

# **BEST OF COSTA RICA**

**MARCH 16 – 28, 2013**



**ORANGE-COLLARED MANAKIN © DAVID WOLF**

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**TOUR REPORT  
BEST OF COSTA RICA  
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**By David E. Wolf**

Small in size, but huge in possibilities, Costa Rica is simply amazing! There are few other places in the world where such a great diversity of birds and other wildlife can be seen so readily and in such a small area, and our 2013 Best of Costa Rica tour took full advantage of this wealth as we roamed from one side of the country to the other. Costa Rica has done much to promote conservation and this really paid off for us, with an astounding number of birds seen on the trip. More important, most of them were seen well, including many large and spectacular species that have declined over much of their ranges. Song and nesting activity were high, yielding many photo opportunities. We visited a wide variety of habitats and all the while we learned more about these wonderful tropical birds and their environments. Such is the joy of birding in Costa Rica!

This tour covered four very different regions, each producing its own specialties and surprises. After spotting our first birds in the hotel garden in San Jose, we traveled to the wet subtropical zone on the flanks of Volcan Poas; at our first stop, sleek Long-tailed Silky-flycatchers appeared in the treetops and a responsive trio of unique Prong-billed Barbets landed right in front of us. Nearby, the lush gardens and forests of Bosque de Paz provided a nice selection of subtropical birds, including a ridiculous number of very bold Black Guans coming to the feeders and sparkling Golden-browed Chlorophonias and Spangle-cheeked Tanagers in the fruiting shrubs. After dark a family of Pacas, a large and rarely seen nocturnal rodent, interrupted our dinner when they appeared at the feeders. Walks inside the forest produced little birds like Slaty Antwren and Spotted Barbtail, and scope views of a very cooperative Lineated Foliage-gleaner, while along the road we enjoyed fledgling American Dippers just out of the nest, and puzzled over hybrid trogons. Hummingbird feeders here and at the nearby Catarata de Toro were swarming with birds, and we found multiples of such little-known gems as Black-bellied Hummingbird, Coppery-headed Emerald, Green Thorntail, and White-bellied Mountain-gem amidst the commoner species.

From the wet subtropics we moved across the highlands and down to the dry Pacific lowlands. As always, the partially deciduous forests of Carara National Park were incredibly birdy, with a seemingly endless array of forest birds revealing themselves. Scarlet Macaws, the signature species of this region, thrilled us every time we saw them, while colorful Fiery-billed Aracaris in the canopy paused to give us scope views, a Black-faced Antthrush paraded around on the open forest floor, a pair of stunning Baird's Trogons sat motionless in the midstory right above us, and colorful little Orange-collared Manakins snapped and buzzed at a lek right beside the path. A very successful afternoon boat trip on the Tarcoles River gave us a break from the forest birding and yielded 10 species of the heron family, including a Bare-throated Tiger-Heron that forced down a large dead catbird, plus all five kingfishers possible (among them a very close and bold Pygmy), a cooperative Panama Flycatcher, and a lovely pair of Turquoise-browed Motmots, among many other birds.

We then went back across the highlands to the wet Caribbean lowlands, with impromptu stops en route producing a Plain-capped Starthroat feeding a large chick in a nest on a utility pole and an amazing Great Potoo perched atop an open dead snag by the roadside. A spectacular morning greeted us the next day at the world-renowned La Selva Research Station, as birds popped out everywhere our first few hours afield, along what we deemed “the best hundred yards of birding anywhere.” They included parrots; toucans; trogons; a Pied Puffbird; a pair of Rufous-tailed Jacamars; motmots; woodpeckers including Rufous-winged, Cinnamon, and Chestnut-colored; woodcreepers; tanagers; and many others. Later we would have repeated close-up looks at remarkably bold Great Curassows and Crested Guans, both of which have been extirpated in many areas by hunting and clearing of the forest, but here have become a frequent sight. Our final afternoon at La Selva was very humid and still, initially with little bird activity, but we soon located a much-prized Great Tinamou and spent 15 minutes watching it at close range. Then, as we crossed the footbridge to return to the bus, a Sungrebe was spotted in the river below us, calmly foraging in the tree roots overhanging the water. As if that weren’t reward enough, a raucous commotion sounded off just ahead, right behind the main station buildings—and proved to be a spectacular pair of endangered Great Green Macaws perched in full view in gorgeous late afternoon light!

A travel day to our final destination gave us a chance to bird the rugged Caribbean foothills a little, picking up birds like a Fasciated Tiger-Heron fishing in a clear rocky stream, a trio of King Vultures up and soaring overhead, tiny male Black-crested Coquette and Snowcap hummingbirds dancing around the verbena flowers, and a Dull-mantled Antbird literally at our feet. Then it was on to the cool highlands and the delightful Savegre Valley, where we found our first, never to be forgotten, Resplendent Quetzals before even reaching our lodge. Some would argue that this is the most beautiful bird in the world and after watching them at close range we certainly wouldn’t disagree. Later we would return to watch these birds again—with a bird like this one can never get enough!

Birds are not as abundant in the Costa Rica highlands as in the lowlands, but a high percentage of those present are endemic to this small region, which barely extends into western Panama, and many are unique. At first we birded the spectacular lodge gardens and nearby woodlots and rushing stream, getting acquainted with soon-to-be favorites like the Ruddy Treerunner, Flame-throated and Black-cheeked warblers, Collared Redstart, and Yellow-thighed Finch. Later we drove up to the high country on Cerro de la Muerte to search for the specialties of the highest elevations. Here the very range-restricted Volcano Junco hopped up to us within minutes of our arrival and proved itself to be a very entertaining little bird, while it took some effort to coax the Timberline Wren and strange Large-footed Finches out of the bamboo. Our final morning here was highlighted by a singing Ochraceous Pewee, one of the rarest of the endemics. All too soon it was time to head back to San Jose, our grand tour of some of the best birding areas in Costa Rica complete.

### Itinerary:

**March 16:** arrival in San Jose, Costa Rica.

**March 17:** morning travel from San Jose and the Meseta Central (after birding the garden at the Cariari) to Bosque de Paz and then afternoon birding around Bosque de Paz.

**March 18:** morning birding around Bosque de Paz and afternoon excursion to the Catarata del Toro waterfall and hummingbird garden.

**March 19:** morning birding at Bosque de Paz and then afternoon travel to the Pacific lowlands in the Carara NP region.

**March 20:** morning birding in Carara National Park and then an afternoon boat trip on the nearby Tarcoles River.

**March 21:** morning and afternoon hikes inside the forest in Carara NP, especially in the Quebrada Bonita area.

**March 22:** birding around the grounds at Villa Lapas before travel to the Caribbean slope at La Paz Waterfall Garden and a late afternoon arrival in the Caribbean lowlands at Sueno Azul.

**March 23:** morning and afternoon excursions to the La Selva Field Station of the Organization of Tropical Studies (OTS), with midday break at Sueno Azul.

**March 24:** morning and afternoon excursions to La Selva.

**March 25:** morning birding in the Quebrada Gonzalez area of Braulio Carillo NP and nearby, and then afternoon travel to the Savegre Valley on Cerro de la Muerte.

**March 26:** morning birding the beautiful Savegre Valley and then an afternoon excursion to the high country on Cerro de la Muerte.

**March 27:** morning birding the Savegre Valley and then afternoon drive to San Jose.

**March 28:** departure for flights home.

### Key:

MC = Meseta Central

BP = Bosque de Paz Private Reserve and nearby, in the wet subtropical rainforest at mid-elevations on the Caribbean slope.

PL = the Pacific lowlands in the Carara National Park region, including the Tarcoles River and the grounds at Villa Lapas.

CS = the wet Caribbean foothills at the La Paz Waterfall Garden and then again in the Quebrada Gonzalez area of Braulio Carillo NP a few days later.

CL = the Caribbean lowlands from Sueno Azul to the La Selva Field Station and nearby.

CM = Cerro de la Muerte area, especially the Savegre Valley and nearby, but also the high country near "the towers".

**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.

**ep** = endemic to the moist Pacific lowlands of southern Costa Rica and far western Panama.

**el** = endemic to the Caribbean and Pacific lowlands of Costa Rica and Panama.

**hd** =

**Bird List:** Follows *The A.O.U. Check-list of North American Birds, Seventh Edition* and supplements. A few of our many highlights are **bolded**.

**Great Tinamou** (*Tinamus major*) – CL  
 Little Tinamou (*Crypturellus soui*) – CL (heard only).  
 Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – PL  
 Muscovy Duck (*Cairina moschata*) – PL, CL  
**Crested Guan** (*Penelope purpurascens*) – PL, CL  
eh **Black Guan** (*Chamaepetes unicolor*) – BP (a specialty of the subtropical forest).  
**Great Curassow** (*Crax rubra*) – CL (this spectacular bird has been hunted to extirpation in most of its range).  
 Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*) – PL  
 Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*) - PL  
 Neotropic Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – PL, CL  
 Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*) – PL, CL  
 Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) – PL  
**Fasciated Tiger-Heron** (*Tigrisoma fasciatum*) – CL (nice study of one on the bank of a clear rocky stream).  
 Bare-throated Tiger-Heron (*Tigrisoma mexicanum*) – PL, CL  
 Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) – PL, CL  
 Great Egret (*Ardea alba*) – PL, CL  
 Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*) – PL, CL  
 Little Blue Heron (*Egretta caerulea*) – PL, CL  
 Tricolored Heron (*Egretta tricolor*) - PL  
 Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) – MC, PL, CS, CL  
 Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*) – PL, CS, CL  
 Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*) – PL  
**Boat-billed Heron** (*Cochlearius cochlearius*) – PL  
 White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*) – PL  
 Roseate Spoonbill (*Platalea ajaja*) – PL  
 Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*) – all regions (seen daily).  
 Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*) – all regions (seen daily).  
**King Vulture** (*Sarcoramphus papa*) – PL, CS (good looks at soaring adults).  
 Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) – PL, CL  
 Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*) – CS  
 Double-toothed Kite (*Harpagus bidentatus*) – PL, CL, CS  
 Plumbeous Kite (*Ictinia plumbea*) – PL  
 Bicolored Hawk (*Accipiter bicolor*) – BP (glimpsed).  
 Common Black-Hawk (*Buteogallus anthracinus*) - PL  
 Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*) – BP, CS, CL, CM  
 Gray Hawk (*Buteo nitidus*) – PL, CL  
 Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) – BP  
 Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) – CM  
 Collared Forest-Falcon (*Micrastur semitorquatus*) – PL (heard only).  
 Crested Caracara (*Caracara cheriway*) – MC, PL, CL  
 Yellow-headed Caracara (*Milvago chimachima*) – PL

Laughing Falcon (*Herpetotheres cachinnans*) – CL  
 Bat Falcon (*Falco ruficularis*) – CL (glimpsed).  
 White-throated Crake (*Laterallus albigularis*) - CS (heard only).  
**Gray-necked Wood-Rail** (*Aramides cajanea*) – CL  
 Purple Gallinule (*Porphyrio martinica*) – PL  
**Sungrebe** (*Heliornis fulica*) – CL (great looks as it slowly drifted up the big river at La Selva, searching the branches and logs in the water).  
 Southern Lapwing (*Vanellus chilensis*) - PL  
 Black-bellied Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – PL  
 Collared Plover (*Charadrius collaris*) – PL  
 Wilson's Plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*) – PL (distant).  
 Semipalmated Plover (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) – PL (distant).  
 Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*) - PL  
 Northern Jacana (*Jacana spinosa*) – PL, CL  
 Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularius*) – PL, CL  
 Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*) - PL  
 Willet (*Tringa semipalmata*) - PL  
 Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*) – PL  
 Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) – PL  
 Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) – PL (distant).  
 Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*) - PL  
 Laughing Gull (*Leucophaeus atricilla*) – PL  
 Royal Tern (*Thalasseus maximus*) – PL  
 Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*) - feral birds in cities and towns.  
 Pale-vented Pigeon (*Patagioenas cayennensis*) - CL  
 Red-billed Pigeon (*Patagioenas flavirostris*) - MC, BP, CS  
 Band-tailed Pigeon (*Patagioenas fasciata*) - CM  
 Ruddy Pigeon (*Patagioenas subvinacea*) – CM  
 Short-billed Pigeon (*Patagioenas nigrirostris*) – PL, CL, CS (hd)  
 White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*) – MC, PL  
 Inca Dove (*Columbina inca*) – MC, PL  
 Ruddy Ground\_Dove (*Columbina talpacoti*) – PL, CL  
 White-tipped Dove (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – BP, CL  
 Gray-chested Dove (*Leptotila cassini*) – CL (heard only).  
**Olive-backed Quail-Dove** (*Geotrygon veraguensis*) – CL, CS  
 Buff-fronted Quail-Dove (*Geotrygon costaricensis*) – CM (glimpsed by a few when one jumped across the road in front of the bus).  
 Ruddy Quail-Dove (*Geotrygon montana*) – PL  
 Crimson-fronted Parakeet (*Aratinga finschi*) – BP (distant; in flight).  
 Olive-throated Parakeet (*Aratinga nana*) – CL  
 Orange-fronted Parakeet (*Aratinga canicularis*) – PL  
**Great Green Macaw** (*Ara ambiguus*) - CL  
**Scarlet Macaw** (*Ara macao*) – PL  
 Barred Parakeet (*Bolborhynchus lineola*) - CM

- Orange-chinned Parakeet (*Brotogeris jugularis*) – PL, CL  
 Brown-hooded Parrot (*Pyrilia haematotis*) – CS  
 White-crowned Parrot (*Pionus senilis*) – BP, CL  
 White-fronted Parrot (*Amazona albifrons*) - PL  
 Red-lored Parrot (*Amazona autumnalis*) – PL, CL  
 Mealy Parrot (*Amazona farinosa*) – PL, CL  
 Squirrel Cuckoo (*Piaya cayana*) – PL, CL  
 Striped Cuckoo (*Tapera naevia*) - PL  
 Groove-billed Ani (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*) – PL, CL  
 Spectacled Owl (*Pulsatrix perspicillata*) – PL (heard only; close but remained unseen).  
 Common Pauraque (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) – CL  
**Great Potoo** (*Nyctibius grandis*) – CS  
 swift sp? (*Cypseloides sp?*) - CL  
 White-collared Swift (*Streptoprocne zonaris*) – BP, PL, CS, CM  
E Costa Rican Swift (*Chaetura fumosa*) – PL (now split from the Band-rumped).  
 Gray-rumped Swift (*Chaetura cinereiventris*) – CL  
 Green Hermit (*Phaethornis guy*) – BP, CS  
 Long-billed Hermit (*Phaethornis longirostris*) – PL (formerly considered a race of Long-tailed Hermit).  
 Stripe-throated Hermit (*Phaethornis striigularis*) – PL, CL (formerly lumped with Little Hermit).  
 Scaly-breasted Hummingbird (*Phaeochroa cuvierii*) – PL  
 Violet Sabrewing (*Campylopterus hemileucurus*) – BP, PL, CS  
 White-necked Jacobin (*Florisuga mellivora*) – CL  
 Brown Violet-ear (*Colibri delphinae*) - CS  
 Green Violet-ear (*Colibri thalassinus*) – CS, CM  
 Violet-headed Hummingbird (*Klais guimeti*) - CS  
**Black-crested Coquette** (*Lophornis helenae*) – CS  
 Green Thorntail (*Discosura conversii*) – BP, CS  
 Violet-crowned Woodnymph (*Thalurania colombica*) – CL, CS  
eh **Fierly-throated Hummingbird** (*Panterpe insignis*) - CM (stunning endemic of the highest elevations, but it takes a while to see all of the colors light up).  
 Steely-vented Hummingbird (*Amazilia saucerrottei*) - PL  
 Rufous-tailed Hummingbird (*Amazilia tzacatl*) – MC, BP, PL, CS, CL  
 Cinnamon Hummingbird (*Amazilia rutila*) - MC  
 Stripe-tailed Hummingbird (*Eupherusa eximia*) – CM  
eh **Black-bellied Hummingbird** (*Eupherusa nigriventris*) – BP, CS (an uncommon specialty of the wet mid-elevations of the Caribbean slope).  
E **Coppery-headed Emerald** (*Elvira cupreiceps*) – BP, CS (a true Costa Rican endemic, known from no other country).  
ec **Snowcap** (*Microchera albocoronata*) – CS (including a stunning male at the verbenas).  
 Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer (*Chalybura urochrysis*) – CL  
eh White-bellied Mountain-gem (*Lampornis hemileucus*) – BP, CS

- eh** Purple-throated Mountain-gem (*Lampornis calolaemus*) – BP, CS
- eh** White-throated (Gray-tailed) Mountain-gem (*Lampornis castaneoventris*) – CM
- Green-crowned Brilliant (*Heliodoxa jacula*) – BP, CS
- Magnificent Hummingbird (*Eugenes fulgens*) – BP, CM
- Purple-crowned Fairy (*Heliothryx barroti*) – PL, CS
- Long-billed Starthroat (*Heliomaster longirostris*) – PL
- Plain-capped Starthroat** (*Heliomaster constantii*) – MC (adult feeding a large young one in a nest at our coffee stop).
- eh** Magenta-throated Woodstar (*Calliphlox bryantae*) – BP
- Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*) - PL
- eh** Volcano Hummingbird (*Selasphorus flammula*) - CM
- eh** Scintillant Hummingbird (*Selasphorus scintilla*) – BP, CM
- Slaty-tailed Trogon (*Trogon massena*) – PL, CL
- ep** **Baird’s Trogon** (*Trogon bairdii*) – PL (it’s hard to pick a favorite trogon, but this is the scarcest and most range-restricted that we saw).
- Gartered Trogon (*Trogon caligatus*) – PL, CL (now split from the Violaceous Trogon (*Trogon violaceus*) of Amazonia).
- Black-throated Trogon (*Trogon rufus*) – PL, CL
- Collared Trogon (*Trogon collaris*) – BP
- eh** Orange-bellied Trogon (*Trogon aurantiiventris*) - BP
- Resplendent Quetzal** (*Pharomachrus mocinno*) – CM (who could even get enough of this spectacular bird?).
- Blue-crowned Motmot (*Momotus momota*) - PL
- Rufous Motmot (*Baryphthengus martii*) – CL
- Broad-billed Motmot (*Electron platyrhynchum*) – CL
- Turquoise-browed Motmot** (*Eumomota superciliosa*) – PL
- Ringed Kingfisher (*Megaceryle torquatus*) – PL, CL
- Belted Kingfisher (*Megaceryle alcyon*) - PL
- Amazon Kingfisher (*Chloroceryle amazona*) – PL, CL
- Green Kingfisher (*Chloroceryle americana*) – PL, CL
- American Pygmy Kingfisher** (*Chloroceryle aenea*) - PL
- White-necked Puffbird (*Notharchus hyperrhynchus*) – CL
- Pied Puffbird** (*Notharchus tectus*) – CL
- Rufous-tailed Jacamar** (*Galbula ruficauda*) – PL (hd), CL
- eh** **Prong-billed Barbet** (*Semnornis frantzii*) – BP, CS (hd) (strange and unique birds with wild calls).
- Emerald Toucanet (*Aulacorhynchus prasinus*) – BP, CM (the endemic Blue-throated@ race, sometimes split as a separate species (*Aulacorhynchus “caeruleogularis”*)).
- Collared Aracari (*Pteroglossus torquatus*) - CL
- ep** Fiery-billed Aracari (*Pteroglossus frantzii*) - PL
- Keel-billed Toucan (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*) - CL
- Black-mandibled Toucan** (*Ramphastos ambiguus*) – PL, CL (colorful, noisy, common and conspicuous; sometimes split as the Chestnut-mandibled Toucan (*Ramphastos “swainsoni”*)).



- Acorn Woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) – CM  
Golden-naped Woodpecker (*Melanerpes chrysauchen*) – PL (heard only).  
Black-cheeked Woodpecker (*Melanerpes pucherani*) - CL
- eh** Hoffmann's Woodpecker (*Melanerpes hoffmannii*) – MC, PL  
Hairy Woodpecker (*Picoides villosus*) – BP
- el** **Rufous-winged Woodpecker** (*Piculus simplex*) – CL  
Golden-olive Woodpecker (*Colaptes rubiginosus*) - CM  
Cinnamon Woodpecker (*Celeus loricatus*) - CL  
**Chestnut-colored Woodpecker** (*Celeus castaneus*) – CL (feeding at Heliconia flowers right at our feet).  
Pale-billed Woodpecker (*Campephilus guatemalensis*) – PL, CL  
Fasciated Antshrike (*Cymbilaimus lineatus*) – CL  
Barred Antshrike (*Thamnophilus doliatus*) – PL (heard only)
- ep** Black-hooded Antshrike (*Thamnophilus bridgesi*) – PL  
Slaty Antwren (*Myrmotherula schisticolor*) - BP  
Dot-winged Antwren (*Microrhopias quixensis*) – PL  
Dusky Antbird (*Cercomacra tyrannina*) – PL, CL  
Chestnut-backed Antbird (*Myrmeciza exsul*) – PL  
Dull-mantled Antbird (*Myrmeciza laemosticta*) – CS  
Bicolored Antbird (*Gymnopithys leucaspis*) – PL (at the ant swarm of course).  
**Black-faced Antthrush** (*Formicivorus analis*) – PL (slowly parading around on the forest floor like a miniature hen).  
**Red-faced Spinetail** (*Cranioleuca erythroptis*) – BP (especially fun to watch the pair actively working on the bulky suspended nest hanging right over the road).  
Spotted Barbtail (*Premnoplex brunnescens*) - BP
- eh** Ruddy Treerunner (*Magarornis rubiginosus*) - CM  
**Lineated Foliage-gleaner** (*Syndactyla subalaris*) – BP (scope views!).  
Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner (*Automolus ochrolaemus*) – PL  
Plain Xenops (*Xenops minutus*) – PL, CL  
Olivaceous Woodcreeper (*Sittasomus griseicapillus*) – CS  
Long-tailed Woodcreeper (*Deconychura longicauda*) – PL (seen by a few).  
Wedge-billed Woodcreeper (*Glyphorhynchus spirurus*) – PL, CS  
Northern Barred-Woodcreeper (*Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae*) - CL  
Cocoa Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus susurrans*) – PL, CL  
Streak-headed Woodcreeper (*Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*) – PL, CL  
Spot-crowned Woodcreeper (*Lepidocolaptes affinis*) – BP, CM  
Southern Beardless-Tyrannulet (*Camptostoma obsoletum*) – PL  
Yellow Tyrannulet (*Capsiempis flaveola*) – CL  
Greenish Elaenia (*Myiopagis viridicata*) - PL  
Yellow-bellied Elaenia (*Elaenia flavogaster*) – MC, PL, CL  
Mountain Elaenia (*Elaenia frantzii*) – BP, CM  
**Torrent Tyrannulet** (*Serpophaga cinerea*) – BP, CS  
Olive-striped Flycatcher (*Mionectes olivaceus*) - BP

Ochre-bellied Flycatcher (*Mionectes oleagineus*) – PL  
 Paltry (Mistletoe) Tyrannulet (*Zimmerius villissimus*) – BP, CL, CM  
 Common Tody-Flycatcher (*Todirostrum cinereum*) – PL, CL  
 Eye-ringed Flatbird (*Rhynchocyclus brevirostris*) – BP (leader only?).  
 Yellow-olive Flycatcher (*Tolmomyias sulphurescens*) – PL, CL (hd)  
**Stub-tailed Spadebill** (*Platyrinchus cancrominus*) – PL (very responsive bird in the dark, but open, understory of the heavy forest, so tiny it was hard to spot just a few feet away).  
 Golden-crowned Spadebill (*Platyrinchus coronatus*) – PL (by a few).  
 Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher (*Myiobius sulphureipygius*) – PL  
 Tufted Flycatcher (*Mitrephanes phaenocercus*) – BP, CM  
eh Dark Pewee (*Contopus lugubris*) – BP, CM  
**Ochraceous Pewee** (*Contopus ochraceus*) - CM  
 Eastern Wood-Pewee (*Contopus virens*) – PL, CL  
 Tropical Pewee (*Contopus cinereus*) – CL  
 Yellowish Flycatcher (*Empidonax flavescens*) – BP, CS, CM  
eh Black-capped Flycatcher (*Empidonax atriceps*) - CM  
 Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*) – BP, CL, CM  
**Long-tailed Tyrant** (*Colonia colonus*) – CL (a favorite and a very distinctive flycatcher).  
 Bright-rumped Attila (*Attila spadiceus*) – BP (seen), PL (hd), CL (hd)  
 Rufous Mourner (*Rhytipterna holerythra*) - CL  
 Dusky-capped Flycatcher (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) – PL, CL  
**Panama Flycatcher** (*Myiarchus panamensis*) - PL  
 Great Crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus crinitus*) – PL, CL  
 Great Kiskadee (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) – MC, PL, CS, CL  
 Boat-billed Flycatcher (*Megarynchus pitangua*) – PL, CL  
 Social Flycatcher (*Myiozetetes similis*) – MC, PL, CL  
 Gray-capped Flycatcher (*Myiozetetes granadensis*) – PL, CL  
 White-ringed Flycatcher (*Conopias albobittatus*) – CL (the scarcest of the “look-alikes”).  
eh Golden-bellied Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes hemichrysus*) – BP  
 Streaked Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes maculates*) – PL  
 Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes luteiventris*) – BP, CL  
 Piratic Flycatcher (*Legatus leucophaeus*) – PL, CL  
 Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – all regions (seen daily).  
 Thrush-like Schiffornis (*Schiffornis turdina*) - PL  
 Cinnamon Becard (*Pachyramphus cinnamomeus*) – CL  
 White-winged Becard (*Pachyramphus polychopterus*) - PL  
 Rose-throated Becard (*Pachyramphus aglaiae*) - PL  
 Masked Tityra (*Tityra semifasciata*) – PL, CL  
 Black-crowned Tityra (*Tityra inquisitor*) – PL, CL  
 White-collared Manakin (*Manacus candei*) – CL  
ep **Orange-collared Manakin** (*Manacus aurantiacus*) – PL (active males jumping, snapping and buzzing at their lek in the forest understory).  
 Blue-crowned Manakin (*Pipra coronata*) – PL

**Red-capped Manakin** (*Pipra mentalis*) – PL (gorgeous males splashing in their “secret” bathing pool inside the forest in the late afternoon).

Yellow-throated Vireo (*Vireo flavifrons*) – BP, PL

**eh** Yellow-winged Vireo (*Vireo carmioli*) – CM

Brown-capped Vireo (*Vireo leucophrys*) – BP, CS, CM (hd)

Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphicus*) – PL, CM

Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*) – BP, PL

Yellow-green Vireo (*Vireo flavoviridis*) – MC, PL

Lesser Greenlet (*Hylophilus decurtatus*) – PL, CL

Green Shrike-Vireo (*Vireolanius pulchellus*) – CL (hd), CS (hd) (heard only).

Rufous-browed Peppershrike (*Cyclarhis gujanensis*) – CM (heard only)

Brown Jay (*Cyanocorax morio*) – MC, BP, PL

Gray-breasted Martin (*Progne chalybea*) – CL

Mangrove Swallow (*Tachycineta albilinea*) – PL, CS, CL

Blue-and-white Swallow (*Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*) – MC, BP, CS, CM

Northern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) – MC, PL, CS, CL

Southern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) – CL

Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) – MC, PL

Band-backed Wren (*Campylorhynchus zonatus*) – CL

Rufous-naped Wren (*Campylorhynchus rufinucha*) – MC, PL

**ec** Black-throated Wren (*Thryothorus (Pheugopedius) atrogularis*) – CL (heard only)

Black-bellied Wren (*Thryothorus (Pheugopedius) fasciatoventris*) – PL (heard only).

Bay Wren (*Thryothorus (Cantorchilus) nigricapillus*) – CL

**ep** **Riverside Wren** (*Thryothorus (Cantorchilus) semibadius*) – PL

**ec** Stripe-breasted Wren (*Thryothorus (Cantorchilus) thoracicus*) – CL

Plain Wren (*Thryothorus (Cantorchilus) modestus*) – CL (heard only)

Rufous-breasted Wren (*Thryothorus (Pheugopedius) rutilus*) – PL

Rufous-and-white Wren (*Thryothorus (Thryophilus) rufalbus*) – PL (heard only)

House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*) – MC, PL, CS, CL

**eh** Ochraceous Wren (*Troglodytes ochraceus*) – BP, CM

**eh** **Timberline Wren** (*Thryorchilus browni*) – CM (a high-country specialty eventually coaxed out of the bamboo for great looks).

White-breasted Wood-Wren (*Henicorhina leucosticta*) – CL

Gray-breasted Wood-Wren (*Henicorhina leucophrys*) – BP, CS (hd), CM

Nightingale Wren (*Microcerculus philomela*) – CS (heard only, but what a song!).

Scaly-breasted Wren (*Microcerculus marginatus*) – PL (seen by a few).

Long-billed Gnatwren (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) – PL, CL (hd)

Tropical Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila plumbea*) – PL, CL

**American Dipper** (*Cinclus mexicanus*) – BP

**eh** Black-faced Solitaire (*Myadestes melanops*) – BP, CS (hd), CM

**eh** Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush (*Catharus gracilirostris*) – CM

Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrush (*Catharus fuscater*) – BP

Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush (*Catharus frantzii*) – BP, CM

- Swainson's Thrush (*Catharus ustulatus*) – PL, CL, CM  
 Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*) – PL, CL
- eh** Sooty Thrush (*Turdus nigrescens*) – CM (fierce-eyed endemic of the high country).  
 Mountain Thrush (*Turdus plebejus*) – CS, CM  
**Clay-colored Thrush** (*Turdus grayi*) – all regions (the national bird of Costa Rica, seen and heard daily, sometimes singing a bit too early in the morning).  
 White-throated Thrush (*Turdus assimilis*) – CL (by a few).
- eh** **Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher** (*Ptilogonys caudatus*) – BP, CM (sleek, elegant birds reminiscent of waxwings).  
 Louisiana Waterthrush (*Parkesia motacilla*) – CS (glimpsed).  
 Northern Waterthrush (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – PL  
 Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) – BP, CS, CL  
 Black-and-white Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*) – BP
- eh** **Flame-throated Warbler** (*Oreothlypis gutturalis*) – BP, CM (oh what a beauty!).  
 Tennessee Warbler (*Oreothlypis peregrina*) - MC, CM  
 Gray-crowned Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis poliocephala*) – PL  
 Kentucky Warbler (*Geothlypis formosa*) - PL  
 Olive-crowned Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis semiflava*) – CL  
 American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*) - PL  
 Tropical Parula (*Setophaga pitiayumi*) – BP, PL (hd), CS  
 Blackburnian Warbler (*Setophaga fusca*) – BP  
 Yellow Warbler (*Setophaga petechia*) - MC, PL  
 Chestnut-sided Warbler (*Setophaga pensylvanica*) – BP, PL, CS, CL  
 Black-throated Green Warbler (*Setophaga virens*) – MC, CS, CM  
 Buff-rumped Warbler (*Myiothlypis fulvicauda*) – PL, CL  
 Rufous-capped Warbler (*Basileuterus rufifrons*) – MC (by a few).
- eh** **Black-cheeked Warbler** (*Basileuterus melanogenys*) – CM  
 Three-striped Warbler (*Basileuterus tristriatus*) – BP, CS  
 Wilson's Warbler (*Cardellina pusilla*) – BP, CM  
 Slate-throated Redstart (*Myioborus miniatus*) – BP, CS
- eh** **Collared Redstart** (*Myioborus torquatus*) – CM (the incredibly tame and confiding Aamigo de hombre®, very typical of the high-elevation oak forests and edge).  
 Bananaquit (*Coereba flaveola*) – BP, PL, CS, CL  
**Dusky-faced Tanager** (*Mitrospingus cassinii*) – CL  
 Gray-headed Tanager (*Eucometis penicillata*) – PL  
 White-shouldered Tanager (*Tachyphonus luctuosus*) – PL  
 Tawny-crested Tanager (*Tachyphonus delatrii*) - CM  
**Crimson-collared Tanager** (*Ramphocelus sanguinolentus*) – CS, CL  
**Passerini=s Tanager** (*Ramphocelus passerinii*) – CS, CL (everything a tropical bird should be – colorful, common and conspicuous!).
- ep** Cherrie's Tanager (*Ramphocelus costaricensis*) - PL  
 Blue-gray Tanager (*Thraupis episcopus*) – all regions (seen daily).  
 Palm Tanager (*Thraupis palmarum*) – MC, PL, CS, CL

- Golden-hooded Tanager (*Tangara larvata*) – CL, CS
- eh** **Spangle-cheeked Tanager** (*Tangara dowii*) – BP, CS, CM (beautiful highland endemic seen more often than usual).
- Plain-colored Tanager (*Tangara inornata*) – CL
- Bay-headed Tanager (*Tangara gyrola*) - PL
- Silver-throated Tanager (*Tangara icterocephala*) – BP, CS
- Blue Dacnis (*Dacnis cayana*) – CL
- Green Honeycreeper (*Chlorophanes spiza*) – PL, CL
- Shining Honeycreeper (*Cyanerpes lucidus*) – CL
- Red-legged Honeycreeper (*Cyanerpes cyaneus*) – MC, PL, CL
- Grayish Saltator (*Saltator coerulescens*) - MC
- Buff-throated Saltator (*Saltator maximus*) – PL, CL
- Black-headed Saltator (*Saltator atriceps*) – CL
- Blue-black Grassquit (*Volatinia jacarina*) – PL, CL
- Variable Seedeater (*Sporophila corvina*) – PL, CS, CL
- White-collared Seedeater (*Sporophila torqueola*) – PL
- Yellow-faced Grassquit (*Tiaris olivacea*) – CM
- eh** Slaty Flowerpiercer (*Diglossa plumbea*) – BP, CM
- eh** **Yellow-thighed Finch** (*Psellophorus tibialis*) – BP, CM (comical and common).
- eh** **Large-footed Finch** (*Pezopetes capitalis*) - CM (lurking in the bamboo thickets at high elevations).
- Orange-billed Sparrow (*Arremon aurantirostris*) – CL
- Sooty-faced Finch** (*Arremon crassirostris*) – BP, CS (hd)
- Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch (*Arremon brunneinucha*) – BP
- Rufous-collared Sparrow (*Zonotrichia capensis*) - MC, BP, CS, CM
- eh** **Volcano Junco** (*Junco vulcani*) – CM (fierce-eyed specialty of the paramo thickets at the highest elevations, begging crumbs practically at our feet).
- Common Bush-Tanager (*Chlorospingus ophthalmicus*) – BP, CS, CM
- eh** Sooty-capped Bush-Tanager (*Chlorospingus pileatus*) – CM
- Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*) – BP, PL, CL
- Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*) – CL (by a few).
- Flame-colored Tanager (*Piranga bidentata*) – CM
- Red-throated Ant\_Tanager (*Habia fuscicauda*) – CL
- Carmiols (Olive) Tanager (*Chlorothraupis carmioli*) – CS
- Black-faced Grosbeak (*Caryothraustes poliogaster*) - CL, CS
- Blue-black Grosbeak (*Cyanocompsa cyanoides*) – PL, CL (hd)
- Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) – PL
- Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*) – BP, CS
- Melodious Blackbird (*Dives dives*) – MC, BP, CS (hd), CL, CM (hd)
- Great-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) – MC, BP, PL, CS, CL
- Bronzed Cowbird (*Molothrus aeneus*) – BP
- Shiny Cowbird** (*Molothrus bonariensis*) – CL (one male and two females seen well at La Selva; a recent invader in Costa Rica).

- Giant Cowbird (*Molothrus oryzivorus*) – CL (in flight only).  
 Black-cowled Oriole (*Icterus prosthemelas*) – CS, CL  
 Orchard Oriole (*Icterus spurius*) - MC  
 Baltimore Oriole (*Icterus galbula*) – MC, PL, CL, CM  
 Chestnut-headed Oropendola (*Psarocolius wagleri*) – PL, CL  
 Montezuma Oropendola (*Psarocolius montezuma*) – PL, CS, CL  
el Yellow-crowned Euphonia (*Euphonia luteicapilla*) – PL, CL  
 Thick-billed Euphonia (*Euphonia lanirostris*) - PL  
 Yellow-throated Euphonia (*Euphonia hirundinacea*) – PL  
ep Spot-crowned Euphonia (*Euphonia imitans*) - PL  
 Olive-backed Euphonia (*Euphonia gouldi*) - CL  
eh **Golden-browed Chlorophonia** (*Chlorophonia callophrys*) – BP  
 Yellow-bellied Siskin (*Carduelis xanthogastra*) – CM  
 House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) - CL

**Mammal List:** follows the nomenclature in *The Mammals of Costa Rica* by Mark Wainwright.

- Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth (*Bradypus variegatus*) – PL  
 Hoffmann's Two-toed Sloth (*Choloepus hoffmanni*) – CL  
 Nine-banded Long-nosed Armadillo (*Dasypus novemcinctus*) – PL (Amy's friend).  
**White Tent Bat** (*Ectophylla alba*) - CL  
 insectivorous bats (several sizes) – PL, CL  
 White-throated Capuchin Monkey (*Cebus capucinus*) – PL  
 Mantled Howler Monkey (*Alouatta palliata*) – PL (hd), CL  
 Central American Spider Monkey (*Ateles geoffroyi*) – PL  
 Red-tailed Squirrel (*Sciurus granatensis*) – BP, CM  
 Variegated Squirrel (*Sciurus variegatoides*) – PL, CL  
 mouse sp? – BP  
 dark brown mouse sp? – CM  
 Roof (Black) Rat (*Rattus rattus*) - MC  
 Central American Agouti (*Dasyprocta punctata*) – BP, CL  
**Paca** (*Agouti paca*) – BP (a rare animal due to hunting and habitat loss, but protected here, where they come to the feeders after dark).  
 White-nosed Coati (*Nasua narica*) – BP, CS  
**Long-tailed Weasel** (*Mustela frenata*) - CM  
 Collared Peccary (*Tayassu tajacu*) - CL

**Amphibians & Reptiles:**

- Cane (Giant) Toad (*Bufo marinus*) - PL  
 Strawberry Poison-dart (Ablue jeans) Frog (*Dendrobates pumilio*) – CL  
 American Crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*) – PL  
 Spectacled Caiman (*Caiman crocodilus*) - CL  
 Black Wood-Turtle (*Rhinoclemmys funerea*) – CL

House Gecko (*Hemidactylus frenatus*) – CL  
Common Basilisk (*Basiliscus basiliscus*) - PL  
Black Spiny-tailed Iguana (“ctenosaur” or “false iguana”) (*Ctenosaura similis*) - PL  
Green (Common) Iguana (*Iguana iguana*) – MC, CL  
Anole sp? – CM  
Anole sp? - PL  
Green Spiny Lizard (*Sceloporus malachiticus*) – BP, CM  
Central American Whip-tailed Lizard (*Ameiva festiva*) – CL, CS

**And many other fascinating butterflies, small creatures and plants, including:**

“machaca” – fruit-eating fish seen from the La Selva bridge.  
Morpho butterflies  
spectacular moths at the Bosque de Paz lights  
Helicopter damselfly  
Eciton army ants  
Leaf-cutter ants  
“rhinoceros beetle”