) - CM  
Black-cheeked Woodpecker (*Melanerpes pucherani*) - CL  
Hoffmann’s Woodpecker (*Melanerpes hoffmannii*) - MC  
Hairy Woodpecker (*Picoides villosus*) - CM (heard only)  
Golden-olive Woodpecker (*Colaptes rubiginosus*) - CS  
Cinnamon Woodpecker (*Celeus loricatus*) - CL (heard only).  
**Chestnut-colored Woodpecker** (*Celeus castaneus*) - CL (posing motionless).  
Lineated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus lineatus*) - CL  
Pale-billed Woodpecker (*Campephilus guatemalensis*) - CL (heard only)  
Red-faced Spinetail (*Cranioleuca erythropis*) - CS  
Spotted Barbtail (*Premnoplex brunnescens*) - CS (by some).  
eh **Ruddy Treerunner** (*Magarornis rubiginosus*) - CM (scurrying around the tree trunks in the  
mixed-flocks in the mountain forest).  
**Buffy Tuftedcheek** (*Pseudocolaptes lawrencii*) - CM (a great, if neck-breaking, study of one  
rummaging through the bromeliads in the high canopy).  
Plain Xenops (*Xenops minutus*) - CL, CS  
Plain-brown Woodcreeper (*Dendrocincla fuliginosa*) - CL  
Wedge-billed Woodcreeper (*Glyphorhynchus spirurus*) - CS, CL  
Northern Barred-Woodcreeper (*Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae*) - CL  
Cocoa Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus susurrans*) - CL  
**Black-striped Woodcreeper** (*Xiphorhynchus lachrymosus*) - CL (great looks at this most  
beautiful of the Central American woodcreepers).  
Spotted Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus erythropygius*) - CS  
Streak-headed Woodcreeper (*Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*) - CL  
Spot-crowned Woodcreeper (*Lepidocolaptes affinis*) - CM  
Fasciated Antshrike (*Cymbilaimus lineatus*) - CL (heard only, though repeatedly).  
Great Antshrike (*Taraba major*) - CL (seen by Terry; heard only by most of us).  
Barred Antshrike (*Thamnophilus doliatus*) - CL  
**Russet Antshrike** (*Thamnistes anabatinus*) - CS (a family group with a mixed-flock at the  
roadside edge, seen repeatedly low down at close range).  
Chestnut-backed Antbird (*Myrmeciza exsul*) - CL, CS (hd)  
Ocellated Antbird (*Phaenostictus mcleannani*) - CL (heard only)  
eh Silvery-fronted Tapaculo (*Scytalopus argentifrons*) - CM (heard only)  
Yellow-bellied Elaenia (*Elaenia flavogaster*) - MC, CS, CL  
Mountain Elaenia (*Elaenia frantzii*) - CS, CM  
**Torrent Tyrannulet** (*Serpophaga cinerea*) - CM (a cute flycatcher, distinctive in appearance  
and habitat).  
Paltry (Mistletoe) Tyrannulet (*Zimmerius villissimus*) - CS, CL, CM  
Common Tody-Flycatcher (*Todirostrum cinereum*) - CL

- Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher (*Todirostrum nigriceps*) - CL (heard only).  
 Yellow-olive Flycatcher (*Tolmomyias sulphureus*) - CL  
 Tufted Flycatcher (*Mitrephanes phaenocercus*) - CS, CM
- eh** Dark Pewee (*Contopus lugubris*) - CM  
 Tropical Pewee (*Contopus cinereus*) - CL (calling to confirm the identification).  
 Yellowish Flycatcher (*Empidonax flavescens*) - CM
- eh** Black-capped Flycatcher (*Empidonax atriceps*) - CM  
 Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*) - CM  
**Long-tailed Tyrant** (*Colonia colonus*) - CL (conspicuous around the La Selva clearings).  
 Bright-rumped Attila (*Attila spadiceus*) - CL  
 Dusky-capped Flycatcher (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) - CL  
 Great Kiskadee (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) - MC, CS, CL  
 Boat-billed Flycatcher (*Megarynchus pitangua*) - CL  
 Social Flycatcher (*Myiozetetes similis*) - MC, CS, CL  
 Gray-capped Flycatcher (*Myiozetetes granadensis*) - CL  
 White-ringed Flycatcher (*Conopias albobittatus*) - CL
- eh** **Golden-bellied Flycatcher** (*Myiodynastes hemichrysus*) - CS, CM (squeaking like a rubber duckie).  
 Piratic Flycatcher (*Legatus leucophaeus*) - CS, CL  
 Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) - all regions
- ec** Gray-headed Piprites (*Piprites griseiceps*) - CS (Will had one in the big mixed-flock).  
 Cinnamon Becard (*Pachyramphus cinnamomeus*) - CL  
 White-winged Becard (*Pachyramphus polychopterus*) - CL  
 Masked Tityra (*Tityra semifasciata*) - CL
- ec** **Snowy Cotinga** (*Carpodectes nitidus*) - CL (great looks at this ethereal specialty, very restricted in range).  
**White-collared Manakin** (*Manacus candei*) - CL (including a close male at a fruiting shrub by the La Selva patio).
- eh** Yellow-winged Vireo (*Vireo carmioli*) - CS, CM  
 Brown-capped Vireo (*Vireo leucophrys*) - CS, CM  
 Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphicus*) - CM  
 Lesser Greenlet (*Hylophilus decurtatus*) - CL  
 Gray-breasted Martin (*Progne chalybea*) - CL  
 Mangrove Swallow (*Tachycineta albilinea*) - CL  
 Blue-and-white Swallow (*Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*) - CS, CM  
 Northern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) - CL  
 Southern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) - CL  
 Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) - CL  
 Band-backed Wren (*Campylorhynchus zonatus*) - CL  
 Rufous-naped Wren (*Campylorhynchus rufinucha*) - MC  
 Bay Wren (*Thryothorus nigricapillus*) - CL
- ec** Stripe-breasted Wren (*Thryothorus thoracicus*) - CL (hd), CS  
 Plain Wren (*Thryothorus modestus*) - CL  
 House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*) - CS (hd), CL
- eh** Ochraceous Wren (*Troglodytes ochraceus*) - CS, CL  
**eh** **Timberline Wren** (*Thryorchilus browni*) - CM (one eventually coaxed out into full view for all as it gave its complex song).

- White-breasted Wood-Wren (*Henicorhina leucosticta*) - CL, CS  
 Gray-breasted Wood-Wren (*Henicorhina leucophrys*) - CS, CM  
 Nightingale Wren (*Microcerculus philomela*) - CS (heard only, but what a song!).  
 Tropical Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila plumbea*) - CL
- eh** Black-faced Solitaire (*Myadestes melanops*) - CS (hd), CM  
**eh** Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush (*Catharus gracilirostris*) - CM  
 Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush (*Catharus frantzii*) - CM  
 Black-headed Nightingale-Thrush (*Catharus mexicanus*) - CS (heard only)  
 Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*) - CL, CS
- eh** Sooty Thrush (*Turdus nigrescens*) - CM  
 Mountain Thrush (*Turdus plebejus*) - CS, CM  
**Clay-colored Thrush** (*Turdus grayi*) - all regions (the national bird of Costa Rica, seen and heard in large numbers, sometimes singing a bit too early in the morning).
- eh** **Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher** (*Ptilogonys caudatus*) - CM (sleek, elegant birds reminiscent of waxwings).  
 Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) - CS, CM  
 Tennessee Warbler (*Vermivora peregrina*) - all regions
- eh** **Flame-throated Warbler** (*Parula gutturalis*) - CM (oh what a beauty!).  
 Tropical Parula (*Parula pitiayumi*) - CS  
 Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*) - MC, CL  
 Chestnut-sided Warbler (*Dendroica pensylvanica*) - CS, CL  
 Black-throated Green Warbler (*Dendroica virens*) - CS, CM  
 Blackburnian Warbler (*Dendroica fusca*) - CS  
 Black-and-white Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*) - CS, CM  
 American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*) - CL  
 Northern Waterthrush (*Seiurus noveboracensis*) - CS, CL  
 Louisiana Waterthrush (*Seiurus motacilla*) - CM  
 Gray-crowned Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis poliocephala*) - CS  
 Wilson's Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla*) - CS, CM  
 Slate-throated Redstart (*Myioborus miniatus*) - CS
- eh** **Collared Redstart** (*Myioborus torquatus*) - CM (the incredibly tame and confiding "amigo de hombre").
- eh** Black-cheeked Warbler (*Basileuterus melanogenys*) - CM  
 Buff-rumped Warbler (*Basileuterus fulvicauda*) - CL (by a few).  
 Bananaquit (*Coereba flaveola*) - CS, CL  
 Common Bush-Tanager (*Chlorospingus ophthalmicus*) - CS, CM
- eh** Sooty-capped Bush-Tanager (*Chlorospingus pileatus*) - CM  
**Black-and-yellow Tanager** (*Chrysothlypis chrysomelas*) - CS (close looks for some).  
 Dusky-faced Tanager (*Mitrospingus cassinii*) - CS
- el** **White-throated Shrike-Tanager** (*Lanio leucothorax*) - CS (the leader of a big mixed-flock inside the foothill forest, perched right in front of us).  
 White-shouldered Tanager (*Tachyphonus luctuosus*) - CS  
 Tawny-crested Tanager (*Tachyphonus delatrii*) - CS (by a few).  
 White-lined Tanager (*Tachyphonus rufus*) - CL  
**Crimson-collared Tanager** (*Ramphocelus sanguinolentus*) - CS, CL (stunning in color).  
**Passerini's Tanager** (*Ramphocelus passerinii*) - CS, CL (not too shabby either).  
 Blue-gray Tanager (*Thraupis episcopus*) - all regions

- Palm Tanager (*Thraupis palmarum*) - CS, CL  
 Blue-and-gold Tanager (*Bangsia arcaei*) - CS  
 Plain-colored Tanager (*Tangara inornata*) - CL  
**Emerald Tanager** (*Tangara florida*) - CS (down low and close at the roadside).  
 Silver-throated Tanager (*Tangara icterocephala*) - CS, CM  
 Speckled Tanager (*Tangara guttata*) - CS  
 Bay-headed Tanager (*Tangara gyrola*) - CS  
 Golden-hooded Tanager (*Tangara larvata*) - CL  
eh **Spangle-cheeked Tanager** (*Tangara dowii*) - CS, CM (beautiful and scarce endemic).  
 Scarlet-thighed Dacnis (*Dacnis venusta*) - CS, CL  
 Blue Dacnis (*Dacnis cayana*) - CL  
 Green Honeycreeper (*Chlorophanes spiza*) - CL, CS  
 Shining Honeycreeper (*Cyanerpes lucidus*) - CL (by a few).  
 Red-legged Honeycreeper (*Cyanerpes cyaneus*) - CS, CL  
 Grayish Saltator (*Saltator coerulescens*) - MC, CL  
 Buff-throated Saltator (*Saltator maximus*) - CS, CL  
 Black-headed Saltator (*Saltator atriceps*) - CL  
 Variable Seedeater (*Sporophila corvina*) - CS, CL  
 White-collared Seedeater (*Sporophila torqueola*) - CS.  
ec **Nicaraguan Seed-Finch** (*Oryzoborus nuttingi*) - CL (several males of this very range-restricted endemic sitting up in the open marsh).  
 Thick-billed Seed-Finch (*Oryzoborus funereus*) - CL  
 Yellow-faced Grassquit (*Tiaris olivacea*) - CM (heard only).  
eh Slaty Flowerpiercer (*Diglossa plumbea*) - CM  
eh **Yellow-thighed Finch** (*Psellophorus tibialis*) - CS, CM (strange birds of the mountain vine tangles).  
eh **Large-footed Finch** (*Pezopetes capitalis*) - CM (lurking in the thickets at high elevations).  
 Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch (*Arremon brunneinucha*) - CS  
 Orange-billed Sparrow (*Arremon aurantirostris*) - CL  
 Black-striped Sparrow (*Arremonops conirostris*) - CL  
 Rufous-collared Sparrow (*Zonotrichia capensis*) - MC, CS, CM  
eh **Volcano Junco** (*Junco vulcani*) - CM (found only in paramo vegetation at the very highest elevations, so a very localized endemic of restricted range).  
 Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*) - CL, CS, CM  
 Flame-colored Tanager (*Piranga bidentata*) - CM  
 Red-throated Ant-Tanager (*Habia fuscicauda*) - CL  
 Carmiol's (Olive) Tanager (*Chlorothraupis carmioli*) - CS  
 Black-faced Grosbeak (*Caryothraustes poliogaster*) - CL, CS  
eh Black-thighed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus tibialis*) - CM  
 Blue-black Grosbeak (*Cyanocompsa cyanoides*) - CL  
 Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) - CL  
 Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*) - MC  
 Melodious Blackbird (*Dives dives*) - MC, CS  
 Great-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) - MC, CS, CL  
 Bronzed Cowbird (*Molothrus aeneus*) - CL  
 Black-cowled Oriole (*Icterus prothemelas*) - CS, CL  
**Yellow-tailed Oriole** (*Icterus mesomelas*) - CL (beautiful in both plumage and song).

Baltimore Oriole (*Icterus galbula*) - CS, CL, CM  
Chestnut-headed Oropendola (*Psarocolius wagleri*) - CS  
**Montezuma Oropendola** (*Gymnostinops montezuma*) - CS, CL (always entertaining, this species takes the prize for the most-interesting sound effects).

el Yellow-crowned Euphonia (*Euphonia luteicapilla*) - CL  
Olive-backed Euphonia (*Euphonia gouldi*) - CL  
Tawny-capped Euphonia (*Euphonia anneae*) - CS (by some).  
Yellow-bellied Siskin (*Carduelis xanthogastra*) - CM  
House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) - CL (introduced).

**Mammal List:** follows the nomenclature in “*A Field Guide to the Mammals of Central America and Southeastern Mexico*” by Fiona Reid.

Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth (*Bradypus variegatus*) - CL, CS  
Hoffmann’s Two-toed Sloth (*Choloepus hoffmanni*) - CL  
insectivorous bats (several sizes) - CL  
White-throated Capuchin (*Cebus capucinus*) - CS (by a few).  
Mantled Howler Monkey (*Alouatta palliata*) - CS, CL (hd)  
Red-tailed Squirrel (*Sciurus granatensis*) - CL, CM (widespread inside moister forests, including at higher elevations).  
Variegated Squirrel (*Sciurus variegatoides*) - MC, CL  
Central American Agouti (*Dasyprocta punctata*) - CL (by a few).  
Collared Peccary (*Tayassu tajacu*) - CL

### **Amphibians & Reptiles:**

Giant (Marine or Cane) Toad (*Bufo marinus*) - CL  
Green-and-black Poison-Dart Frog (*Dendrobates auratus*) - CL  
**Strawberry (Blue Jeans) Poison-Dart Frog** (*Dendrobates pumilio*) - CL  
Spectacled Caiman (*Caiman crocodilus*) - CL  
House Gecko (*Hemidactylus frenatus*) - CL  
**Green Basilisk** (*Basiliscus plumifrons*) - CL (spectacular lizard that looks like a miniature dinosaur).  
**Green (Common) Iguana** (*Iguana iguana*) - CL  
Stream Anole (*Norops oxylophus*) - CL  
medium-sized anole sp? - CL (being bashed by a Cocoa Woodcreeper).  
small anole sp? - CL (down low in the understory at La Selva).  
Green (Malachite) Spiny Lizard (*Sceloporus malachiticus*) - CM (by a few).  
**Central American Whip-tailed Lizard** (*Ameiva festiva*) - CL (on the boardwalk through the small swamp at La Selva).  
**Eyelash Pit-Viper** (*Bothriechis schlegelli*) - CL (a yellow morph individual curled up on an understory shrub).

**And many other fascinating small creatures and plants,** including numerous butterflies; helicopter damselflies; leaf-cutter ants; centipedes; and much more!