

BEST OF COSTA RICA

March 22 – April 3, 2008



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Resplendent Quetzal

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Simply put, Costa Rica is remarkable! There is simply nowhere else in the world where such a small country has so many natural treasures to interest the visitor. Ecotourism has become one of their biggest businesses, and throughout the country people have made it a more friendly place for wildlife. Where else do troops of javelina practically stroll along with the observers, or flocks of toucans troop into isolated trees just overhead, or curassows parade through a parking area? Where else does one see a tinamou slowly strolling a few feet from the group, or hummingbirds vying with tanagers at incredibly active feeding stations, or quetzals carrying on right beside the cabins? Consider the pair of Black-and-white Owls in the town plaza that have become local mascots, or the huge American crocodiles that cause daily traffic jams along the coast highway, or the pairs of Scarlet Macaws over a busy road. We experienced all of this and much, much more on our 2008 Best of Costa Rica tour, as we roamed from the lush Caribbean slope and lowlands to the Pacific moist forests and the temperate forests at high elevations. In each region we found much to delight us.

We began in the lush subtropical forests in the Bosque de Paz area, with comical Prong-billed Barbets duetting, a pair of Orange-bellied Trogons, a bonanza of hummingbirds at the feeders, and gorgeous Spangle-cheeked Tanagers and Golden-browed Chlorophonias at the fruiting figs. Black Guans scrambling all over the feeders were a ridiculous sight; at night, those same feeders attracted a family of pacas, a rarely-seen large rodent. At our first stop in the Carara region we thrilled to Scarlet Macaws in flight, spectacularly lit up by the low afternoon sun. They would be a consistent favorite during our time in this region, but here we also tracked down shy forest skulkers like a Great Tinamou in the trail; had great looks at a ridiculous number of Ruddy Quail-Doves; watched a gorgeous pair of very quiet Brown-hooded Parrots at a nest-hole; saw a rarely-seen Scaly-throated Leaf-tosser in the dark understory; and found normally shy Red-capped and Blue-crowned manakins coming down to bathe right in front of us. We also found five species of gorgeous trogons, including the endemic Baird's, sometimes making it hard to tear our eyes away from them to enjoy the plethora of flycatchers, antbirds, and other forest insectivores foraging through the forest. White-whiskered Puffbirds sat as still as bumps on a log for us, and we found gorgeous Turquoise-browed Motmots in an open garden. A delightful boat trip produced closeups of Boat-billed Herons, Bare-throated Tiger-Herons, Wood Storks, and more, but perhaps the ultimate highlight of this very birdy area was the trifecta of Streak-chested Antpitta, Black-faced Antthrush, and Chestnut-backed Antbird that paraded all around us for a remarkable 15 minutes of closeup viewing!

Our first morning at the world-famous La Selva Field Station in the wet Caribbean lowlands was almost overwhelming, with birds popping out everywhere after an overnight rain. The rarest sightings of the morning were the Pied Puffbird singing from high in the canopy and the male Great Curassow that ran down the path in front of us, but we ended the day with a stunning run of big, special birds in the afternoon: a magnificent Agami Heron perched quietly in the forest shadows; a pair of Great Green Macaws that flew out of the forest directly overhead; yet another Great Tinamou; and, finally, a pair of Crested Guans feeding in a fruiting tree so close at hand we could almost touch them! While in this area we also saw toucans galore; Rufous and Broad-billed motmots hooting and honking inside the rainforest; showy woodpeckers like the Chestnut-colored and Rufous-winged; odd Snowy Cotingas;

Fasciated Antshrikes at point-blank range and a Bare-crowned Antbird in the scope; and sneaky specialties like Black-throated and Stripe-breasted wrens, their songs spectacular.

As we left this region, final stops in the foothills produced “best-ever” looks at several male Snowcaps, and, for some, a stunning male Lattice-tailed Trogon. After the heat and humidity of the tropical lowlands, it was refreshing to end our tour in the delightful Savegre Valley, along a rushing mountain stream amidst the magnificent temperate oak forest. Birds are not as abundant here, but a very high percentage of them are endemic to these highlands and quite unique. We were lucky with most of the high-elevation specialties—it took about 30 seconds to find the Volcano Junco—and had great looks at such scarce ones as Sulphur-winged Parakeets feeding in the croton trees and a singing Black-thighed Grosbeak. The outstanding bird of the area, however, is the Resplendent Quetzal, and both mornings we observed a veritable fiesta of these special birds, as they fluttered around the fruiting “aguatillo” trees, males chasing the females. Some would argue that this is the most beautiful bird in the world, and we certainly wouldn’t disagree.

All too soon it was time to return to San Jose, our grand tour of the highlights of Costa Rica complete.

Itinerary:

March 22: group arrival in San Jose, Costa Rica.

March 23: Morning travel from the Meseta Central to Bosque de Paz; PM: birding the Bosque de Paz gardens and nearby.

March 24: Bosque de Paz Reserve and nearby areas, in the wet subtropical zone.

March 25: AM: Bosque de Paz Reserve; PM: drive to Villa Lapas near Carara NP.

March 26: AM: forest trail at Carara NP; PM: boat trip on the Tarcoles River.

March 27: morning and afternoon excursions on forest trails at Carara NP.

March 28: AM: travel from Villa Lapas to the Meseta Central (with stop at Orotina) and then on to the La Paz Waterfall Garden on the Caribbean slope; in the afternoon we stopped at the “hummingbird house” before driving on to Sueno Azul.

March 29: La Selva Field Station of the OTS, in the wet Caribbean lowlands.

March 30: La Selva Field Station of the OTS; PM Sueno Azul (and La Selva for some).

March 31: AM: Braulio Carillo National Park and nearby in the wet Caribbean foothills; PM: drive to Cerro de la Muerte and the valley of San Gerardo de Dota.

April 1: AM: in the temperate forests and gardens in the upper Savegre Valley near the lodge; PM: back up “the Road” and along the Pan American highway to Villa Mills, for the special birds of the subalpine thickets.

April 2: AM; birding the Savegre Valley; PM: back to San Jose after a final stop in the upper-zone forests.

April 3: departure for home or on-going travels.

Key:

MC = Meseta Central region, in transit.

BP = Bosque de Paz Private Reserve and nearby, at subtropical elevations.

PL = Pacific lowlands in the Carara NP and Tarcoles River area and nearby.

CS = Caribbean slope, including La Paz Waterfall Garden, the hummingbird house at Cinchona, and the Quebrada Gonzalez area of Braulio Carillo National Park. These sites are in the lower subtropical and upper tropical (foothills) zones.

CL = Caribbean lowlands in the Sarapiquí region, especially at the La Selva Field Station of the OTS, around Sueno Azul Lodge, and along the roads in-between.

CM = Cerro de la Muerte, especially the temperate forests, orchards and gardens of the upper Savegre Valley at San Gerardo de Dota, but also to the high point on the Pan-American Highway.

hd = heard

Bird List: a few of our highlights are bolded.

- Great Tinamou** (*Tinamus major*) - PL, CL (seen well in two different areas).
Little Tinamou (*Crypturellus soui*) - CL (heard only)
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) - PL, CL
Gray-headed Chachalaca (*Ortalis cinereiceps*) - CL
Crested Guan (*Penelope purpurascens*) - CL (calmly feeding in the trees right around the labs at La Selva).
Black Guan (*Chamaepetes unicolor*) - BP (scrambling all over the feeders at Bosque de Paz)
Great Curassow (*Crax rubra*) - CL (a male running down the path in front of us).
Spotted Wood-Quail (*Odontophorus guttatus*) - CM (heard only)
Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) - PL (glimpsed offshore as we drove past).
Neotropic Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) - PL, CL
Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*) - PL, CL
Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*) - PL
Bare-throated Tiger-Heron (*Tigrisoma mexicanum*) - PL, CL (a very beautiful member of its family, seen often and well this trip).
Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) - PL, CL
Great Egret (*Ardea alba*) - MC, PL, CL
Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*) - PL, CL
Little Blue Heron (*Egretta caerulea*) - PL, CL
Tricolored Heron (*Egretta tricolor*) - PL
Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) - PL, CL
Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*) - PL, CL
Agami Heron (*Agamia agami*) - CL (full breeding-plumaged adult sitting motionless inside the sun-dappled woodland along a stream).
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*) - PL
Boat-billed Heron (*Cochlearius cochlearius*) - PL (weird birds!).
White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*) - PL
Green Ibis (*Mesembrinibis cayennensis*) - CL (heard only)
Roseate Spoonbill (*Ajaia ajaja*) - PL
Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*) - PL
Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*) - all regions and seen daily.
Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*) - all regions and seen daily.
King Vulture (*Sarcoramphus papa*) - CS (multiple sightings of adults over the foothills).
Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) - PL, CL, CM (dining on trout).
Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*) - PL, CS, CM
White-tailed Kite (*Elanus leucurus*) - CL
Double-toothed Kite (*Harpagus bidentatus*) - PL, CL, CS
Plumbeous Kite (*Ictinia plumbea*) - PL
Semiplumbeous Hawk (*Leucopternis semiplumbeus*) - CL (glimpsed; leaders only?).
White Hawk (*Leucopternis albicollis*) - CS (a bird that made a spectacular dive into an emergent tree and then sat still for long scope views).
Mangrove Black-Hawk (*Buteogallus subtilis*) - PL (from the boat trip on the Tarcoles River; not always split from the Common Black-Hawk (*Buteogallus anthracinus*)).
Great Black-Hawk (*Buteogallus urubitinga*) - CL
Roadside Hawk (*Buteo magnirostris*) - PL, CL
Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*) - BP, CS, CL, CM

Gray Hawk (*Buteo nitidus*) - CL
 Short-tailed Hawk (*Buteo brachyurus*) - BP
 Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) - BP, PL, CL (migrating).
 Zone-tailed Hawk (*Buteo albonotatus*) - CL
 Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) - BP, CM
 Yellow-headed Caracara (*Milvago chimachima*) - PL
 Laughing Falcon (*Herpetotheres cachinnans*) - PL (hd), CL
Bat Falcon (*Falco ruficularis*) - PL (perched low overhead as it tore up a swallow to eat).
 Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) - PL
 White-throated Crake (*Laterallus albigularis*) - CL (glimpsed by a few; mostly heard only).
Gray-necked Wood-Rail (*Aramides cajanea*) - CL (out in the open!).
 Purple Gallinule (*Porphyrio martinica*) - PL, CL
 Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*) - PL
 Northern Jacana (*Jacana spinosa*) - PL, CL
 Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*) - PL, CL
 Solitary Sandpiper (*Tringa solitaria*) - CL
 Willet (*Tringa semipalmata*) - PL
 Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*) - PL
 Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*) - PL
 Laughing Gull (*Larus atricilla*) - PL
 Royal Tern (*Sterna maxima*) - PL
 Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*) - cities and town (feral birds).
 Pale-vented Pigeon (*Patagioenas cayennensis*) - CL
 Scaled Pigeon (*Patagioenas speciosa*) - CL
 Red-billed Pigeon (*Patagioenas flavirostris*) - MC, PL, CS, CL
 Band-tailed Pigeon (*Patagioenas fasciata*) - BP, CM
 Ruddy Pigeon (*Patagioenas subvinacea*) - CM
 Short-billed Pigeon (*Patagioenas nigrirostris*) - PL, CL
 White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*) - MC, PL
 Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*) - MC (from the bus).
 Inca Dove (*Columbina inca*) - MC, PL
 Ruddy Ground-Dove (*Columbina talpacoti*) - PL, CL
 White-tipped Dove (*Leptotila verreauxi*) - BP, MC, CL, CM
 Gray-chested Dove (*Leptotila cassini*) - PL (hd), CL
Ruddy Quail-Dove (*Geotrygon montana*) - CL (seen often and well inside the forest at Carara this year, quite unexpectedly).
Sulphur-winged Parakeet (*Pyrrhura hoffmanni*) - CM (feeding quietly inside the canopy).
 Crimson-fronted Parakeet (*Aratinga finschi*) - PL, MC
 Olive-throated Parakeet (*Aratinga nana*) - CL
Great Green Macaw (*Ara ambiguus*) - CL (a noisy pair that flew right overhead).
Scarlet Macaw (*Ara macao*) - PL (a thrilling sight each of the many times that we saw them).
 Orange-chinned Parakeet (*Brotogeris jugularis*) - PL, CL
Brown-hooded Parrot (*Pionopsitta haematotis*) - PL, CL (including closeups of a very quiet pair at their nesthole inside the forest at Carara).
 White-crowned Parrot (*Pionus senilis*) - BP, CL
 White-fronted Parrot (*Amazona albifrons*) - MC (glimpsed from the bus).
 Red-lored Parrot (*Amazona autumnalis*) - PL, CL

Mealy Parrot (*Amazona farinosa*) - PL, CL
 Squirrel Cuckoo (*Piaya cayana*) - PL, CL
Mangrove Cuckoo (*Coccyzus minor*) - PL (great looks at this surprise, in the mangroves).
 Groove-billed Ani (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*) - PL, CL
Crested Owl (*Lophotrix cristata*) - CL (at its day roost on the final return to La Selva).
 Spectacled Owl (*Pulsatrix perspicillata*) - CL (heard only)
 Central American Pygmy-Owl (*Glaucidium griseiceps*) - CS (heard only)
 Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl (*Glaucidium brasilianum*) - PL
 Mottled Owl (*Ciccaba virgata*) - CM (heard only; by Roy).
Black-and-white Owl (*Ciccaba nigrolineata*) - PL (the town “mascots” at their day roost in the plaza in the middle of Orotina village).
 Common Pauraque (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) - PL, CL
 Chestnut-collared Swift (*Streptoprocne rutila*) - BP, CS
 White-collared Swift (*Streptoprocne zonaris*) - BP, CS, CL, CM
 Vaux’s Swift (*Chaetura vauxi*) - MC, BP
 Costa Rican Swift (*Chaetura fumosa*) - PL (a recent split from Band-rumped Swift (*Chaetura spinicauda*)).
 Gray-rumped Swift (*Chaetura cinereiventris*) - CL
 Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift (*Panyptila cayennensis*) - CL
 Bronzy Hermit (*Glaucis aeneus*) - CL
 Green Hermit (*Phaethornis guy*) - BP, CS
 Long-billed (Western Long-tailed) Hermit (*Phaethornis longirostris*) - PL (formerly considered a race of Long-tailed Hermit).
 Stripe-throated Hermit (*Phaethornis striigularis*) - PL (formerly considered a race of the Little Hermit).
 Scaly-breasted Hummingbird (*Phaeochroa cuvierii*) - PL
 Violet Sabrewing (*Campylopterus hemileucurus*) - BP, CS
 White-necked Jacobin (*Florisuga mellivora*) - CL, CS
Brown Violet-ear (*Colibri delphinae*) - CS (an uncommonly seen species).
 Green Violet-ear (*Colibri thalassinus*) - CS, CM
 Violet-headed Hummingbird (*Klais guimeti*) - CS
 Black-crested Coquette (*Lophornis helenae*) - CS (female seen by a few).
 Green Thorntail (*Discosura conversii*) - CS
 Violet-crowned Woodnymph (*Thalurania colombica*) - CL, CS
Fiery-throated Hummingbird (*Panterpe insignis*) - CM (inches from us at the feeders at the restaurant on the crest of Cerro de la Muerte).
 Charming Hummingbird (*Polyerata amabilis*) - PL
 Steely-vented Hummingbird (*Saucerottia saucerrottei*) - PL
 Rufous-tailed Hummingbird (*Amazilia tzacatl*) - PL, CS, CL
 Black-bellied Hummingbird (*Eupherusa nigriventris*) - CS
 Coppery-headed Emerald (*Elvira cupreiceps*) - CS (a true Costa Rican endemic).
Snowcap (*Microchera albocoronata*) - CS (the best looks ever at this incredible hummer).
 Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer (*Chalybura urochrysis*) - CL
 Purple-throated Mountain-gem (*Lampornis calolaema*) - BP, CS
 White-throated Mountain-gem (*Lampornis castaneoventris*) - CM
 Green-crowned Brilliant (*Heliodoxa jacula*) - BP, CS
 Magnificent Hummingbird (*Eugenes fulgens*) - BP, CM

Purple-crowned Fairy (*Heliothryx barroti*) - PL, CL
Magenta-throated Woodstar (*Calliphlox bryantae*) - BP (took a while for all to see them).
Volcano Hummingbird (*Selasphorus flammula*) - CM
Scintillant Hummingbird (*Selasphorus scintilla*) - BP, CM
Black-headed Trogon (*Trogon melanocephalus*) - PL
Baird's Trogon (*Trogon bairdii*) - PL (great looks at this range-restricted endemic).
Violaceous Trogon (*Trogon violaceus*) - PL, CL
Collared Trogon (*Trogon collaris*) - CM
Orange-bellied Trogon (*Trogon aurantiiventris*) - BP
Black-throated Trogon (*Trogon rufus*) - PL, CL
Slaty-tailed Trogon (*Trogon massena*) - PL, CL
Lattice-tailed Trogon (*Trogon clathratus*) - CS (Caribbean foothill specialty).
Resplendent Quetzal (*Pharomachrus mocinno*) - CM (Costa Rica's "wow bird").
Blue-crowned Motmot (*Momotus momota*) - PL
Rufous Motmot (*Baryphthengus martii*) - BP, CL (especially the lodge mascot as Bosque de Paz; it sat right outside of our rooms hooting).
Broad-billed Motmot (*Electron platyrhynchum*) - CL, CS
Turquoise-browed Motmot (*Eumomota superciliosa*) - PL
Ringed Kingfisher (*Ceryle torquata*) - PL, CL
Amazon Kingfisher (*Chloroceryle amazona*) - PL, CL
Green Kingfisher (*Chloroceryle americana*) - PL, CL
White-necked Puffbird (*Notharchus macrorhynchos*) - CL
Pied Puffbird (*Notharchus tectus*) - CL (singing from the highest emergent trees).
White-whiskered Puffbird (*Malacoptila panamensis*) - PL, CL (motionless in the shady understory).
Rufous-tailed Jacamar (*Galbula ruficauda*) - CL (seen by only a few).
Red-headed Barbet (*Eubucco bourcierii*) - BP
Prong-billed Barbet (*Semnornis frantzii*) - BP, CS (seen from only a few feet away).
Blue-throated Toucanet (*Aulacorhynchus caeruleogularis*) - BP, CM (split from Emerald Toucanet).
Collared Aracari (*Pteroglossus torquatus*) - CL
Fiery-billed Aracari (*Pteroglossus frantzii*) - PL (well-concealed until it flew).
Keel-billed Toucan (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*) - CL
Chestnut-mandibled Toucan (*Ramphastos swainsoni*) - PL, CL, CS (hd) (spectacular pair at nesthole by the rooms at Villa Lapas, and then flocks of up to 20 in the Caribbean lowlands; sometimes lumped with the Black-billed Toucan (*Ramphastos ambiguus*)).
Acorn Woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) - BP, CM
Golden-naped Woodpecker (*Melanerpes chrysauchen*) - PL (low down inside the forest for great looks at this uncommon species).
Black-cheeked Woodpecker (*Melanerpes pucherani*) - CL, CS
Hoffmann's Woodpecker (*Melanerpes hoffmannii*) - MC, PL
Hairy Woodpecker (*Picoides villosus*) - BP, CM
Smoky-brown Woodpecker (*Veniliornis fumigatus*) - BP, CL
Rufous-winged Woodpecker (*Piculus simplex*) - CL (an uncommon specialty).
Chestnut-colored Woodpecker (*Celeus castaneus*) - CL (gorgeous)
Lineated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus lineatus*) - CL
Pale-billed Woodpecker (*Campephilus guatemalensis*) - PL, CL (hd)

Red-faced Spinetail (*Cranioleuca erythroptera*) - BP
 Spotted Barbtail (*Premnoplex brunnescens*) - BP
 Ruddy Treerunner (*Magarornis rubiginosus*) - BP, CM
Buffy Tuftedcheek (*Pseudocolaptes lawrencii*) - CM (ripping through the big tank bromeliads in search of food, a unique foraging niche).
 Lined Foliage-gleaner (*Syndactyla subalaris*) - BP
 Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner (*Automolus ochrolaemus*) - PL
 Streak-breasted Treehunter (*Thripadectes rufobrunneus*) - BP (seen by a few).
 Plain Xenops (*Xenops minutus*) - PL
Scaly-throated Leaf-tosser (*Sclerurus guatemalensis*) - PL (rarely-seen skulker of the dark forest floor).
 Wedge-billed Woodcreeper (*Glyphorhynchus spirurus*) - PL, CL, CS
 Northern Barred-Woodcreeper (*Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae*) - CL
 Cocoa Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus susurrans*) - PL, CL (recent split from the Buff-throated Woodcreeper).
Black-striped Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus lachrymosus*) - PL (the most beautiful of its family in Central America).
 Streak-headed Woodcreeper (*Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*) - PL, CL
 Spot-crowned Woodcreeper (*Lepidocolaptes affinis*) - BP, CM
Fasciated Antshrike (*Cymbilaimus lineatus*) - CL (at close range several times).
 Great Antshrike (*Taraba major*) - CL (seen by a few).
 Barred Antshrike (*Thamnophilus doliatus*) - PL, CL (hd)
 Black-hooded Antshrike (*Thamnophilus bridgesi*) - PL
 Russet Antshrike (*Thamnistes anabatinus*) - PL
 Dot-winged Antwren (*Microrhophias quixensis*) - PL
 Dusky Antbird (*Cercomacra tyrannina*) - PL
Bare-crowned Antbird (*Gymnocichla nudiceps*) - CL (in the scope, eventually).
 Chestnut-backed Antbird (*Myrmeciza exsul*) - PL
Black-faced Antthrush (*Formicarius analis*) - PL (strutting on the shady forest floor).
Streak-chested (Spectacled) Antpitta (*Hylopezus perspicillatus*) - PL (the “egg with legs” hopping all around us on the open shaded forest floor, for a remarkable 15 minutes!).
 Silvery-fronted Tapaculo (*Scytalopus argentifrons*) - BP (heard only).
 Yellow Tyrannulet (*Capsiempis flaveola*) - CL
 Greenish Elaenia (*Myiopagis viridicata*) - PL
 Yellow-bellied Elaenia (*Elaenia flavogaster*) - CL
 Mountain Elaenia (*Elaenia frantzii*) - BP, CM
 Torrent Tyrannulet (*Serpophaga cinerea*) - BP, CM
 Olive-striped Flycatcher (*Mionectes olivaceus*) - BP
 Ochre-bellied Flycatcher (*Mionectes oleagineus*) - PL
 Paltry Tyrannulet (*Zimmerius villissimus*) - CL, CM
 Northern Bentbill (*Oncostoma cinereigulare*) - PL
 Common Tody-Flycatcher (*Todirostrum cinereum*) - PL, CL
 Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher (*Todirostrum nigriceps*) - CL
 Eye-ringed Flatbird (*Rhynchocyclus brevirostris*) - PL
 Yellow-olive Flycatcher (*Tolmomyias sulphurescens*) - PL, CL
 Northern Royal Flycatcher (*Onychorhynchus mexicanus*) - CL (by a few).
 Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher (*Myiobius sulphureipygius*) - PL

Tufted Flycatcher (*Mitrephanes phaenocercus*) - BP, CM
 Olive-sided Flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*) - PL
 Dark Pewee (*Contopus lugubris*) - BP, CM
 Tropical Pewee (*Contopus cinereus*) - CL
 Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (*Empidonax flaviventris*) - PL
 Yellowish Flycatcher (*Empidonax flavescens*) - BP, CM
 Black-capped Flycatcher (*Empidonax atriceps*) - CM
 Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*) - BP, CL
 Long-tailed Tyrant (*Colonia colonus*) - CL
 Bright-rumped Attila (*Attila spadiceus*) - PL, CL
 Rufous Mourner (*Rhytipterna holerythra*) - CL, CS
 Dusky-capped Flycatcher (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) - PL, CL
 Great Crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus crinitus*) - PL
 Great Kiskadee (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) - MC, PL, CS, CL
 Boat-billed Flycatcher (*Megarynchus pitangua*) - BP, PL, CL, CM
 Social Flycatcher (*Myiozetetes similis*) - BP, PL, CL
 Gray-capped Flycatcher (*Myiozetetes granadensis*) - PL, CL
 White-ringed Flycatcher (*Conopias albobittata*) - CL (the scarcest of the confusing look-alikes and confined to the treetops, but we had good looks).
 Golden-bellied Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes hemichrysus*) - BP
 Streaked Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes maculatus*) - PL
 Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes luteiventris*) - CL
 Piratic Flycatcher (*Legatus leucophaeus*) - PL, CL
 Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) - all regions
 Thrush-like Schiffornis (*Schiffornis turdina*) - PL (heard and glimpsed shooting past).
 Barred Becard (*Pachyramphus versicolor*) - BP
 Cinnamon Becard (*Pachyramphus cinnamomeus*) - CL
 White-winged Becard (*Pachyramphus polychopterus*) - CL
Rose-throated Becard (*Pachyramphus aglaiae*) - PL (including pairs nest-building, by wrapping long strands of material around the down-hanging pouch while in flight).
 Masked Tityra (*Tityra semifasciata*) - BP, PL, CL
 Black-crowned Tityra (*Tityra inquisitor*) - CL
Snowy Cotinga (*Carpodectes nitidus*) - CL (ethereal specialty of the Caribbean lowlands).
 White-collared Manakin (*Manacus candei*) - CL
Orange-collared Manakin (*Manacus aurantiacus*) - PL (active lek of displaying males).
 Blue-crowned Manakin (*Lepidothrix coronata*) - PL
Red-capped Manakin (*Pipra mentalis*) - PL (coming down to bathe right in front of us).
 Yellow-winged Vireo (*Vireo carmioli*) - BP, CM
 Brown-capped Vireo (*Vireo leucophrys*) - BP, CM
 Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphicus*) - PL, CM
 Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*) - PL, CL, CM
 Yellow-green Vireo (*Vireo flavoviridis*) - MC (hd), PL
 Lesser Greenlet (*Hylophilus decurtatus*) - PL, CL, CS (hd)
 Green Shrike-Vireo (*Vireolanius pulchellus*) - PL (hd)
 Rufous-browed Peppershrike (*Cyclarhis gujanensis*) - BP, PL
 Brown Jay (*Cyanocorax morio*) - BP, PL
 Gray-breasted Martin (*Progne chalybea*) - PL, CL

Mangrove Swallow (*Tachycineta albilinea*) - PL, CL
 Blue-and-white Swallow (*Notiochelidon cyanoleuca*) - MC, BP, CS, CM
 Northern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) - PL
 Southern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) - CL
 Bank Swallow (*Riparia riparia*) - PL
 Cliff Swallow (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*) - PL
 Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) - MC, PL, CL
 Band-backed Wren (*Campylorhynchus zonatus*) - CL
 Rufous-naped Wren (*Campylorhynchus rufinucha*) - PL
Black-throated Wren (*Thryothorus atrogularis*) - CL (this specialty with the beautiful song took patience and persistence; a real skulker).
Black-bellied Wren (*Thryothorus fasciatoventris*) - PL (remarkably easy to see this trip).
 Bay Wren (*Thryothorus nigricapillus*) - CL
 Riverside Wren (*Thryothorus semibadius*) - PL
 Stripe-breasted Wren (*Thryothorus thoracicus*) - CL, CS
 Rufous-breasted Wren (*Thryothorus rutilus*) - PL
 Rufous-and-white Wren (*Thryothorus rufalbus*) - PL
 House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*) - MC (hd), BP, PL, CS, CL
 Ochraceous Wren (*Troglodytes ochraceus*) - BP, CM
 Timberline Wren (*Thryorchilus browni*) - CM (heard only; very quiet and unresponsive).
 White-breasted Wood-Wren (*Henicorhina leucosticta*) - CL
 Gray-breasted Wood-Wren (*Henicorhina leucophrys*) - BP, CS (hd), CM
 Scaly-breasted (Southern Nightingale) Wren (*Micocerculus marginatus*) - PL
 American Dipper (*Cinclus mexicanus*) - BP
 Long-billed Gnatwren (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) - PL, CL
 Tropical Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila plumbea*) - PL CL (hd) (seen by only a few).
Black-faced Solitaire (*Myadestes melanops*) - BP, CM (delightful songs in the cloud forest).
 Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush (*Catharus gracilirostris*) - CM
 Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrush (*Catharus fuscater*) - CS
 Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush (*Catharus frantzii*) - BP, CM
 Swainson's Thrush (*Catharus ustulatus*) - PL, CL, CM
 Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*) - CS, CL
 Sooty Robin (*Turdus nigrescens*) - CM
 Mountain Robin (*Turdus plebejus*) - BP, CM
Clay-colored Robin (*Turdus grayi*) - all regions and seen every day (the national bird of Costa Rica, seen and heard in large numbers, sometimes singing a bit too early in the morning).
Black-and-yellow Silky-Flycatcher (*Phainoptila melanothorax*) - BP, CM (quite unique).
Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher (*Ptilogonys caudatus*) - BP, CM (elegant birds characteristic of the higher montane regions).
 Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) - BP, CS, CM
 Tennessee Warbler (*Vermivora peregrina*) - MC, CS, CL, CM
 Flame-throated Warbler (*Parula gutturalis*) - BP, CM
 Tropical Parula (*Parula pitiayumi*) - BP, PL (hd)
 Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*) - PL, CL (including a beautiful adult male **"Mangrove"** Warbler near the Tarcoles River, sometimes considered a separate species).
 Chestnut-sided Warbler (*Dendroica pensylvanica*) - PL, CL
 Black-throated Green Warbler (*Dendroica virens*) - BP, CM

Townsend's Warbler (*Dendroica townsendi*) - CM (brilliant adult male at Savegre; rare).
 Blackburnian Warbler (*Dendroica fusca*) - CS
 Black-and-white Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*) - BP, PL
 Northern Waterthrush (*Seiurus noveboracensis*) - PL, CL
 Wilson's Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla*) - BP, CM
 Slate-throated Redstart (*Myioborus miniatus*) - BP
Collared Redstart (*Myioborus torquatus*) - BP, CM (delightfully tame and confiding).
 Black-cheeked Warbler (*Basileuterus melanogenys*) - BP
 Three-striped Warbler (*Basileuterus tristriatus*) - BP
Buff-rumped Warbler (*Basileuterus fulvicauda*) - PL, CL (a surprising number of good looks at this species on this trip).
 Bananaquit (*Coerebe flaveola*) - CS, CL
 Common Bush-Tanager (*Chlorospingus ophthalmicus*) - BP, CS, CM
 Sooty-capped Bush-Tanager (*Chlorospingus pileatus*) - BP, CM
 Black-and-yellow Tanager (*Chrysothlypis chrysomelaena*) - CS
 Gray-headed Tanager (*Eucometis penicillata*) - PL
 White-throated Shrike-Tanager (*Lanio leucothorax*) - CS
 White-shouldered Tanager (*Tachyphonus luctuosus*) - PL
 Tawny-crested Tanager (*Tachyphonus delatrii*) - CS
 White-lined Tanager (*Tachyphonus rufus*) - CL
 Red-throated Ant-Tanager (*Habia fuscicauda*) - CL (heard only)
 Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*) - BP, PL, CS, CL
 Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*) - CL
 Flame-colored Tanager (*Piranga bidentata*) - CM
Crimson-collared Tanager (*Ramphocelus sanguinolentus*) - CS (stunning in color).
 Passerini's Tanager (*Ramphocelus passerinii*) - CS, CL (not too shabby either).
 Cherrie's Tanager (*Ramphocelus costaricensis*) - PL (Scarlet-rumped Tanager was split into this and the preceding species; the females differ more than the males).
 Blue-gray Tanager (*Thraupis episcopus*) - all regions and seen daily.
 Palm Tanager (*Thraupis palmarum*) - MC, PL, CL
 Plain-colored Tanager (*Tangara inornata*) - CL
 Silver-throated Tanager (*Tangara icterocephala*) - BP, CS, CM
 Speckled Tanager (*Tangara guttata*) - CS
 Bay-headed Tanager (*Tangara gyrola*) - PL
 Golden-hooded Tanager (*Tangara larvata*) - PL, CL, CS
Spangle-cheeked Tanager (*Tangara dowii*) - BP, CM (beautiful endemic, down low and close in good sunlight several times).
 Scarlet-thighed Dacnis (*Dacnis venusta*) - BP
 Blue Dacnis (*Dacnis cayana*) - CL
 Green Honeycreeper (*Chlorophanes spiza*) - PL, CL, CS
 Shining Honeycreeper (*Cyanerpes lucidus*) - CL
 Red-legged Honeycreeper (*Cyanerpes cyaneus*) - PL
 Variable Seedeater (*Sporophila corvina*) - BP, CS, CL
 Thick-billed Seed-Finch (*Oryzoborus funereus*) - CL
 Yellow-faced Grassquit (*Tiaris olivacea*) - BP, CS, CM
 Slaty Flowerpiercer (*Diglossa plumbea*) - BP, CM
Yellow-thighed Finch (*Psellophorus tibialis*) - BP, CS, CM (unique endemic, seen well).

Large-footed Finch (*Pezopetes capitalis*) - CM
Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch (*Buarremon brunneinucha*) - BP
Orange-billed Sparrow (*Arremon aurantirostris*) - PL, CL
Black-striped Sparrow (*Arremonops conirostris*) - CL
Rufous-collared Sparrow (*Zonotrichia capensis*) - BP, CS, MC, CM
Volcano Junco (*Junco vulcani*) - CM (the highest-elevation endemic of these mountains).
Grayish Saltator (*Saltator coerulescens*) - CS
Buff-throated Saltator (*Saltator maximus*) - PL, CS, CL
Black-headed Saltator (*Saltator atriceps*) - CL
Black-faced Grosbeak (*Caryothraustes poliogaster*) - CL, CS
Black-thighed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus tibialis*) - CM (beautiful looks once we finally tracked them down as they fed quietly in the canopy).
Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) - PL, CS, CM
Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*) - PL (by a few).
Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) - PL (at the southern limit of their range).
Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*) - MC
Melodious Blackbird (*Dives dives*) - MC, PL
Great-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) - MC, BP, PL, CS, CL
Bronzed Cowbird (*Molothrus aeneus*) - BP, CL
Black-cowled Oriole (*Icterus prothemelas*) - CL
Yellow-tailed Oriole (*Icterus mesomelas*) - CL
Baltimore Oriole (*Icterus galbula*) - PL, CS, CL, CM
Scarlet-rumped Cacique (*Cacicus uropygialis*) - CL
Chestnut-headed Oropendola (*Psarocolius wagleri*) - PL, CL
Montezuma Oropendola (*Psarocolius (Gymnostinops) montezuma*) - MC, CL (a noisy and conspicuous favorite).
Scrub Euphonia (*Euphonia affinis*) - PL
Yellow-crowned Euphonia (*Euphonia luteicapilla*) - CL
Thick-billed Euphonia (*Euphonia lanirostris*) - PL
Olive-backed Euphonia (*Euphonia gouldi*) - CL
Tawny-capped Euphonia (*Euphonia anneae*) - CS
Golden-browed Chlorophonia (*Chlorophonia callophrys*) - BP (exquisite little fig-feeders).
Yellow-bellied Siskin (*Carduelis xanthogastra*) - CM
House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) - CL, MC

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*) - PL
yellow bat? (possibly *Lasiurus sp?*) - PL (roosting on trunk of tall forest tree at Carara).
insectivorous bats (several sizes)
White-faced Capuchin (*Cebus capucinus*) - CS (by a few)
Mantled Howler (*Alouatta palliata*) - CL (heard only).
Variegated Squirrel (*Sciurus variegatoides*) - BP, PL, CL
Red-tailed Squirrel (*Sciurus granatensis*) - BP, CS, CM (inside moister forests).
Central American Agouti (*Dasyprocta punctata*) - BP
Paca (*Agouti paca*) - BP
White-nosed Coati (*Nasua narica*) - BP, PL, CS, CL
Collared Peccary (*Tayassu tajacu*) - CL

Amphibians & Reptiles: follows “A Guide to Amphibians and Reptiles of Costa Rica” by Twan Leenders. This was a great group for spotting herps, but many remain unidentified to species.

Green and Black Poison-Dart Frog (*Dendrobates auratus*) - PL
Strawberry Poison-Dart Frog (*Dendrobates pumilio*) - CL (“blue jeans frog”).
Spectacled Caiman (*Caiman crocodilus*) - PL
American Crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*) - PL
Black Wood Turtle (*Rhinoclemys funerea*) - CL
House Gecko (*Hemidactylus frenatus*) - introduced
Common Basilisk (*Basiliscus basiliscus*) - PL
Striped Basilisk (*Basiliscus vittatus*) - CL
Black Spiny-tailed Iguana (*Ctenosaura similis*) - PL (“false iguana” or “ctenosaur”).
Green Iguana (*Iguana iguana*) - CL
anoles (various sizes) - PL, CL
Green Spiny Lizard (*Sceloporus malachiticus*) - CM
Central American Whip-tailed Lizard (*Ameiva festiva*) - PL, CL (fairly large brown lizard common in the leaf litter at Carara NP and La Selva; variable in color with race and age).
very thin brown snake - CL
Fer-de-lance (*Bothrops asper*) – CL