

COSTA RICA

January 11 – 27, 2011

Observations of birds and other wildlife

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Summary of route, weather and highlights:

Jan. 10: Fyn – Copenhagen - Newark, New York – San Jose. Air ticket, car and hotel first and last nights were bought as a package. We got rented 4x4 near the airport and found the hotel in Alajuela.

Jan. 11: Alajuela – La Selva Biological Station by route 126 with stop at Virgen del Socorro – the first visit to the beautiful forest. The road was very poor in places. The weather was windy with showers. In the air over the mountains we saw many Black/Turkey Vultures and Black/White-collared Swifts.

Jan. 12: We enjoyed the rain forest of la Selva. The included guided tour was very good. Here we were introduced to the two species of Sloth, Howler and Capuchin Monkey, among others. During our 2 days stay we saw a Boa Constrictor, big Iguanas everywhere in the trees, flocks of Peccaries and more than 40 species of birds. It was often difficult to identify the species due to the dense forest and the rain (it probably rained 50 % of the time we spend here). The

cabins are located about 1 km from the reception and dining hall, so we had a good, long walk back and forth through some very nice forest.

Jan. 13: La Selva was booked 6 weeks in advance, we wanted 3 nights but only two nights were available. From the reception we then booked room in Tapanti for the next night. We took the eastern route through Siquirres, Turrialba and Orosi to Kiri Lodge just outside Tapanti Nat. Park. This is a good lodge at the end of a long and rough road, and the cloud forest a visit worth, but it was hard for us to enjoy the area because of rain 100 % of the time.

Jan. 14: Next stop San Gerardo de Dota, where we had booked room 2 nights at Savegre Lodge in 2000 mtr. altitude. This place is luxurious and the cloud forest up the mountain slope is very impressive with several long trails.

Jan. 15: The valley is known for Resplendent Quetzal and with some help from a local guide we located a very fine male. The restaurant had an excellent hummingbird "bar" with 5 species as guests while we were there. The weather was sunny with only few showers.

Jan. 16: From San Gerardo we headed towards the Osa peninsula with the next night open. We slept at Villas Rio Mar near Dominical, a tourist place. We didn't spend much time here.

Jan. 17: We drove to Sierpe in the morning for the boat to our next booked destination, Punta Marenco Lodge. The Lodge is reached after 1½ hour (fast) boat trip down the river and along the Pacific coast to Punta Marenco just north of the national park of Corcovado. The lodge is at the same time primitive and adventurous. This area has so much to offer, and 3-4 days are needed to explore the rain forest and the coast.

Jan.18-20: We had guided tours in the secondary and primary forest belonging to the lodge and to the national park a boat trip down the coast. Scarlet Macaws and Chestnut-Mandibled Toucans came every day by the lodge, and so did the Capuchin Monkeys. From the lodge and when sailing we could see Humpback Whales and Dolphins. 40 bird species and 6 mammal species were observed. During our stay the weather was dry and sunny.

Jan. 21: From the Osa Peninsula we drove up along the Pacific coast and tried to find a hotel near Carara Nat. Park with no success. Then we stayed the night in Miramar.

Jan. 22-23: We had booked the Palo Verde OTS Field Station for 2 nights next. After a long drive on rough dirt roads we found the biological station in a dry forest on the edge of a river valley. The concentrations of wetland birds were astonishing with nearly all species that could be expected ("Awesome" as a young American expressed it). The forest was also rich in birds as well as mammals. 59 species of birds and 7 species of mammals came in the note-book. The weather was sunny and windy.

Jan. 24- 27: The last destination was booked on the Pacific coast as a relaxing/romantic finale. The Lagarta Lodge by the river-mouth of Nosara River is indeed a romantic place, but it also has a lot of natural life in the private biological reserve and along the coast. 42 bird species and 4 mammal species were observed. Sea Turtles breed on the beach near by, but they didn't appear while we were in the area.

Jan. 27: Most of the day was spend on the road back to Alajuela.

Jan. 28-29: After we dropped off the car, we had the same plane-trip in reverse to Copenhagen and home to Fyn.

All-in-all we had a very pleasant trip with almost no trouble. When planning such a trip to one of the hotspots of biodiversity in the world, you expect to experience a lot, especially to see really many bird species. And we were not disappointed: 181 bird species on a vacation is a record for us, the same is the 16 mammal species we saw.

As big an experience as the many species of birds and animals was, so were the forest habitats of lowland rain forest, cloud forest and dry tropical forest that we visited. The richness of tree species and the many extraordinary life forms of plants in the forest are really hard to describe – you have to see for yourself.

Literature used:

Baker, C.P. 2009: Moon Handbooks, Costa Rica.
Gargiullo, M.B. 2008: A Field Guide to Plants of Costa Rica. A Zona Tropical Publication.
Garrigues, R. 2007: The Birds of Costa Rica. A Zona Tropical Publication.
Lawson, B. 2009: Where to Watch Birds Costa Rica. Christopher Helm.
Wainwright, M. 2007: The Mammals of Costa Rica. A Zona Tropical Publication.

Map: Costa Rica. International Travel Maps 1:315.000.

A few pictures:

See photo gallery here: <http://natur-foto.dk/Rejser.htm>



Punta Marenco Lodge



Chestnut-Mandibled Toucan



Scarlet Macaw



Three-Toed Sloth



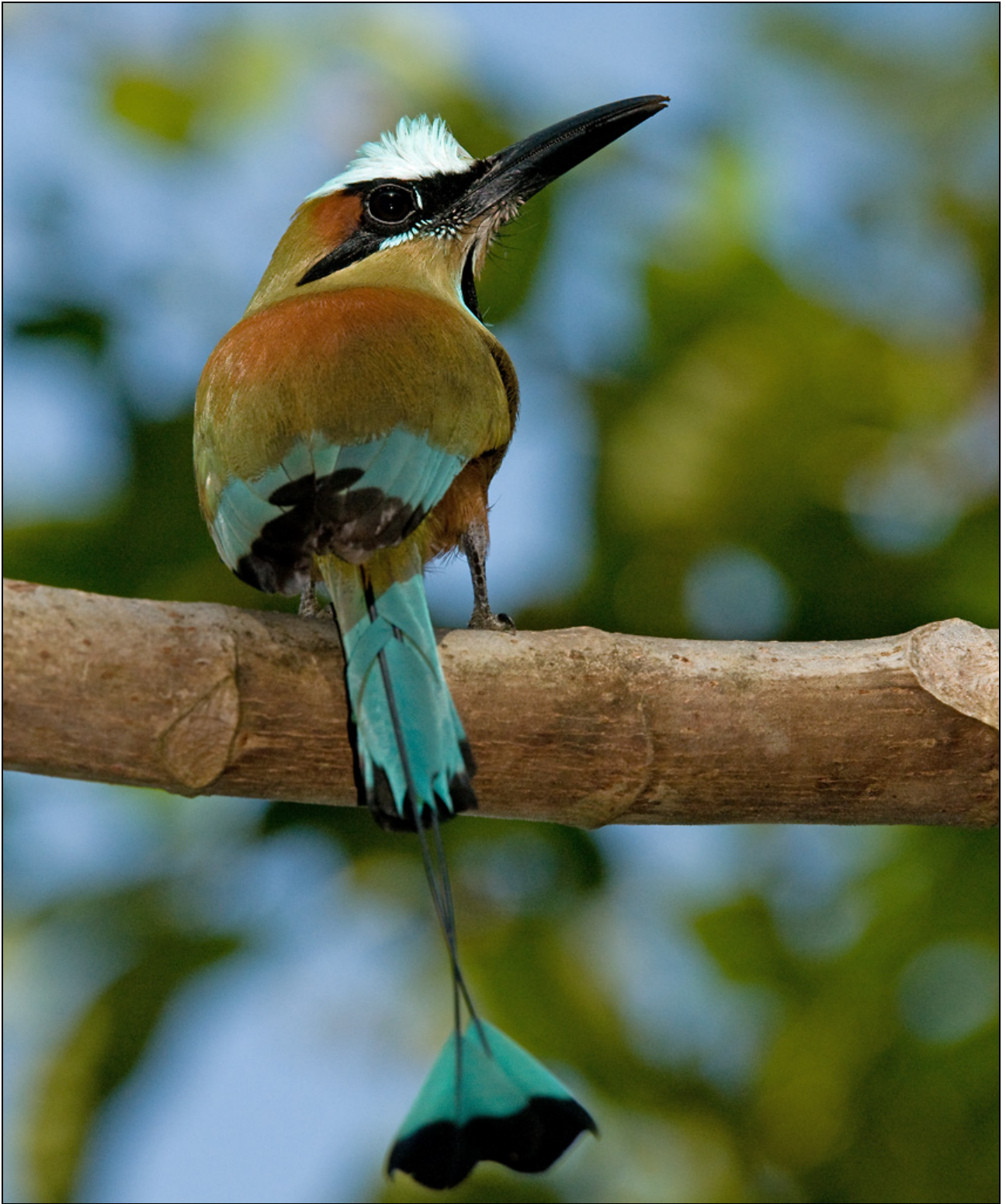
White-throated Capuchin Monkey



Snail Kite



Little Blue Heron



Turquoise-browed Motmot



Black Vulture

Bird observations in Costa Rica, January 11 – 27. 2011. Ella Maria and Leif Bisschop-Larsen.

Species (*: endemic)		Observations
Great Tinamou	<i>Tinamus major</i>	1 La Selva
Little Tinamou	<i>Crypterellus soui</i>	1 La Selva
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck	<i>Dendrocygna autumnalis</i>	[1000] Palo Verde
Muscovy Duck	<i>Cairina moschata</i>	5 Palo Verde
Blue-winged Teal	<i>Anas discors</i>	Com Palo Verde
Crested Guan	<i>Penelope purpurascens</i>	Com La Selva, 2 Marengo
Black Guan *	<i>Chamaepetes unicolor</i>	1 Tapanti, 1 S.Gerardo
Brown Pelican	<i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>	Com at coasts
Brown Booby	<i>Sula Leucogaster</i>	Com Marengo
Neotropic Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax brasilianus</i>	Few Marengo
Anhinga	<i>Anhinga anhinga</i>	Com Palo Verde
Magnificent Frigatebird	<i>Fregata magnificens</i>	Com at coasts
Wood Stork	<i>Mycteria americana</i>	Com Palo Verde, 2 Dominical
Bare-throated Tiger-Heron	<i>Tigrisoma mexicanum</i>	1 Tarcoles, com Palo Verde
Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>	Few Pacific coast
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	Com Pacific coast
Snowy Egret	<i>Egretta thula</i>	Com Pacific coast
Little Blue Heron	<i>Egretta caerulea</i>	Com Palo Verde
Tricolored Heron	<i>Egretta tricolor</i>	Few Palo Verde, 1 Tarcoles
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	Com with cattle
Green Heron	<i>Butorides virescens</i>	Com Palo Verde
White Ibis	<i>Eudocimus albus</i>	Com Palo Verde, com Sierpe
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	Few Palo Verde
Roseate Spoonbill	<i>Ajaia ajaja</i>	Com Palo Verde, com Sierpe
Black Vulture	<i>Coragyps atratus</i>	Com everywhere
Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>	Com everywhere (fewer than BV)
King Vulture	<i>Sarcoramphus papa</i>	2 Palo Verde

Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	[10] along coasts and rivers
Swallow-tailed Kite	<i>Elanoides forficatus</i>	4-5 Dominical, 1 Tarcoles
Snail Kite	<i>Rostrhamus sociabilis</i>	3-4 Palo Verde
White Hawk	<i>Leucopternis albicollis</i>	1 Marengo
Mangrove Black-Hawk	<i>Buteogallus subtilis</i>	2-3 Marengo, 1 Palo Verde
Gray Hawk	<i>Asturina nitidus</i>	1 Alajuela-Puerto Viejo
Roadside Hawk	<i>Buteo magnirostris</i>	1 Sierpe
Broad-winged Hawk	<i>Buteo platypterus</i>	1 La Selva
Short-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo brachyurus</i>	1 La Selva
Red-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	2-3 S.Gerardo, com Palo Verde
Swainson's Hawk	<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>	Few Palo Verde
Crested Caracara	<i>Caracara cheriway</i>	2 Sierpe, 1 Tarcoles, com Palo Verde, 1 Nosara
Yellow-headed Caracara	<i>Milvago chimichima</i>	[10-15] Pacific coast
Laughing Falcon	<i>Herpetotheres cachinnans</i>	1 La Selva, 1 Palo Verde
Collared Forest-Falcon	<i>Micrastur semitorquatus</i>	1 Tarcoles
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	1-2 Marengo, 2 Nosara
Purple Gallinule	<i>Porphyrio martinica</i>	Com Palo Verde
Northern Jacana	<i>Jacana spinosa</i>	Com Sierpe, com Palo Verde
Limpkin	<i>Aramus guarauna</i>	Com Palo Verde
Double-striped Thick-Knee	<i>Burhinus bistriatus</i>	Com Palo Verde
Black-necked Stilt	<i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>	Com Palo Verde
Southern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus chilensis</i>	1 Palo Verde
American Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus palliatus</i>	Few Marengo
Long-billed Curlew	<i>Numenius americanus</i>	1 Nosara
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	Few Marengo, few Nosara
Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularius</i>	Few Marengo, few Nosara
Laughing Gull	<i>Larus atracilla</i>	Few Marengo, few Nosara
Royal Tern	<i>Thalasseus maximus</i>	4 Nosara
Least Tern	<i>Sternula antillarum</i>	2 Nosara
Ruddy Pigeon	<i>Patagioenas subvinacea</i>	Com S.Gerardo

Short-billed Pigeon	<i>Patagioenas nigrirostris</i>	Few Marengo
White-winged Dove	<i>Zenaida asiatica</i>	Com Miramar
Inca Dove	<i>Columbina inca</i>	Com Dominical, com Palo Verde
Ruddy Ground-Dove	<i>Columbina talpacoti</i>	Com La Selva
White-tipped Dove	<i>Leptotila verreauxi</i>	Com Marengo, com Palo Verde
Sulphur-winged Parakeet *	<i>Pyrrhura hoffmanni</i>	Com S.Gerardo
Orange-fronted Parakeet	<i>Aratinga canicularis</i>	Com Miramar, com Palo Verde, com Nosara
Orange-chinned Parakeet	<i>Brotogeris jugularis</i>	Com Nosara
Scarlet Macaw	<i>Ara macao</i>	Com Marengo
Great Green Macaw	<i>Ara Ambigua</i>	1-2 La Selva
White-fronted Parrot	<i>Amazona albifrons</i>	Few Palo Verde
Red-lored Parrot	<i>Amazona autumnalis</i>	Com La Selva, com Marengo
Yellow-naped Parrot	<i>Amazona auropalliata</i>	Com Palo Verde
Squirrel Cuckoo	<i>Piaya cayana</i>	Com La Selva, 1 Palo Verde, few Nosara
Groove-billed Ani	<i>Crotophaga sulcirostris</i>	Com Palo Verde
Ferruginous Pygmy Owl	<i>Glaucidium brasilianum</i>	1 Nosara
CAPRIMULGIDAE		1 Tapanti, few Palo Verde
Black Swift	<i>Cypseloides niger</i>	Com Alajuela-North
White-collared Swift	<i>Streptoprocne zonaris</i>	Com Alajuela-North, com S.Gerardo
Stripe-throated Hermit	<i>Phaethornis striigularis</i>	Few Marengo
Scaly-breasted Hummingbird	<i>Phaeochroa cuvieri</i>	1 La Selva
Violet Sabrewing	<i>Campylopterus hemileucurus</i>	com Tapanti
White-necked Jacobin	<i>Florisuga mellivora</i>	Few Marengo
Blue-throated Goldentail	<i>Hylocharis eliciae</i>	Few Marengo
Green Violet-ear	<i>Colibri thalassinus</i>	Com S.Gerardo
Green-breasted Mango	<i>Anthracothorax prevostii</i>	2 Nosara
Black-crested Coquette	<i>Lophornus helenae</i>	1 Nosara
Rufous-tailed Hummingbird	<i>Amazilia tzacatl</i>	Com La Selva, few Dominical, com Marengo
Cinnamon Hummingbird	<i>Amazilia rutila</i>	Few Palo Verde, few Nosara

White-throated Mountain-Gem *	<i>Lampornis castaneoventris</i>	Few S.Gerardo
Green-crowned Brilliant	<i>Heliodoxa jacula</i>	Few S.Gerardo
Magnificent Hummingbird	<i>Eugenes fulgens</i>	Com S.Gerardo
Scintillant Hummingbird *	<i>Selasphorus scintilla</i>	Few S.Gerardo
Resplendent Quetzal	<i>Pharomachrus mocinno</i>	1 S.Gerardo
Black-headed Trogon	<i>Trogon melanocephalus</i>	Few Nosara
Violaceous Trogon	<i>Trogon rufus</i>	Few La Selva, 1 Nosara
Collared Trogon	<i>Trogon collaris</i>	1 S.Gerardo
Slaty-tailed Trogon	<i>Trogon messena</i>	Few La Selva
Turquoise-browed Motmot	<i>Eumomota superciliosa</i>	Few Nosara
Blue-crowned Motmot	<i>Momotus momota</i>	1 Palo Verde
Rufous Motmot	<i>Baryphthengus martii</i>	2 La Selva
Ringed Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle torquata</i>	1 Palo Verde
Belted Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle alcyon</i>	1 Palo Verde
White-necked Puffbird	<i>Notharchus macrorhynchos</i>	1 Nosara
Prong-billed Barbet *	<i>Semnornis frantzii</i>	1 Tapanti
Emerald Toucanet	<i>Aulacorhynchus prasinus</i>	1 S.Gerardo
Keel-billed Toucan	<i>Ramphastos sulfuratus</i>	2 Alajuela-Puerto Viejo, few La Selva
Chestnut-mandibled Toucan	<i>Rhamphastos swainsonii</i>	Com La Selva, com Marengo
Collared Aracari	<i>Pteroglossus torquatus</i>	1 Alajuela-Puerto Viejo
Linneated Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus lineatus</i>	1 La Selva, 1 S.Gerardo
Pale-billed Woodpecker	<i>Campephilus guatemalensis</i>	1 Palo Verde
Acorn Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes formicivorus</i>	Com S.Gerardo
Hoffmann's Woodpecker *	<i>Melanerpes hoffmannii</i>	1 Miramar, com Palo Verde, com Nosara
Red-rumped Woodpecker	<i>Veniliornis kirkii</i>	Few Marengo
Chestnut-colored Woodpecker	<i>Celeus castaneus</i>	Few Celeus sp. La Selva
Ruddy Treerunner *	<i>Margarornis rubiginosus</i>	1 S.Gerardo
Streak-headed Woodcreeper	<i>Lepidocolaptes souleyetti</i>	Com Marengo, com Nosara
Fasciated Antshrike	<i>Cymbilaimus lineatus</i>	Few La Selva

Barred Antshrike	<i>Thamnophilus doliatus</i>	1 La Selva, few Nosara
Chestnut-backed Antbird	<i>Myrmeciza exsul</i>	Few Marengo
Torrent Tyrannulet	<i>Serpophaga cinerea</i>	3 S. Gerardo
Common Tody-Flycatcher	<i>Todirostrum cinereum</i>	Few La Selva
Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher	<i>Myiobius sulphureipygius</i>	2-3 Alajuela-Puerto Viejo
Willow Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax traillii</i>	Few Nosara
Great Crested Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus crinitus</i>	Few Marengo
Dusky-capped Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus tuberculifer</i>	1 S.Gerardo
Great Kiskadee	<i>Pitangus sulphuratus</i>	Com everywhere
Tropical Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus melancholicus</i>	Com S.Gerardo
Western Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus verticalis</i>	Com Palo Verde
Tufted Flycatcher	<i>Mitrephanes phaeocercus</i>	1 S.Gerardo
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	<i>Tyrannus forficatus</i>	Com Palo Verde, 1 Nosara
Rose-throated Becard	<i>Pachyramphus aglaiae</i>	1 Palo Verde
Three-wattled Bellbird *	<i>Procnias tricarunculatus</i>	1 pair Marengo
White-collared Manakin	<i>Manacus candei</i>	Few La Selva
Long-tailed Manakin	<i>Chiroxiphia linearis</i>	Few Nosara
Red-capped Manakin	<i>Pipra mentalis</i>	Few Nosara
Philadelphia Vireo	<i>Vireo philadelphicus</i>	Few Marengo
White-throated Magpie-Jay	<i>Calocitta formosa</i>	1 Palo Verde, few Nosara
Brown Jay	<i>Cyanocorax morio</i>	4 Tapanti
Gray-breasted Martin	<i>Progne chalybea</i>	Com Sierpe
Mangrove Swallow	<i>Tachycineta albilinea</i>	Com Sierpe
Southern Rough-winged Swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx ruficollis</i>	Com La Selva, com Sierpe
Blue-and-white Swallow	<i>Notiochelidon cyanoleuca</i>	Com S.Gerardo
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Com Palo Verde, com Nosara
Rufous-naped Wren	<i>Campylorhynchus rufinucha</i>	Com most places
Band-backed Wren	<i>Campylorhynchus zonatus</i>	Few La Selva
Rufous-and-white Wren	<i>Thryothorus rufalbus</i>	Com Nosara
Plain Wren	<i>Thryothorus modestus</i>	1 Nosara

House Wren	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>	Few La Selva
Wood Thrush	<i>Hylocichla mustelina</i>	1 La Selva
Sooty Thrush *	<i>Turdus nigrescens</i>	Few S.Gerardo
Clay-colored Thrush	<i>Turdus grayi</i>	Com most places
Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush *	<i>Catharus gracilirostris</i>	Few S.gerardo
Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher *	<i>Ptilogonys caudatus</i>	4 S.gerardo
Blue-winged Warbler	<i>Vermivora pinus</i>	1 Miramar
Chestnut-sided Warbler	<i>Dendroica penslyvanica</i>	Com La Selva
Prothonotary Warbler	<i>Protonotaria citrea</i>	Few Nosara
Wilson's Warbler	<i>Wilsonia pusilla</i>	2 Tapanti
Collared Redstart *	<i>Myioborus torquatus</i>	Few S.Gerardo
Black-cheeked Warbler *	<i>Basileuterus melanogenys</i>	Few S.Gerardo
Bananaquit	<i>Coereba flaveola</i>	Few Marengo
Blue-gray Tanager	<i>Thraupis episcopus</i>	Com Alajuela-Puerto Viejo, few Tapanti
Scarlet Tanager	<i>Piranga olivacea</i>	1 Palo Verde
Crimson-collared Tanager	<i>Ramphocelus sanguinolentus</i>	Few La Selva
Passerini's Tanager	<i>Rhamphocelus passerini</i>	Com La Selva, few Tapanti
Cherrie's Tanager *	<i>Rhamphocelus costaricensis</i>	Com villas Rio Mar, com Marengo
Silver-throated Tanager	<i>Tangara icterocephala</i>	Com Tapanti, com S.Gerardo
Golden-hooded Tanager	<i>Tangara larvata</i>	Com La Selva
Red-legged Honeycreeper	<i>Cyanerpes cyaneus</i>	Few Marengo
Common Bush-Tanager	<i>Chlorospingus ophthalmicus</i>	Few Tapanti
Sooty-capped Bush-Tanager *	<i>Chlorospingus pileatus</i>	Few S.Gerardo
Variable Seedeater	<i>Sporophila americana</i>	Few Villas Rio Mar, com Marengo
Thick-billed seed-Finch	<i>Oryzoborus funereus</i>	Few Marengo
Stripe-headed Sparrow	<i>Aimophila ruficauda</i>	Few Miramar
Rufous-collared Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia capensis</i>	Com Alajuela, few Tapanti, com S.Gerardo
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Com Osiri, few Palo Verde
Melodious Blackbird	<i>Dives dives</i>	Few Tapanti

Great-tailed Grackle	<i>Quiscalus mexicanus</i>	Com everywhere
Spot-breasted Oriole	<i>Icterus pectoralis</i>	Few Palo Verde
Streak-backed Oriole	<i>Icterus pustulatus</i>	Com Palo Verde
Baltimore Oriole	<i>Icterus galbula</i>	Com Palo Verde
Montezuma Oropendola	<i>Psarocolius montezuma</i>	2 Alajuela-PuertoViejo, few La Selva, few Tapanti
Olive-backed Euphonia	<i>Euphonia gouldi</i>	1 La Selva

Observations of mammals

Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth	<i>Bradypus variegates</i>	2 La Selva
Hoffmann's Two-toed Sloth	<i>Choloepus hoffmanni</i>	1 La Selva
Nine-banded Long-nosed Armadillo	<i>Dasypus novemcinctus</i>	1 Nosara
(Greater) White-lined Bat	<i>Saccopteryx bilineata</i>	Com La Selva, Marengo. Other unidentified bats seen flying.
White-throated Capuchin Monkey	<i>Cebus capucinus</i>	1 La Selva, Com Marengo
Mantled Howler Monkey	<i>Alouatta palliata</i>	Com La Selva, few Marengo, com Nosara
Red-tailed Squirrel	<i>Sciurus granatensis</i>	1 Tapanti, 1 S.Gerardo
Variegated Squirrel	<i>Sciurus variegatoides</i>	Few La Selva, few Palo Verde
Central American Agouti	<i>Dasyprocta punctata</i>	Few Marengo, few Palo Verde
Tapiti / Forest Rabbit	<i>Sylvilagus brasiliensis</i>	1 La Selva
Northern Raccoon	<i>Procyon lotor</i>	1-2 Nosara
White-nosed Coati	<i>Nasua narica</i>	1 family Dominical, com Palo Verde, 6-7 Nosara
Collared Peccary	<i>Tayassu tajacu</i>	Com La Selva, few Marengo, com Palo Verde
White-tailed Deer	<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>	3-4 Palo Verde
Delphinidae		2 unidentified dolphins at Marengo
Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	2 or more seen each day at Marengo

Observations of reptiles and other animals

Boa Constrictor	<i>Boa constrictor</i>	1 La Selva
Snakes		Several small species seen La Selva and Marengo
American Crocodile	<i>Crocodylus acutus</i>	1 Sierpe, 1 Palo Verde
Jesus Christ Lizard	<i>Basiliscus basiliscus</i>	Com La Selva, com Marengo
Green Iguana	<i>Iguana iguana</i>	Com La Selva, Marengo, Nosara
Black Iguana, Ctenosaur	<i>Ctenosaura similis</i>	Com Palo Verde
Anole sp	<i>Norops sp</i>	Com Marengo
Gecko sp		Common most places
Owl Butterfly	<i>Caligo eurilochus</i>	Few Nosara
Blue Morpho	<i>Morpho (peleides)</i>	Com Marengo, Palo Verde, Nosara