

Costa Rica - December 2008

Report by Sjöf Öllers

Introduction

After months of reading and preparation we were eager to go to Thailand late November 2008. But in the last week of November the political unrest in Thailand had reached a climax with the chaotic occupation of both international airports around Bangkok. On our date of departure, November 28, all major European carriers were forced to continue with the cancellation of all flights to Bangkok that had started a few days earlier. Flights to Phuket and Chiang Mai were now either full or sold at premium prices. After some last desperate attempts trying to get to Thailand we finally gave up.

This meant a very last-minute change of plans and a Jack-Bauer-type 24 hour race against the clock was started in order to find a new holiday destination. After a quick scan around the globe only Panama and Costa Rica were considered as candidates. The cheaper flights and presumed easier travelling made us opt for Costa Rica. Tickets were bought, the luggage repacked with a new travel guide and the correct mammal and bird guides; the extravagant luxury of buying field guides way in advance for future reference now paid off. Because of our last minute departure and December already being high season we decided to book the accommodations through Camino Travel (www.caminotravel.com). In retrospect this proved to be a wise decision as several places were fully booked during our stay. Overall, Camino did a great job with arranging and booking everything last minute. Only point of criticism would be the incompetent subcontractor they used in Corcovado (more details in the report).

Considering the fact that we weren't able to do any advance preparation at all for this trip, I was pleased with what we saw. Ocelot, tapir, tamandua, both sloths, both peccaries, all four possible monkey species, snowy cotinga, bare-necked umbrellabird, five manakins, and seven trogons including the charismatic quetzal were some of the highlights. We unfortunately missed puma by just one day. Spotighting success, however, was very limited, not in the last place because many late afternoons and evenings brought heavy rain.

I took two field guides for birding and I found them both useful, if not essential. The first was *A Guide to the Birds of Costa Rica* by F. Gary Stiles and Alexander F. Skutch. This book is considered a classic in its field and deservedly so. Both the text and (most of the) plates are outstanding. However, the book is inevitably outdated with respect to recent taxonomic changes and it is a bit large for a field guide. Still indispensable for the information on behavior and ecology. The disadvantages of the above book are taken away by a newer guide called *The Birds of Costa Rica: A Field Guide* by Richard Garrigues and Robert Dean. Very handy size, good range maps and it included (at the the time and probably still) the most updated overview of Costa Rican species. The plates are as a whole not as good as Skutch's book, but they are definitely not bad either and many species are shown at a larger size. The text almost exclusively focuses on identification and there is little information on behavior and ecology. For most birds this book will be just fine, but it is very handy to have Skutch's book as a back up in your hotel room.



For mammal identification I only took along *Neotropical Rainforest Mammals: A Field Guide* by Louise H. Emmons and Francois Feer. There is also *The Mammals of Costa Rica: A Natural History and Field Guide* by Mark Wainwright, which seems to be a very useful field guide. But I could find everything I needed in Emmons' book, so I did not bother to buy it. Other wildlife was identified (or not) with books at the lodges or by asking local guides.

One major disadvantage of the last-minute departure was the fact that I hardly had time to prepare a decent collection of bird sounds to upload on my MP3 player. I only had a few hours to make a collection and I focused on songbirds; in the rush I forgot complete families such as owls, nightjars, raptors and ant-thrushes. This explains why some families are very under-represented or even absent in the trip list. Non-vocal tyrant flycatchers as always also posed identification problems and quite a few of them had to remain undetermined during the trip. Part of the problem was relieved by hiring local guides at every location we visited. The guides in Costa Rica were generally excellent and well worth the money in my opinion. The only exception was the disaster guide in Corcovado. For Corcovado I had requested the superb guide Felipe Arias who had guided my brother on a Corcovado trip a few years earlier, but he was no longer working with Camino, but I found that out only when I got there.

Itinerary

- Nov. 30: Flight to Costa Rica
- Dec. 1: Transfer to Esquinas Rainforest Lodge
- Dec. 2: Esquinas Rainforest Lodge
- Dec. 3: Transfer to Puerto Jimenez and the Carate/La Leona
- Dec. 4: Corcovado national park - Hike to Sirena Biological Station
- Dec. 5: Corcovado national park - Trails around Sirena Biological Station
- Dec. 6: Corcovado national park - Hike back to La Leona
- Dec. 7: Transfer back to Esquinas Rainforest Lodge
- Dec. 8: Esquinas Rainforest Lodge
- Dec. 9: Transfer to San Gerardo de Dota valley - Savegre Lodge
- Dec. 10: Savegre Lodge
- Dec. 11: Savegre Lodge
- Dec. 12: Morning Savegre - afternoon back to San Jose - Colonial Hotel
- Dec. 13: Drive to La Selva
- Dec. 14: La Selva
- Dec. 15: To La Fortuna - Overnight at Lomas del Volcan
- Dec. 16: Daytrip to Los Chiles and Cano Negro/Rio Frio - Overnight at Lomas del Volcan
- Dec. 17: Depart to Monteverde. Overnight at Monteverde Cloud Forest Lodge
- Dec. 18: Morning Santa Elena - afternoon Monteverde
- Dec. 19: Morning Sanctuario Ecologico - depart to San Jose - Colonial Hotel
- Dec. 20: Flight back to the Netherlands



Day-to-Day Account

Nov. 30: Flight to Costa Rica

We had booked flights with Delta. After an uneventful flight to Atlanta, we changed planes and initially the flight to Costa Rica went fine and we arrived on time (about 9.15 pm) above San Jose. Then, the plane kept circling and circling. Finally, the captain announced that bad weather (extreme fog conditions) was preventing us from landing. After two more hours of circling above San Jose and finally hearing that the airport was closed for all air traffic until next morning, we were diverted to Panama city at around 1 am. We arrived at around 2 am in Panama and around 3 am we passed through an improvised one-person custom booth. In the ensuing chaos, we managed to get a seat on the last minibus to Panama City, where we got a room in a very nice hotel. Unfortunately, at least 50% of the passengers on our plane were not so lucky and they spent all night on the airport.

Dec. 1: Panama City - Esquinas Rainforest Lodge

After a few hours of much-cherished sleep and a tasty re-energizing breakfast, we were shuttled back from Panama City to the international airport. After a short flight we arrived in San Jose. In order not to lose even more quality time, we insisted on going directly to Esquinas. We were told that it would take 5 hours, which seemed optimistic, but nice if true. We left 4.30 pm and, of course, arrived much later at 11.30 pm, but we were glad to have arrived! On the way down to Esquinas, we saw several pauragues and even better a Northern racoon on the unpaved section of the coastal road between Dominical and Quepos.

Dec. 2: Esquinas Rainforest Lodge

The next morning confirmed that we had made the right decision by going straight to Esquinas. Esquinas is a little paradise with excellent birdwatching, a great trail system and very nice lodge facilities. After the hectic preceding days, we decided to take it easy the first day. In the morning I walked the entrance road, the Riverbed trail and the Bird Trail. Common, but splendid species such as bay-headed and golden-hooded tanager, riverside wren, spot-crowned euphonia and chestnut-mandibled toucan were picked up. Less common highlights were orange-collared manakin, dot-winged antwren, black-hooded antshrike and white-throated shrike-tanager.



Mammal densities at Esquinas are still comparatively low as the area was heavily poached before it became protected. Mammals are starting to return though. Close to the lodge we saw coatis and on the trails agoutis and squirrels were seen quite regularly. Several cat species up to the size of ocelot have been seen, but sightings are extremely rare. Night walks sometimes produce kinkajous and olingos according to the resident guides. The pools along the entrance road hold a few small and medium-sized caimans, of which one caught a green heron leaving behind a distressed German couple and partner (the green heron's partner that is).

Dec. 3: Morning at Esquinas - Transfer to Puerto Jimenez and the Carate/La Leona

I was out again at dawn and ran into a couple of great curassows on the entrance road. Excellent start! Other noteworthy birds were orange-billed sparrow and beryl-crowned hummingbird. After breakfast we walked the Ocelot and Waterbed trail and found yellow-bellied flycatcher, red-crowned woodpecker, wedge-billed and black-striped woodcreeper, white-crowned parrot, and buff-throated saltator among others. Around noon the

lodge staff brought us to the ferry landing in Golfoito. In Golfoito harbour we saw willet, black-bellied plover, and ruddy turnstone. Scarlet macaws were a common sight in the forest above the town. The ferry crossing produced a few of the aptly named magnificent frigatebirds.

We arrived at the harbour in Puerto Jimenez around 1 pm where we met our guide from a local subcontractor called Ocarina Expeditions on the dock. We were told that we had to wait for another group that would arrive with the next ferry. This was a bit unfortunate, but still seemed OK and I was hoping to relax for two hours and do some casual birdwatching at the relatively birdy dock area. We first headed to the restaurant next to the quay for a lunch break and slowly the full story was revealed by the guide: the next group would not only drive to Carate with us, they would be our company for the next days despite the fact that we had booked a private tour. We were also to find out that the lodge we had requested for the first night was full, which meant we had to camp. We don't mind camping at all, but not when a premium price has been paid for a private tour that was converted to a group tour.

When the next ferry finally arrived at about 3 pm, the other group wasn't on it. It turned out that they had missed the ferry, because their flight was delayed. I think that the guide already knew this, because he was on the phone with his boss constantly and the taxi driver that would take us to Carate had taken our backpacks when we headed off for lunch. It seemed odd that the guide hadn't bothered to let the guy come over with our luggage when the ferry was on its way. The guide kept delaying our departure but after another hour hanging around on the dock we insisted on going to Carate as it was already 4.30 pm and he still couldn't give a conclusive answer on whether the other clients would actually still come or not. Reluctantly, he finally gave in and we departed for Carate. We arrived in pitch black at the beach in Carate, which guaranteed the added attraction of a waist-deep river crossing in the dark at high tide. Otherwise it was an easy hike on the beach to La Leona. There, we heard that the other group now definitely would arrive later that night. We relaxed a bit at the very nice La Leona lodge and a few hours later the other clients indeed arrived, four female hikers from Germany. They seemed as surprised as we were when the guide unfolded his plan for the next days. The German women had booked a different program (walk out via Los Patos station), but it was decided for them that they would do the same program that we had booked. Unsurprisingly, the atmosphere during the group dinner with the guide was very icy. However, the German women themselves luckily proved to be very nice company.

Dec. 4: Corcovado national park - Hike to Sirena Biological Station

The next morning before breakfast I explored the campground area and the surrounding forest, but it was surprisingly quiet. However, my partner saw a coati walk across the campsite only a few meters from the tent while I was out birding.

After breakfast we met the guide and the four German women at the ranger station in La Leona and we started walking. The hike to Sirena biological station proved to be easier than expected, but it does include two tricky river crossings (chest-deep in the middle of the river when we were there). The further away you get from Carate/La Leona, the better the forest gets. Unfortunately, our guide acted like an idiot on our way to La Sirena so options for bird- or mammalwatching were rather limited, but still a decent number of birds were picked up along the beach including many royal terns, a few least and elegant terns, laughing gull, little blue heron, tricolored heron, bare-throated tiger heron, osprey, scarlet macaw, common black hawk and brown pelican. In the forest I saw a female black-throated trogon, many of the commoner tanager species, riverside wren and best of all I had very close views of a female golden-naped woodpecker while lagging behind the rest of the group. On the beach at the forest edge we saw several large ctenosaurs. Howler, spider and capuchin monkeys were regularly seen.

On their website Ocarina advertise the trip we made as the Corcovado Naturalist Trek guided by a *naturalist* guide. The only positive thing I can say about the guide is that he handled the two major river crossing on the trip well and helped out when needed while crossing the river. As a naturalist, he was useless. He only stopped for very obvious animals that we would have seen ourselves anyway; he completely missed several smaller mammals in the forest just because he was walking way too fast. He did not show any of the colourful frogs, interesting insects, etc. He almost never stopped for birds, despite that I had told him that I was a birdwatcher, but maybe it was for the better: even a clay-colored robin felt insulted and flew away when he called it "an antbird".

Around 2.30-3 pm we arrived at Sirena biological station rather wet from the first afternoon rain. The last two kilometres I had put my bins in the backpack to keep them dry. Relaxing on the veranda I suddenly saw a feline emerge from the forest. The cat stood still on the edge of the airstrip and was looking around. The cat was

medium-sized, but compact and powerful. From this distance it looked unicoloured. Unfortunately, our guide had seen the cat as well after a few seconds and started shouting out loud "puma, puma, puma, puma, puma, puma, puma,..." as if he had just developed an obsessive-compulsive disorder. I frantically dug up my bins from the backpack as, coincidentally or not, the cat had started to trot across the airstrip when our guide had started to shout. I was lucky enough to get the cat in my bins for about 10 seconds and could see it was an ocelot. The ocelot was completely soaked from the rain and its lower half was completely reddish brown from the mud. But the upper half showed the beautiful pattern of its coat. Incredible! Soon after this spectacle the heavens opened again and the torrential rain lasted until sunset. Any spotlighting plans after dinner were cut short by more rain and we had to get up early anyway.

Dec. 5: Corcovado national park - Trails around Sirena Biological Station

Some of us did a pre-dawn walk along the airstrip and we found the resident female Baird's tapir with a collar at the far end of the airstrip. Overall, things were rather quiet though on this hike, both mammal- and birdwise. Impressive were two 3.5-4 metre saltwater crocodiles at the mouth of the Rio Sirena.

As most people that stayed at Sirena yesterday had seen a puma mother with two cubs in the Sendero Espanel area, our guide wanted to try to see if they were still there. That prospect was interesting enough to endure him for another morning hike after breakfast. Before entering the forest, he ordered us to be very silent at all times if we were to have any chance of seeing the pumas. Unsurprisingly, he was the first to start blaring in the forest. We did not see the puma and I was not surprised that we didn't, when later that day I heard at the biological station from other visitors that yesterday one of the guides had managed to position himself and the clients between the cubs and the mother. Of course, the puma mother had taken offence and had left the area.

The remainder of the morning hike produced (mainly the sound of) a group of white-lipped peccaries rushing through the undergrowth, but I managed to see one individual well. They also did their impressive teeth grinding show. Best sighting for me was a group of squirrel monkeys. However, our guide himself provided another unexpected highlight to round off the morning: when we ran into another tourist (who was accompanied by a volunteer from Sirena biological station), our guide assumed that the man was walking off-trail in the park without a permit. Without exactly asking what had happened, he started ranting and shouting at this man in a verbally extremely aggressive way. Our guide jumped in front of him and told him that he personally would make sure that the guy would be expelled from the park. When I later talked to the guy, it turned out that he actually did nothing wrong and was allowed to be where he was. After the incident our guide gave a long rant on the way back to the biological station about how terrible tourists were and how they destroyed everything in the park, etc., etc. So much for job satisfaction.

It may come as a surprise to some readers, but I decided to go out on my own for the rest of the day. This proved to be a lot more productive. Several large mixed flocks were seen, but relatively few new species were seen (russet antshrike, ruddy-tailed flycatcher, white-shouldered tanager, rose-throated becard, masked tityra and pale-billed woodpecker). Still, sorting out the species in the flocks was as always good fun. Very nice was a second encounter with a group of squirrel monkeys. A gap in the canopy forced them down to the young new-growth trees, which allowed stunning close-up views (unfortunately I didn't take the camera). Late afternoon brought some heavy showers again, but less intense and persistent than yesterday. My wife joined two of the German ladies on the afternoon hike with the guide to a natural swimming pool, but unsurprisingly that was disappointing, especially when the guide thought it was an invitation to watch when the ladies told him that they wanted to put on their swim suits.

In the evening a Belgian tourist showed me a picture of half a tail and part of the hindquarters of a sandy/pale-rufous-coloured cat, which must have been a puma (or maybe jaguarundi). The picture was taken at the swampy area at the end of the airstrip. Unfortunately, the vegetation was too high, which had prevented better views and pictures.

Since heavy rain after dark discouraged me again to do any spotlighting, I had a chat with some other tourists including a Dutch couple, who were also interested in birds and mammals, a wildlife photographer and a Swiss wildlife enthusiast with a special interest in flowers and butterflies. All of them had booked their trip through a local agency and all of them had experienced varying problems (private tours turned into group tours without any form of compensation, program and accommodation changes based on nothing, guides that are basically only trekking guides (not naturalists), out-of-nowhere surcharges, etc.). Although good guides/companies seem to exist (my brother had an excellent local guide a few years back), many of the tourism businesses centred

around Corcovado/Osa Peninsula seem rather unprofessional and greatly overpriced for what they offer, especially in comparison with the generally good standards I experienced in the rest of the country.

Dec. 6: Corcovado national park - Hike back to La Leona

In the morning I explored the area around the biological station. Scarlet macaws and mealy parrots were plentiful and a squadron of black vultures was drying their wings on the grassy airstrip only a short distance from the balcony of the biological station. Several agoutis were seen along the forest edge around the station. When we started the return hike to La Leona, our group and another group discovered very fresh puma tracks (adult and cubs) on the Sendera Los Naranjos. The puma mother had transferred the cubs a few kilometres in a south-westerly direction. The guide from the other group said that he had heard the mother deeper in the forest, but neither they nor we managed to get views of the cats. The walk back was rather uneventful, but turned up a decent number of coastal birds including two new trip ticks, whimbrel and semipalmated plover.

Around 2 pm we arrived at La Leona lodge where we were finally relieved of our guide, who continued to Carate with the German ladies to bring them to Puerto Jimenez. The stay at La Leona was lovely (we got an upgrade to stay in their luxury tents, very nice). In the afternoon I explored the area around the lodge. Monkeys were rather common with capuchin, spider and howler monkeys regularly seen, although seemingly in smaller groups than around La Sirena (typically small groups of 2-4 animals). Birding, however, was surprisingly uneventful. Most noteworthy was a short-tailed hawk that showed up shortly above the lodge and then turned back in the direction of Carate.

Dec. 7: Transfer back to Esquinas Rainforest Lodge

In the morning I walked the lodge area again and now I managed to find a small feeding flock on a fruiting tree. Birds included blue dacnis, red-legged honeycreeper, squirrel cuckoo, bananaquit, short-billed pigeon, and Cherrie's tanager. In the understorey I had good views of a male chestnut-backed antbird. The drive back to Puerto Jimenez was unfortunately uneventful (best sighting grey-necked wood-rail), particularly when we heard from our driver that he had seen a jaguar cross the road yesterday afternoon. The ferry back to Golfito produced good numbers of magnificent frigatebirds and brown boobies.

Back at Esquinas things started out very well with a couple of the gorgeous Baird's trogon in a tree opposite the car parking. Two summer tanagers in full plumage were a delight to see. I ran into a friendly group of American birdwatchers and while sorting out a medium-sized flock in a fruiting tree, their leader confirmed the identity of two more difficult species: paltry tyrannulet and tawny-crowned greenlet.

A night walk with two of the local guides and three other tourists was excellent for frogs, snakes, spiders and odd insects, but an American woman who claimed to be a biologist, kept chattering about herself, thus effectively killing any opportunity to see mammals.



Dec. 8: Esquinas Rainforest Lodge

Around dawn I explored the entrance road and the Waterbed and Bird trails. A roosting white hawk and crested guan were the most exciting sightings. Furthermore, an agouti, belted and ringed kingfisher, female blue dacnis, several hermits, streak-headed woodcreeper, orange-chinned parakeet and chestnut-backed antbird were seen.

After breakfast we walked half of the Fila Trail and the first bit of the Valle Bonito Trail. From the spot where I had seen the single white hawk, four of them had now left their roosts and started spiralling upwards. Great sight. A close view of a couple of red-capped manakins on the Valle Bonito trail was superb. Otherwise, several good mixed flocks with 10-15 species each were seen including our only black-cheeked ant-tanagers. At some point I had fleeting glimpses of a large green/yellowish bird feeding on fruits; this must almost certainly have been a female three-wattled bellbird, but views were too short and partly obscured by vegetation to be sure.

Because of the enjoyable morning we walked part of the Fila trail and Valle Bonito trail again, but we ascended this time via the lush Ocelot trail, where two agoutis were seen. In the afternoon there were several heavy showers. We surprised a covey of marbled wood-quails hiding (seemingly) from the rain under a large log. Otherwise, it was very quiet, but two female great curassows were seen on the descent back to the lodge.

A nightly spotlighting session on my own was rather unproductive. Only insects, spiders and the occasional frog were seen.

Dec. 9: Transfer to San Gerardo de Dota valley - Savegre Lodge

On our last morning at Esquinas I went out alone before breakfast to check out the other half of the Fila Trail. I did not get very far, because the place was packed with birds. First, two rufous-tailed jacamars were heard and then seen. A black-throated trogon was heard, but stayed out of sight. On the edge of the reserve I managed to see two rare birds: American redstart and Western tanager. Both were seen very well (details in trip list, I tried to discuss the sightings with the local guides, but they weren't around that morning and we left Esquinas later that morning). A small brown snake could not be identified as it slithered away too fast. The magic was far from over. Within 15 minutes I saw red-capped and orange-collared manakin, black-throated trogon, blue dacnis, long-billed gnatwren, violet-crowned woodnymph and ruddy quail-dove among others. After breakfast my partner joined and we went back: things were much quieter now, but both manakins were still around.

Around lunchtime we made the transfer to the San Gerardo de Dota/Savegre valley. The drive was quite productive with black-chested hawk, grey-headed tanager, streaked saltator and best of all fiery-billed aracari. The late afternoon at Savegre was spent in the lodge grounds mostly seeing common birds (slaty flowerpiercer, yellowish flycatcher, common bush tanager, collared redstart, ruddy treerunner, etc.) and lots of hummers at the feeders. At sunset I saw the spectacular silhouette of a male Quetzal flying right over our chalet.



Dec. 10-11: Savegre Lodge

During our stay here we walked all the lodge's trails and they were all worth exploring for birds and forest scenery. Birding on the trails was typically relatively slow, although usually a few good flocks were encountered on each of them. With the relative lack of abundantly coloured Neotropical species in Savegre's cloud forest habitat, it was nice that the north-american migrants added a splash of colour: flame-throated warbler, black-

throated green warbler, golden-winged warbler, Wilson's warbler, and Baltimore oriole were some of the birds seen. Resident birds seen included sooty-capped bush-tanager, large-footed finch, chestnut-capped brush-finch, yellow-thighed finch, and gray-breasted wood-wren.

The lodge gardens and especially the main road in the valley were often much birdier and the birding was generally easier, because the open deforested spaces allowed the effective use of telescopes. The main road was definitely the best place to see quetzals when we were there. However, to see them at close quarters a visit to one of the quetzal miradores along the road is recommended. There are two, miradores 2 and 3 km, respectively, upstream from the lodge. Entry is 1-2 USD per person. At both of them we saw one or two females and about 4-7 males, sometimes 5-6 birds at once. On one of our walks up to the miradores we were lucky to see a torrent tyrannulet feeding along the river.

On the morning of the 11th we hired a guide through the lodge. We were joined on the tour by a friendly French couple. Though not cheap at 35 USD per person, hiring the guide was well worth the money as he showed us many good birds. Some highlights were a stunning male golden-browed chlorophonia, long-tailed silky flycatcher, flame-coloured tanager, fiery-throated and volcano hummingbird, dark pewee, rufous-browed peppershrike, many flycatchers and resplendent quetzal. Surprisingly, we could not find a single emerald toucanet. Later in the afternoon, the French birder and I joined up to give our spouses a well-deserved rest from birdwatching. We walked the Il Jilguero trail and found several collared trogons, black-faced solitaire, black phoebe, black-thighed grosbeak and a group of spangle-cheeked tanagers.

Dec. 12: Morning Savegre - afternoon back to San Jose - Colonial Hotel.

On our last morning in Savegre we decided to walk the quite steep Los Robles trail. The trail gains several hundred meters in altitude, but is easy to follow and an enjoyable hike through beautiful forest. Birding was relatively slow. Flocks were usually relatively small and only the commoner species were seen. On the highest saddle of the trail I heard silvery-throated jays high up in the canopy. I was looking towards the sun, so I could only get fleeting glimpses of their silhouettes. Annoying. On our way down along the La Quebrada trail I ran into an ochraceous pewee who seemed just as stunned as I was. The bird landed on a dead tree stump only a few meters away from me. On this trail I also had good views of tufted flycatcher and black-thighed grosbeak.

The transfer back to San Jose was uneventful. San Jose itself is ugly, boring, and quite a nightmare to drive: its most redeeming feature was the wealth of restaurants.

Dec. 13: Drive to La Selva

After a very underwhelming breakfast at hotel Colonial a representative of Sixt brought us our rental car, a dinky toy 4x4 called Daihatsu Be-Go. I think we could have driven most of the roads by 2WD but in Monteverde we used the 4x4 drive a few times, because some of the roads were very steep and/or slippery.

We had gotten up very early to avoid peak hour in San Jose. This was a good decision and surprisingly we managed to leave the city without taking a wrong turn off once. The drive to La Selva involved about three or four near-lethal accidents with trucks, but was otherwise straightforward. In general, most people with a "normal" car in Costa Rica drive probably more safely than the average driver in my hometown. Things become different when they drive a bus, truck or a SUV with blinded windows: drivers of these vehicles seem to consider any backcountry road as a private single lane. The drive to La Selva took us about 2 hours. It was very rainy when we arrived, but after lunch it changed from rain to showers and they were rarely that bad that we had to stop completely. A perched blue-headed parrot in front of our chalet was a good start. Bird activity remained quite good, especially when the showers stopped for a while. A largish and very loose bird wave near the suspension bridge held white-collared and white-ruffed manakins, several woodcreepers, slaty-tailed trogon, five tanager species, and olive-backed euphonias among others. Along the entrance road, pale-billed and chestnut-coloured woodpeckers, blue dacnis, grey-throated chacalaca, black-faced grosbeak and yellow-throated vireo were seen. Since our accommodation was about 1 km from the restaurant area, dinner always involved a built-in night walk. Unfortunately, it rained this evening and apart from a few large toads and frogs nothing was seen.

Dec. 14: La Selva

The next morning we made a morning excursion with a guide and she was very good: things started off nicely with a two-toed sloth and a stake-out for giant potoo. Today was sunny and warmer and there was activity everywhere almost non-stop right up to lunchtime. In the botanical garden area, it was very busy with large

flocks of Neotropical goodies: honeycreepers, dacnisses, tanagers, euphonias, and woodcreepers were all well represented. Crimson-fronted parakeet and barred parakeet were seen as well. Two sightings of the lovely blue-jeans frog was one of the highlights.

We then walked the CCC trail seeing several small groups of collared peccaries. While we were looking at the infamous bullet ants and a Caligo butterfly, a small group of spider monkeys came racing through the canopy. We turned back and had only walked a few tens of meters, when we ran into a displaying male red-capped manakin. The bird showed its incredible moonwalk and wing beating display. Absolutely spectacular. We headed back for lunch seeing more peccaries, agoutis and several good birds.



The guide had told us that green-and-black poison dart frog could be seen if we would walk deeper into the forest along the STR trail. I thought that our chances would be slim, but after lunch we walked the STR trail for about 2-2.5 km. After searching for a while we gave up, but amazingly we found one right next to the path on our way back. The bright green colour is just incredible. Absolutely superb animals. Elated we left and on our way back we also saw a great tinamou, a pair of shy ruddy quail doves, and a group of twelve coatis. When we returned from the forest to relax a bit around the restaurant, it turned out that a rather large flock was foraging around the restaurant. On a dead tree pied puffbirds and black-crowned tityras were seen. White-crowned parrots were feeding at eye level. A bright-rumped attila was singing from the forest edge and finally a couple of shining honeycreepers was seen well. It was now late afternoon and activity had been almost unrelenting. On my way back to the chalets I saw the amazing display of two white-collared manakins, who did a synchronized performance jumping back and forth on low vines. Luckily the last hour before dark was relatively quiet allowing a much needed break. The night walk after dinner unfortunately produced nothing again.



Dec. 15: Morning La Selva - afternoon La Fortuna

Our last morning at La Selva we decided to have another look around the botanical garden area and walk another trail in the forest. Weather was bright and sunny. We walked to the botanical garden area after breakfast. Things started well with a perched adult semiplumbeous hawk and red-lored parrot. On the branches of a dead tree along the forest edge, birds were constantly landing and taking off, but they were mostly toucans, aracarís and Baltimore orioles. Just when we were about to continue, my partner casually said: what are these white things there in the dead tree? White things? I first looked through my bins and couldn't believe it: five snowy cotingas

had landed. I rushed to see them through the scope and could identify two male, two female and an immature snowy cotinga. As I feared that the birds would fly off any second, we kept looking through the scope, but they stayed for about 5 minutes. In all the excitement, I completely forgot to take a picture. Oh well. We continued through the garden area adding white-vented euphonias.

We then walked the CES trail. Bird activity was initially moderate, but when I was chasing after a skulking wren-like bird, I suddenly saw a small flock feeding on a fruiting tree in a rather open spot in the forest. I saw a jackdaw-sized bird feeding on the fruits, but it was largely obscured. By walking back and forth I finally found an open spot and I was looking at a female bare-necked umbrellabird. Brilliant!! A bit deeper in the forest two researchers showed us a male white-ruffed manakin and a female red-capped manakin that they had caught with nets that morning. On our way out via the STR trail, we saw a pair of olive-backed quail-doves feed quietly along the edge of the trail.

Around noon we departed for La Fortuna. The drive was uneventful. At the Lomas del Volcan lodge, birding was slower-paced, which was a welcome relief from the high-intensity birding at La Selva. Best bird was a gray hawk that perched on a bare tree in the garden for a while.

Dec. 16: Daytrip to Los Chiles and Cano Negro/Rio Frio

Despite the rainy weather we set off with our guide and two single female American travellers, who were good company and one of them was a birdwatcher. Our guide turned out to be a friendly and knowledgeable guy. The relentless rain of the last few weeks had made the water levels rise a few meters, not ideal for watching waterbirds along the Rio Frio. Despite the rain, we picked up yellow-crowned night heron, bat falcon, laughing falcon, great potoo, green and Amazon kingfisher. The waterbirds were present in low numbers as expected but we still saw a few limpkin, white ibis and about 7-8 species of heron. Three wood storks were only seen in flight. A solitary sandpiper was the only wader seen.



Mammal sightings were good too with both two-toed and three-toed sloth, the omnipresent howler monkeys, one shy spider monkey, but sighting of the day was a tamandua feeding high up in a tree along the river edge. Green iguanas were very common. The Jesus Christ lizards were present as well, but less common. Only one young one

was seen racing over the water for a few seconds. Just when we were about to debark in Los Chiles a beautiful black-collared hawk flew over the boat.

Afternoon birding around the lodge produced a pair of bay wrens, a male black-cowled oriole and a lineated woodpecker among others.

Dec. 17: Drive to Monteverde

The drive up to Monteverde produced surprisingly little of interest; best were crested caracara and crimson-fronted parakeet.

We arrived at the Cloud Forest Lodge around noon and birded from the veranda and saw our only emerald toucanets of the trip! In the lodge garden we saw a rather tame coati that seemed to be searching for an easy meal. Later we explored the trails around the lodge. Good sightings were white-eared sparrow, orange-bellied trogon, a variety of hummers, and Chiriqui quail-dove, which was very shy but seen quite well from a distance. A group of about ten capuchin monkeys was seen at close range.

A stop at Stella's bakery in town produced yellow-throated euphonias, blue-crowned motmot and a few hummers but little else. The large tree behind the bakery unfortunately had stopped fruiting.

A night walk on the lodge's trails only produced an agouti.

Dec. 18: Morning Santa Elena - afternoon Monteverde

This morning we visited the Santa Elena reserve and hired Johnny, the local bird expert. He is a friendly guy and very good. Highly recommended. It rained all the time during the hike and the wind was quite strong as well. So sightings were relatively disappointing: the bird specialties of the area did not show. Most of the more regular birds of the region were all seen though, but usually not in the greatest light conditions. Most remarkable were chestnut-capped brush-finch and brown-billed scythebill, but both would typically fly away just when I had focused my bins on them. Even more frustrating was the very short sighting of the only prong-billed barbet.....and from behind. Sigh. Nevertheless, we managed to get a superb sighting of a long-tailed weasel only a few meters away from us in dense vegetation of fallen branches right at the information centre.

We decided to descend to lower elevations in the hope the rain would become less heavy and this was indeed the case. It was actually sunny when we arrived at the Monteverde reserve. Birding was ok with red-fronted spinetail, spotted barbtail, ruddy treerunner, barred becard, ruddy-capped and slaty-breasted nightingale-thrush, mountain robin, both redstarts, three-streaked warbler, etc. In a gap in the forest where some low bushes carried fruits, a decent flock descended down to eye-level. This resulted in amazingly close views of the beautifully coloured spangle-cheeked tanagers. Mammalwise things were quiet, we only saw two agoutis and a few squirrels, and managed to miss a white-tailed deer by a few seconds.

Late afternoon we decided to drive to the Santuario Ecologica (formerly the Finca Ecologica) to see whether it was open. We had a slightly chaotic discussion with the owner and resident guide, but indicated that we wanted to come back tomorrow at 7 am. Moderate rain just after dark made me skip a spotlighting session.



Dec. 19: Morning Sanctuario Ecologico - Back to San Jose

When we arrived at the reserve, it looked like our guide would not show up. Just when we were about to set off by ourselves, he appeared 20 minutes late. The guide was a friendly and knowledgeable guy, but also extremely chatty, a bit too much for our tastes. It detracted and he seemed not that inspired this morning. The habitat is much drier here and looked interesting, but the birding was extremely slow. The weather was sunny but fairly windy, which may have affected the activity. A nice tick was a couple of rufous-and-white wrens. We were in particular looking for long-tailed manakin and after 2.5 hours it seemed that we would have to leave empty handed. However, as we were already on our way back to the car, we suddenly ran into a small mixed flock that also contained a male long-tailed manakin. The friendly manakin perched on a vine that was hanging over the trail allowing excellent views. Mammalwise it was fairly quiet too with a few capuchin monkeys and two coatis. According to the guide, ocelot is not that uncommon and seen about once a month.

Around noon we drove back to San Jose stopping only a few times for drinks and some shopping. In San Jose we had a nice meal at the excellent restaurant on the opposite side of the road of our hotel.

Dec. 20: Flight back to the Netherlands

The flight back to Atlanta was relatively entertaining: a few teenage "dudes" from Scandinavia, whose teenage camp stay of several months in Costa Rica had ended, had obviously been drinking before going on the plane. During the flight one of them became paler and paler. We were sitting in the back next to the toilet and I heard the stewardess say: "Sir, are you Ok?" We looked across our shoulder and the guy passed out and fell down on the floor like a log. After a few panicky moments, the classic announcement was made: "Is there a medic on the plane?" It turned out that the bloke had alcohol poisoning. We were then prioritized for immediate landing by the tower in Atlanta. We basically nose-dived to the runway and arrived 20 minutes ahead of schedule. I hope the kid had a good insurance. On the flight across the Atlantic, things were quiet again and we had to rely on the entertainment system provided by Delta.

Index Trip List

CANE = Cano Negro/Rio Frio area

CFL = Monteverde Cloudforest Lodge

COR = Corcovado national park, i.e., Carate, La Leona area and the trail network around Sirena ranger station

ESQ = Esquinas lodge grounds and trails

LDV = Lomas del Volcan

MOCFR = Monteverde Cloudforest Reserve

MON = Monteverde "urban" area

MOSE = Monteverde Sanctuario Ecologico (a.k.a. Finca Ecologica)

SAV = Savegre lodge grounds and trails

SECFR = Santa Elena Cloudforest Reserve

SGDD = San Gerardo de Dota valley/road, but not Savegre lodge



Mammal list

White-lined Sac-winged Bat *Saccopteryx bilineata* – about 20-25 above the refrigerator at ESQ
Long-nosed Bat *Rhynconycteris naso* – several groups roosting at CANE, a small group sleeping under the veranda roof of our chalet in ESQ
Tent-making Bat *Uroderma bilobatum?* - one group at La Selva
Short-tailed Fruit bat *Carollia perspicillata* - on night walk ESQ
Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth *Bradypus variegatus* - only one male at CANE
Hoffmann's Two-toed Sloth *Choloepus hoffmanni* - two at La Selva and one at CANE
Tamandua/Collared Anteater *Tamandua mexicana*- one feeding high up in a tree at CANE
Mantled howler monkey *Alouatta palliata* - common at COR and CANE
White-throated Capuchin Monkey *Cebus capuchinus* - common at COR (also around La Leona), two groups at CFL, one small group at MOSE
Central American Spider Monkey *Ateles geoffroyi* - common at COR (also around La Leona), about 10 at CFL, one at CANE, small group at La Selva
Central American Squirrel Monkey *Saimiri oerstedii* - seen only twice (groups of 7-8) at COR
Long-tailed Weasel *Mustela frenata* - one at the entrance of SECFR
White-nosed Coati *Nasua narica* - one at CFL, one on the campsite at La Leona Ranger Station, a group of 12 at La Selva, one between Golfito and ESQ and three tame ones near the dam at Arenal lake
Northern Raccoon *Procyon lotor* - one at night between Quepos and Dominical on the road section that is still unpaved
[Puma *Felis concolor* - not seen by us, but most tourists present had seen and photographed a female with two cubs in COR on Dec. 4. The pumas were still around as very fresh tracks were seen regularly, but the cats weren't seen by us or other people the next days]
Ocelot *Felis pardalis* - one seen from Sirena ranger station when it crossed the grassy airstrip
Collared Peccary *Tayassu tajacu* - common at La Selva, both in the botanical garden area and the forest
White-lipped Peccary *Tayassu pecari* - one seen and many heard (and barely seen) rushing through the forest at COR.
Baird's Tapir *Tapirus Bairdii* - one female with a collar at the end of the airstrip at Sirena
Red-tailed Squirrel *Sciurus granatensis* - a few at ESQ
Variegated Squirrel *Sciurus variegatoides* - 1-2 daily in the Monteverde area including CFL
Alfaro's Pygmy Squirrel *Microsciurus alfari* – one at MOSE, one at CFL
Central American Agouti *Dasyprocta punctata* - at least 2-3 daily at COR, 1-2 daily at ESQ, one at CFL, a few in MOCFR



Bird list

Great Tinamou *Tinamus major* – one in COR on the Sendero Espanel, one behind the library and one on the STR trail in La Selva.
Little Tinamou *Crypturellus soui* – heard several times at COR and ESQ, one seen on the Rio Claro trail in COR and one seen at ESQ on the Fila trail.
Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis* – common in the whole Golfo Dulce area and COR

Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster* – about 10 birds in the Golfo Dulce seen from the ferry between Golfito and Puerto Jimenez, an immature bird stranded on the beach at COR seemed to be sick and/or wounded, seen both on December 4 and 6.

Neotropical Cormorant *Phalacrocorax brasilianus* – common along the coast and major rivers

Anhinga *Anhinga anhinga* – common at CANE

Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens* – a few seen on the ferry from Golfito to Puerto Jimenez, 5-10 daily along the coast at COR.

Bare-throated Tiger-Heron *Tigrisoma mexicanum* – a few at COR, one at CANE

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron *Nyctanassa violacea* – two seen at CANE

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* – very common in wetlands and cultivated areas

Green Heron *Butorides virescens* – a few at ESQ, of which one got eaten by a caiman! Also seen at CANE, COR and La Selva.

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea* – daily 1-2 at COR along the coast or river mouths, 2 at CANE.

Tricolored Heron *Egretta tricolor* – two seen at COR along the coast near river mouths.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula* - quite regular in the whole Golfo Dulce area and COR, common in CANE.

Great Egret *Ardea albus* – quite common in most places, especially CANE.

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias* – two at COR, one at CANE.

Wood Stork *Mycteria Americana* - three in flight overhead at CANE and also three in flight at La Selva following the Sarapiquí river inland.

Green Ibis *Mesembrinibis cayennensis* – two sightings (three and one bird(s)) at La Selva at the marshy meadow near the entrance gate, one seen well at CANE

White Ibis *Eudocimus albus* – only about 10-15 at CANE, also fairly common between Carate and Puerto Jimenez

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura* – very common

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus* – very common

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* – at least two different ones at COR, two together at SAV lodge

Double-toothed Kite *Harpagus bidentatus* – one juvenile seen from the suspension bridge at La Selva

White-tailed Kite *Elanus leucurus* – one seen on the outskirts of San Jose

Plumbeous Kite *Ictinia plumbea* – 1-2 seen daily at COR

[Tiny Hawk *Accipiter superciliosus* – heard only (identified by our guide) at La Selva]

Crane Hawk *Geranospiza caerulescens* – one along the road near Muelle

Barred/Black-chested Hawk *Leucopternis princeps* - one flying over at LDV lodge, one near Tillaran, one at ESQ

Semiplumbeous Hawk *Leucopternis semiplumbea* – Smashing views of a single adult bird perched in a tree in the botanical gardens in La Selva

White Hawk *Leucopternis albicollis* – a single bird was seen through the scope of a kind American birdwatching party at ESQ. After breakfast we got outstanding views of four birds emerging from the forest close to the Riverbed trail and spiralling up the thermals.

Gray Hawk *Asturina nitidus* – one perched in a tree in the garden of LDV lodge

Common Black-Hawk *Buteogallus anthracinus* – very common bird at COR/La Leona

Black-collared Hawk *Busarellus nigricollis* - an adult flying over the harbour in Los Chiles

Roadside Hawk *Buteo magnirostris* – an adult at the restaurant in Los Chiles

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis* – most likely the same bird was seen on two consecutive days at SAV

Crested Caracara *Polyborus plancus* – a single bird between Tillaran and Santa Elena

Yellow-headed Caracara *Milvago chimachima* – quite regular at COR, two seen along the coast from Esquinas to Dominical.

Laughing Falcon *Herpetotheres cachinnans* – two birds seen at CANE, one at the restaurant in Los Chiles

Bat Falcon *Falco rufigularis* – good views of two adult birds perched at CANE

Gray-headed Chachalaca *Ortalis cinereiceps* – a single bird seen along the entrance road at La Selva

Crested Guan *Penelope purpurascens* - quite common in La Selva, also 4 birds at ESQ, three in the lodge grounds and one in a large fruiting tree opposite the entrance gate.

Black Guan *Chamaepetes unicolor* – quite common in the MOCFR and SECFR, also 3 birds on the CFL trails

Great Curassow *Crax rubra* – a pair at the parking lot at ESQ, a male and two females on the Fila trail at ESQ, a male at La Selva in the botanical garden area, a male at the CCC trail and a male and two females at COR.

Marbled Wood-Quail *Odontophorus gujanensis* – we surprised a group of 6 birds who were hiding for the rain under a fallen log on the Ocelot/Fila trail intersection at ESQ

Limpkin *Aramus guarauna* – only 4-5 birds at CANE

Gray-necked Wood-Rail *Aramides cajanea* – one in the gardens of ESQ lodge, one crossing the road between Puerto Jimenez and Carate, two on the CFL trails

American Coot *Fulica Americana* – one in a pool near Tillaran

Northern Jacana *Jacana spinosa* – seen at most sites in suitable habitat
Black-bellied Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* – a single bird in the harbour of Puerto Jimenez
Wilson's Plover *Charadrius wilsonia* – two at COR
Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* – single birds and small groups were seen all along the coast at COR, Golfito and Puerto Jimenez.
Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* – a few seen at COR and Puerto Jimenez
Solitary Sandpiper *Tringa solitaria* – a few seen at COR and Puerto Jimenez
Willet *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus* – a single bird at Golfito harbour
Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularia* – daily a few at COR, one at CANE, one at La Selva
Wandering Tattler *Heteroscelus incanus* – one at COR
Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* – small groups in the harbours of Golfito and Puerto Jimenez
Short-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus griseus* - two birds at Puerto Jimenez
Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla*- a few at COR and Puerto Jimenez
Laughing Gull *Larus atricilla* – only seen along the coast at COR and in the Golfo Dulce
Black Tern *Chlidonias niger* – a single bird perched at Puerto Jimenez
Least Tern *Sterna antillarum* – about 3-4 along the coast at COR
Royal Tern *Sterna maxima* – common along the coast at COR
Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis* – quite common along the coast at COR
Elegant Tern *Sterna elegans* – a few along the coast at COR, seen quite close, clearly smaller than royal tern
Rock Dove *Columba livia* – feral birds
Band-tailed Pigeon *Columba fasciata* – several daily at SAV/SGDD valley
Pale-vented Pigeon *Columba cayennensis* – seen at ESQ in the agricultural area
Red-billed Pigeon *Columba flavirostris* – one along the Panamerican Highway in the Central Valley area
Short-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas nigrirostris* – one seen at COR
White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica* – seen quite often along the Pan-American highway between Monteverde and San Jose
Common Ground-Dove *Columbina passerina* – a few at ESQ
Ruddy Ground-Dove *Columbina talpacoti* – seen at ESQ, La Selva, CANE and common in cultivated areas
White-tipped Dove *Leptotila verreauxi* – quite common at CFL and seen en route
Gray-headed Dove *Leptotila rufaxilla* – a few at CANE
Gray-chested Dove *Leptotila cassinii* – seen at ESQ, La Selva and MOSE
Chiriqui Quail-Dove *Geotrygon chiriquensis* – one on the trails at CFL lodge, very shy.
Olive-backed Quail-Dove *Geotrygon veraguensis* - a pair seen well at La Selva on the STR trail.
Ruddy Quail-Dove *Geotrygon montana* – a pair seen on the Fila trail at ESQ and a pair at La Selva, both were shy and hard to track.
Scarlet Macaw *Ara macao* - common at COR, Golfito and Puerto Jimenez
Great Green Macaw *Ara ambigua* – poor views twice of single birds flying just above the canopy along the Puerto Viejo river
Crimson-fronted Parakeet *Aratinga finschi* – one resting in a bare tree around the botanical gardens at La Selva, a small group in flight near Arenal lake
Sulfur-winged Parakeet *Pyrrhura hoffmanni* – small groups of 5-10 birds were seen three times at SAV
Orange-chinned Parakeet *Brotogeris jugularis* – seen at ESQ, CANE, LDV and the lower slopes of the Monteverde-Tillaran road. Mostly flight views only.
White-crowned Parrot *Pionus senilis* – common at La Selva and Monteverde area, also at COR, LDV and CANE
Blue-headed Parrot *Pionus menstruus* – a single bird in a bare tree opposite our bungalows at La Selva
Red-Lored Parrot *Amazona autumnalis* – a small group at La Selva
Mealy Parrot *Amazona farinose* – daily seen at COR and La Selva. Mostly flight views only.
Squirrel Cuckoo *Piaya cayana* – one bird at ESQ on the Riverbed Trail, two birds at CANE, one at La Leona, one at CFL
Smooth-billed Ani *Crotophaga ani* - surprisingly only one seen on the way from from ESQ to SAV.
Great Potoo *Nyctibius grandis* – one shown by the guide at a stake-out in La Selva, one seen at CANE (probably a stake-out as well)
Pauraque *Nyctidromus albicollis* – commonly seen and heard at night between Puerto Jimenez and Carate.
Black Swift *Cypseloides niger* – quite common at COR, also a few at La Selva
Vaux's Swift *Chaetura vauxi* – several around SAV
Gray-rumped Swift *Chaetura cinereiventris* – quite common at La Selva
White-collared Swift – an impressive group of about 100 birds was seen SAV, small numbers at Monteverde
Bronzy Hermit *Glaucis aenea* – quite common at ESQ and COR
Long-tailed Hermit *Phaethornis superciliosus* – common at ESQ
Green Hermit *Phaethornis guy* – low numbers at SECFR and MOCFR, a pair at CFL

Little Hermit *Phaethornis longuemareus* – several seen at ESQ
 Band-tailed Barbthroat or Band-tailed Hermit *Threnetes ruckeri* – A few at ESQ
 Violet Sabrewing *Campylopterus hemileucurus* – common in the Monteverde area
 White-necked Jacobin *Florisuga mellivora* – a few times seen at ESQ
 Green Violetear *Colibri thalassinus* - very common at SAV and Monteverde area
 Canivet's/Forktailed Emerald *Chlorostilbon canivetti* – one at Mose, relatively poor views
 Violet-crowned Woodnymph *Thalurania colombica* – one male seen on the Fila trail at ESQ
 Fiery-throated Hummingbird *Panterpe insignis* – one along SGDD road, shortly showing its rainbow-colored throat patch
 Charming or Beryl-crowned Hummingbird *Amazilia decora* – a few times seen at ESQ
 Rufous-tailed Hummingbird *Amazilia tzacatl* – most common hummer, seen at most sites visited
 Striped-tailed Hummingbird *Eupherusa eximia* – one at CFL lodge
 Coppery-headed Emerald *Elvira cupreiceps* – seen at CFL, SECFR and MOCFR
 Red-footed Plumeteer *Chalybura urochrysis* - a single bird at La Selva in the botanical gardens
 Purple-throated Mountain-gem *Lampornis calolaema* – one at CFL, two at SECFR
 Grey-tailed Mountain-gem *Lampornis cinereicauda* - a few at SAV (some lump this species under White-throated Mountain-gem *Lampornis castaneiventris*)
 Green-crowned Brilliant *Heliodoxa jacula*– one at the feeders in SAV and one on La Quebrada trail at SAV
 Magnificent Hummingbird *Eugenes fulgens* – common at the feeders at SAV
 Magenta-throated Woodstar *Calliphlox bryantae* – only two seen at MOCFR
 Scintillant Hummingbird *Selasphorus scintilla* – a few seen at SAV feeders and SGDD road
 Volcano Hummingbird *Selasphorus flammula* – surprisingly easy to see at SAV/SGDD
 Resplendent Quetzal *Pharomachrus mocinno* – crippling views of a total of 8 males and 4 females at SAV/SGDD. The best place to see these birds are the miradores at 2 and 3 km uphill (towards Cerro de la Muerte) from SAV lodge. I also saw single male birds twice on the SAV lodge grounds.
 Slaty-tailed Trogon *Trogon massena* – easy to see at La Selva , especially on the Arierra-Zompopa trail , also one male at CANE
 Baird's Trogon *Trogon bairdii* - excellent views of a couple in a tree around the parking lot at ESQ



Collared Trogon *Trogon collaris* – excellent views of two different males along the SGDD road. Two males and one female on the Jilguero trail at SAV.
 Orange-bellied Trogon *Trogon aurantiiventris* – A male at SECFR and another male at CFL. A couple at La Selva.
 Black-throated Trogon *Trogon rufus* – a female and moulting/sub-ad? male at ESQ, a female was seen at the La Selva entrance road and a male at CANE.
 Violaceous Trogon *Trogon violaceus* - two females were seen at COR, a couple at La Selva on the Arierra-Zompopa trail and another pair at the entrance in La Selva.
 Ringed Kingfisher *Ceryle torquata* – a female at ESQ
 Belted Kingfisher *Ceryle alcyon* – only seen at ESQ, both male and female.
 Amazon Kingfisher *Chloroceryle amazona* – about 6-7 at CANE

Green Kingfisher *Chloroceryle Americana* – about 3-4 at CANE

Rufous Motmot *Baryphengus martii* – two seen at La Selva on the CCC trail

Blue-crowned Motmot *Momotus momota* – 1-3 daily at ESQ, also at CFL, MOSE, Stella's Bakery and La Selva.

Rufous-tailed Jacamar *Galbula ruficauda* – one on the Valle Bonito trail and two on the Fila trail at ESQ, one at La Selva

Pied Puffbird *Bucco tectus* – a pair in a tree behind the reception building at La Selva

[Prong-billed Barbet *Semnornis frantzii* – very poor views of one at SECFR]

Emerald Toucanet *Aulacorhynchus prasinus* – only 3 seen at CFL, surprisingly none seen at the Monteverde reserves or in SGDD valley

Collared Aracari *Pteroglossus torquatus* – common at La Selva

Fiery-billed Aracari *Pteroglossus frantzii* – three birds in a remnant forest patch in hilly country between Dominical and Cerro de la Muerte

Keel-billed Toucan *Ramphastos sulfuratus* – common at La Selva, one at CFL

Chestnut-mandibled Toucan *Ramphastos swainsonii* – common at ESQ, also at COR and La Selva

Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus* – common at SAV/SGDD

Golden-naped Woodpecker *Melanerpes chrysauchen* – a female seen at COR

Black-cheeked Woodpecker *Melanerpes pucherani* – common at La Selva, also at CANE

Hoffmann's Woodpecker *Melanerpes hoffmannii* – a female at the restaurant in Los Chiles

Red-crowned Woodpecker *Melanerpes rubricapillus* – 1-2 daily at ESQ

Hairy Woodpecker *Picoides villosus* – decent views of one along the road in SGDD valley

Red-rumped Woodpecker *Veniliornis kirkii* - a male bird at ESQ in the garden area on the edge of the forest, this species seems to be rather uncommon, but was seen well for about a minute

Rufous-winged Woodpecker *Piculus simplex* – one at the entrance road in La Selva, one near the restaurant at La Selva

Chestnut-colored Woodpecker *Celeus castaneus* – one at La Selva near the football pitch

Lineated Woodpecker *Dryocopus lineatus*- a few seen at ESQ, two at COR

Pale-billed Woodpecker *Campephilus guatemalensis* – two at COR

Plain-brown Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla fuliginosa* – a single bird on the lower slopes in the Monteverde area

Olivaceous Woodcreeper *Sittasomus griseicapillus* – one at CFL

Wedge-billed Woodcreeper *Glyphorhynchus spirurus* - common at ESQ, La Selva and COR

Strong-billed Woodcreeper *Xiphocolaptes promeropirhynchus* – one at SECFR (identified by the guide, quite rare at that location)

Northern Barred Woodcreeper *Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae* – 3 seen well at SECFR, also one at La Selva

Cocoa Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus susurrans* – 2 at the botanical gardens in La Selva

Black-striped Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus lachrymosus* - a few seen at ESQ

Spotted Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus erythropygius* – one seen at La Selva

Streak-headed Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes souleyetii* – two seen at ESQ

Spot-crowned Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes affinis* – quite common at SAV

Brown-billed Scythebill *Campylorhamphus pusillus* – poor views of one at SECFR

Red-faced Spinetail *Cranioleuca erythroptus* – decent views at SECFR

Spotted Barbtail *Premnoplex brunnescens* – about 3-4 seen poorly to decently at SECFR and two seen well at MOCFR

Ruddy Treerunner *Margarornis rubiginosus* - common at SAV and Monteverde area

Lineated Foliage-gleaner *Syndactyla subalaris* – one at SECFR

Streak-breasted Treehunter *Thripadectes rufobrunneus* – two at SECFR

Black-hooded Antshrike *Thamnophilus bridgesi* - several at ESQ

Russet Antshrike *Thamnistes Anabatinus* - one in COR on Dec. 5.

Western Slaty Antshrike *Thamnophilus punctatus* –one pair at the CCC trail and one pair at the STR trail in La Selva

Chestnut-backed Antbird *Myrmeciza Exsul* - seen well both at ESQ and COR (la Leona Tented camp)

[Slaty Antwren *Myrmotherula schisticolor* – a pair seen well at ESQ on the Fila trail, but nevertheless I wasn't sure about the correct determination. Initially I thought it was a pair of dusky antbirds, because the birds seemed more antbird-sized, but strangely this species was not listed on the lodge's list, so I guess it has to be slaty antwren then].

Dotwinged Antwren *Microrhopias quixensis* – A male at ESQ on the Riverbed trail

[Silvery-fronted Tapaculo *Scytalopus argentifrons* – heard only at SGDD]

Barred Becard *Pachyramphus versicolor* Poor views twice at SECFR

Cinnamon Becard *Pachyramphus cinnamomeus* – Excellent views twice at La Selva. A possible sighting in mangroves at the Rio Sirena in COR.

Rose-throated Becard *Pachyrhamphus aglaiae* - a pair seen very well in a mixed flock at COR, also a few in mixed flocks at ESQ on the second visit there

Masked Tityra *Tityra semifasciata* – one pair at COR at Sirena Station, a small group (about 6-7) in the gardens of LDV lodge, a pair at La Selva in the botanical garden area, several at CFL

Black-crowned Tityra *Tityra inquisitor* - a pair near the restaurant at La Selva

Rufous Piha *Lipaugus unirufus* – one seen after quite some effort in COR (and after hearing the call, first thought it was rufous mourner)

Snowy Cotinga *Carpodectes nitidus* - crippling views of 5 birds (2 males, 2 females and one brown juvenile) in perfect morning light resting on bare trees surrounding the botanical gardens.

Bare-necked Umbrellabird *Cephalopterus glabricollis* – a female was feeding on a fruiting tree on the CES trail in La Selva. Another incredible tick.

Red-capped Manakin *Pipra mentalis* – one pair at the Valle Bonito trail in ESQ, one pair at the Fila trail in ESQ and an incredible performance of a male doing the moonwalk (and other display activities). The moonwalk was a lifer experience even for our guide.

Long-tailed Manakin *Chiroxiphia linearis* After a long search, one male was finally seen well at MOSE

White-ruffed Manakin *Corapipo leucorhoa* – One pair at La Selva near the suspension bridge

Orange-collared Manakin *Manacus aurantiacus* – A pair, a single male and another pair at ESQ on the Waterbed, Bird and Fila trails, respectively.

White-collared Manakin *Manacus candei* – One male and three females/juveniles near the suspension bridge at La Selva. On the Arriera-Zompopa trail I saw an amazing display of two males who performed a synchronized dancing/jumping duet jumping back and forth from two low-hanging vines.

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans* – seen only twice, both along the Savegre river slightly downstream from SAV lodge.

Long-tailed Tyrant *Colonia colonus* – a few birds seen at La Selva

Bright-rumped Attila *Attila spadiceus* – two sightings at La Selva, one bird next to the restaurant, one on the CCC trail

Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus* – very common at all sites visited

Boat-billed Flycatcher *Megarhynchus pitangua* - quite common at most sites visited

Gray-capped Flycatcher *Myiozetetes granadensis* – one at ESQ, several at La Selva

Social Flycatcher *Myiozetetes similis* - quite common at most sites visited

Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus* - quite common at most sites visited

Golden-bellied Flycatcher *Myiodynastes hemichrysus* – a few in SGDD valley

Rufous Mourner *Rhytipterna holerythra* – quite regular in low daily numbers at ESQ, La Selva and COR

Dusky-capped Flycatcher *Myiarchus tuberculifer* – quite common, seen at La Selva, COR, CANE and Monteverde area

Eastern Wood-Pewee *Contopus virens* – one at La Selva was this species according to our guide

Tropical Pewee *Contopus virens* – one in the restaurant garden at Los Chiles, one at La Selva

Dark Pewee *Contopus lugubris* – one upstream and one downstream from SAV lodge at the SGDD road

Ochraceous Pewee *Contopus ochraceus* – one seen very close and well on La Quebrada trail at SAV lodge

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher *Empidonax flaviventris* – few times seen at ESQ

Yellowish Flycatcher *Empidonax flavescens* – quite common at SAV, also a few in the Monteverde area



Black-capped Flycatcher *Empidonax atriceps* – one seen well at SGDD road

Tufted Flycatcher *Mitrephanes phaeocercus* – one seen very well on La Quebrada trail at SAV lodge, another one along the SGDD road upstream from SAV lodge

Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher *Terrenotriccus erythrurus* - one in COR on December 5

Ochre-bellied Flycatcher *Mionectes oleagineus* - one at the Valle Bonito trail

Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher *Myiobius sulphureipygius* - only one sighting at the Fila trail in ESQ

Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum nigriceps* - one at La Selva

Common Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum cinereum* - quite common at La Selva, COR and ESQ

Slate-headed Tody-Flycatcher *Poecilatriccus sylvia* - one seen at COR

Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant *Lophotriccus pileatus* - one on the Valle Bonito trail in ESQ

Torrent Tyrannulet *Serpophaga cinerea* - A nice surprise to run into this species: it was hunting insects along the bank of the Savegre river close to the SGDD road a few hundred meters upstream from SAV lodge

Yellow-bellied Eleania *Elaenia flavogaster* - seen at ESQ and La Selva

Mountain Eleania *Elaenia frantzii* - seen at SAV, CFL and SECFR.

Paltry/Mistletoe Tyrannulet *Zimmerius vilissimus* - one positively identified at the parking lot in ESQ thanks to a local guide.

Southern Beardless Tyrannulet *Camptostoma obsoletum* - seen at ESQ and COR

Gray-breasted Martin *Progne chalybea* - quite regular in urban/agricultural areas, also seen near ESQ

Barn Swallow *Hirunda rustica* - probably undernoticed, only a few seen between Carate and Puerto Jimenez

Southern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis* - quite common in the Caribbean lowlands and La Fortuna area, also ESQ

Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis* - a few scoped in the La Fortuna area

Blue-and-white Swallow *Notiochelidon cyanoleuca* - common at SGDD/SAV, excellent views with the scope of a few perched on wires

Bank Swallow *Riparia riparia* - fairly low numbers (10-15) at CANE

Mangrove Swallow *Tachycineta albilinea* - a few at COR, common at CANE

Brown Jay *Cyanocorax morio* - common in the Monteverde area

[Azure-hooded Jay *Cyanolyca cucullata* - a group of very shy jays on one the longer trails at CFL must have been this species. The birds were noticeably smaller than the "usual" brown jays and when I flushed them I saw blackish birds with a blue sheen on the head but little more detail]

[Silvery-throated Jay *Cyanolyca argentigula* - I could hear the birds on the highest section of the Los Robles trail, but frustratingly I could only see silhouettes moving through the canopy]

[American Dipper *Cinclus mexicanus* - heard by our guide and later by us on the Savegre river along the SGDD road about 300-400m upstream from SAV lodge, but not seen]

Band-backed Wren *Campylorhynchus zonatus* - excellent views of several groups at La Selva including a group of 6 birds, also at LDV lodge

Plain Wren *Thryothorus modestus* - one at ESQ, one at CFL

Rufous-and-white Wren *Thryothorus rufalbus* - two at MOSE

Stripe-breasted Wren *Thryothorus thoracicus* - Two at La Selva

Bay Wren *Thryothorus nigricapillus* - One at La Selva, a couple along forest edge tangles at LDV lodge

Riverside Wren *Thryothorus semibadius* - Common at ESQ and COR

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon* - 1-2 daily at seen at ESQ, one at the Los Chiles restaurant, about 2-3 at La Selva

Ochraceous Wren *Troglodytes ochraceus* - one seen very well MOCFR, also SECFR and SAV

Gray-breasted Wood-Wren *Henicorhina leucophrys* - excellent views of several birds at SAV, also two at SECFR.

White-throated Robin *Turdus assimilis* - a few daily at SAV/SGDD

Clay-colored Robin *Turdus grayi* - very common at SAV/SGDD, abundant in the Monteverde area

Mountain Robin *Turdus plebejus* - quite common at SAV/SGDD, a few in the Monteverde area

Sooty Robin *Turdus nigrescens* - quite common at SAV/SGDD, a few in the Monteverde area

Black-faced Solitaire *Myadestes melanops* - excellent views of one male at the start of the Jilguero trail at SAV, poor views at SECFR, very good views of one at MOCFR

Wood Thrush *Hylocichla mustelina* - seen twice at La Selva

Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus* - one at CFL

Black-headed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus mexicanus* - one at the Los Robles trail.

Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus frantzii* - about 2-3 daily seen at SGDD/SAV.

Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus fuscater* - a total of five seen at SAV, also at SECFR and CFL lodge

Tropical Gnatcatcher *Polioptila plumbea* - common at ESQ and COR.

Long-billed Gnatwren *Ramphocaenus melanurus* - a single sighting at ESQ on the Fila trail.

Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher *Ptilogonys caudatus* - A pair showed very well at Mirador de los quetzals in SGDD valley, also seen about 3-4 daily at SAV.

Rufous-browed Peppershrike *Cyclarhis gujanensis* - two at SGDD.

Yellow-winged Vireo *Vireo carmioli* - two seen well at SAV/SGDD.

Yellow-throated Vireo *Vireo flavifrons* – one positively identified by our guide at La Selva.

Brown-capped Vireo *Vireo leucophrys* – one at SAV.

Tawny-crowned Greenlet *Hylophilus ochraceiceps* – one at ESQ.

Lesser Greenlet *Hylophilus decurtatus* – a few at ESQ and COR, also La Selva.

Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola* – commonly seen at COR, ESQ, La Selva and Monteverde area.

Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia* – one seen well along SGDD road, poor view views of one at MOSE

Golden-winged Warbler *Vermivora chrysoptera* – smashing views of this very attractive warbler at SAV and La Selva, also at MOCFR and SECFR

Tennessee Warbler *Vermivora peregrine* – seen at SGDD, COR and ESQ

Flame-throated Warbler *Parula gutturalis* – quite common at SAV, also a single bird at ESQ

Yellow Warbler *Dendroica petechia* – easy to see in the gardens of LDV lodge, also at MOSE

Black-throated Green Warbler *Dendroica virens* – quite common at SAV, several at MOCFR and SECFR

Chestnut-sided Warbler *Dendroica pensylvanica* – a few at ESQ and MOCFR/SECFR, fairly common at La Selva, also seen at SAV

Northern Waterthrush *Seiurus noveboracensis* – only seen at ESQ, easy to see next to the river at the restaurant

Wilson's Warbler *Wilsonia pusilla* - abundant at SAV/SGDD, also at LDV lodge, Monteverde area

Gray-crowned Yellowthroat *Geothlypis poliocephala* – one at La Leona lodge

American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla* – A stunning male bird was seen hawking after insects on the Fila trail. This species is not listed on Esquinas' checklist, but the male of this species is so distinctive (both plumage and behaviour) that I am 100% sure it was this species.

Slate-throated Redstart *Myioborus miniatus* – common at SECFR and MOCFR

Collared Redstart *Myioborus torquatus* – common at SAV and SECFR/MOCFR

Three-striped Warbler *Basileuterus tristriatus* - very common at SECFR/MOCFR

Black-cheeked Warbler *Basileuterus melanogenys* – a few seen on the SGDD road and on the Il Jilguero trail at SAV

Rufous-capped Warbler *Basileuterus rufifrons* – two seen at MOSE

Buff-rumped Warbler *Phaeothlypis fulvicauda* – one on the Waterfall trail and two on the Bird trail in ESQ, 1-3 daily at La Selva

Chestnut-headed Oropendola *Psarocolius wagleri* – only one group of four birds seen at La Selva

Montezuma Oropendola *Psarocolius montezuma* - common at La Selva, also at CANE

Yellow-billed Cacique *Amblycercus holosericeus* – only seen twice at La Selva

Scarlet-rumped Cacique *Cacicus uropygialis* – regularly seen at ESQ

Bronzed Cowbird *Molothrus aeneus* – a large group at a cattle pen at LDV lodge

Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus* – abundant in cultivated areas

Nicaraguan Grackle *Quiscalus nicaraguensis* - small group near Los Chiles

Black-cowled Oriole *Icterus dominicensis* – an adult in the garden of LDV lodge

Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula* – seemed more common in the North, especially at LDV lodge, CFL lodge, and La Selva

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus* - common at CANE and Los Chiles area, one near La Fortuna

Golden-browed Chlorophonia *Chlorophonia callophrys* – one stunning male giving great scope views at SGDD road, heard only at MOSE

White-vented Euphonia *Euphonia minuta* – about 5-10 in mixed groups at La Selva

Thick-billed Euphonia *Euphonia laniirostris* – several in the garden area at ESQ

Yellow-throated Euphonia *Euphonia hirundinacea* – three males and two females at Stella's bakery in Monteverde

Olive-backed Euphonia *Euphonia gouldi* - common at La Selva

Spot-crowned Euphonia *Euphonia imitans* – quite common at ESQ

[Elegant Euphonia *Euphonia elegantissima* – our guide at SAV tried to whistle them in, but only fleeting views were had of one bird that looked like the female of this species, but not seen long enough to be sure]

Silver-throated Tanager *Tangara icterocephala* – quite common at La Selva, also at SECFR and MOCFR

Golden-hooded Tanager *Tangara larvata* – common at ESQ and at La Selva

Bay-headed Tanager *Tangara gyrola* – fairly common at ESQ, common at La Selva

Spangle-cheeked Tanager *Tangara dowii* - a few seen at the Jilguero trail at SAV lodge, common at SECFR and MOCFR

Western Tanager *Piranga ludoviciana* – I realize that this is a rare species in the southern Pacific region. It is also not featured on the latest checklist (2007) of Esquinas lodge, but I still think that the bird I have seen was a male Western tanager. Initially, the bird was far away, but the bird luckily came closer and closer. The bird foraged rather restless, always staying in the canopy and higher mid-storey levels. The bird was sometimes hunting for insects from a perch, in a somewhat flycatcher-like fashion. The orange head (against the yellow), the two striking differently coloured wing bars and the light-coloured bill were all seen well. The bird had a

blackish mantle (I could not see the scaling/streaks shown in most guides, the back looked rather uniformly blackish to me). The bird was foraging in (what looked to me like) older secondary forest fairly close to the edge of the Esquinas reserve and was seen for about 10 minutes. About 5 minutes the bird was seen at relatively close range (20-30 m). I was watching from an elevated point (top of a small saddle) in an area with good views of the canopy of the surrounding trees, so I was not looking up to the bird from below. Views of the bird were “at eye level” or mostly slightly upwards. There were a few different bird species present in the trees where I saw this bird, but no flock and this bird seemed to be foraging alone. Alternative options that I thought of were: moulting summer tanager (contra: no wing bars, no dark mantle, the orange of the head of the bird seen contrasted quite sharply with the yellow, moulting summer tanagers seem to look more mottled and without the sharp contrast) and immature/moulting flame-colored tanager (contra: not always, but usually higher, i.e. >900 m, darker bill, the streakings on the mantle are usually more obvious in this species, wing bars are both white as far as I know). I also considered the orioles, but apart from the non-matching plumages, the bill shape and overall “jizz” is significantly different, so I quickly eliminated that option. Any comments on the (in)correctness of the determination are most welcome.

Green Honeycreeper *Chlorophanes spiza* – quite common at La Selva, also seen at LDV

Red-legged Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes cyaneus* – a small group at La Leona Tented Camp, a few at the restaurant in Los Chiles and quite common at La Selva

Shining Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes lucidus* – only a single group of about 6 birds at the restaurant in La Selva

Blue Dacnis *Dacnis cayana* – two males at La Leona Tented Camp, about 10 at La Selva

Scarlet-thighed Dacnis *Dacnis venusta* – only seen at La Selva, where encountered about 4-5 times.

Blue-gray Tanager *Thraupis episcopus* – common at most sites visited

Palm Tanager *Thraupis palmarum* – common at COR, ESQ, CANE, and La Selva

Passerini's Tanager *Ramphocelus passerinii* - common at La Selva, also at LDV lodge and CFL lodge

Cherrie's Tanager *Ramphocelus costaricensis* – abundant at ESQ, common at COR

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra* – a few birds at ESQ including two in full plumage

Flame-colored Tanager *Piranga bidentata* – only seen SAV Lodge and SGDD road, where fairly common

Black-cheeked Ant-Tanager *Habia atrimaxillaris* – only a single bird seen in a mixed bird flock on the Fila trail in ESQ

White-throated Shrike-Tanager *Lanio leucothorax* – fairly regular in bird flocks at ESQ, also seen at COR

White-shouldered Tanager *Tachyphonus luctuosus* - small numbers in mixed bird flocks at ESQ and COR

Gray-headed Tanager *Eucometis penicillata* – only seen in bird flocks at COR around Sirena station

Dusky-faced Tanager *Mitrospingus cassinii* – only seen once at La Selva on trail

Common Bush-Tanager *Chlorospingus ophthalmicus* – fairly common at SAV and abundant SECFR, CFL and MOVCFR

Sooty-capped Bush-Tanager *Chlorospingus pileatus* - fairly common at SAV, only a few seen at SECFR

Streaked Saltator *Saltator atriceps* – a small group was seen in a remnant forest patch in hilly country on the way from Esquinas to Cerro de la Muerte

Buff-throated Saltator *Saltator maximus* – common at La Selva and quite common at ESQ, also CFL

Black-faced Grosbeak *Caryothraustes poliogaster* – quite common in mixed flocks at La Selva

Black-thighed Grosbeak *Pheucticus tibialis* – three sightings at SAV: one on the Jilguero trail, two on La Quebrada trail.

Blue-black Grosbeak *Cyanocompsa cyanoides* – A single male in the understorey at La Selva

Yellow-faced Grassquit *Tiaris olivacea* – only seen at SGDD road and SAV lodge grounds

White-collared Seedeater *Sporophila torqueola* – quite common in the more cultivated areas around ESQ

Variable Seedeater *Sporophila aurita* – common at ESQ and La Selva, also at Carate/La Leona Tented Camp

Ruddy-breasted Seedeater *Sporophila minuta* – a group seen at Carate in COR

Thick-billed Seed-Finch *Oryzoborus funereus* - a male near the biological station at ESQ

Blue-black Grassquit *Volatinia jacarina* – common in the more cultivated areas around ESQ

Grassland Yellow-Finch *Sicalis luteola*

Slaty Flowerpiercer *Diglossa plumbea* – excellent views of both male and female at SAV, where quite common. Poor views of a male at SECFR.

Large-footed Finch *Pezopetes capitalis* – an inconspicuous terrestrial bird, one seen well on Los Robles trail at SAV, another on La Quebrada trail at SAV

Yellow-thighed Finch *Pselliophorus tibialis* - common at SAV/SGDD, also seen at SECFR and MOCFR

Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch *Buarremon brunneinucha* – quite good views at the Canto de los Aves trail at SAV, poor views of bits and pieces of two birds at SECFR

Orange-billed Sparrow *Arremon aurantirostris* – a few daily at ESQ, most easily found on the Bird trail and the garden areas.

Black-striped Sparrow *Arremonops conirostris* – common at ESQ

White-eared Ground-Sparrow *Melospiza leucotis* – only seen at CFL

Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis* – abundant at SAV/SGDD
 Yellow-bellied Siskin *Carduelis xanthogastra* - a few seen at SAV/SGDD
 House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* – seen in Los Chiles, La Fortuna and villages between Puerto Viejo de Sarapiquí and La Fortuna



Reptiles, Amphibians and some Insects

Anole spp. – these were quite common, but I did not have a good field guide to identify them. Most were seen at ESQ, COR, and La Selva.

Snail-Eater Snake *Sibon spp.* - two together seen on the night walk in ESQ, beautiful snake.

[Boa Constrictor – a dead one from Monteverde on the way down to the Pan American Highway]

Fer-de-lance *Bothrops asper* – I managed to step on a young one that was hidden under a large leaf in a muddy section on the Riverbed trail at ESQ. Luckily the snake seemed to be slightly dazzled and immobilized by being pressed into the mud allowing me to take a picture, before it slowly crawled away. Whereas one encounter with this snake would seem enough for one holiday, some 25 minutes later on the Ocelot trail, I found another and much bigger one that was sleeping extremely well camouflaged in the dry leaf litter, but luckily I saw it before stepping on it.

American Crocodile *Crocodylus acutus* - about 6-7 seen at COR, including two big ones of about 3.5 m

Spectacled Cayman *Caiman crocodilus* – a few seen at ESQ and CANE. One at ESQ devoured a green heron!

Green Iguana *Iguana iguana* – very common at La Selva, CANE, also ESQ

Ctenosaur/Black spiny-tailed iguana *Ctenosaura similis* – a few seen at COR

Double-crested/Green Basilisk *Basiliscus plumifrons* – only seen at CANE, one seen running over the water.

Brown Basilisk *Basiliscus basiliscus* – very tame around ESQ lodge

Four-lined Ameiva *Ameiva quadrilineata* – seen at ESQ, identified by a local guide

Common Ameiva *Ameiva festiva* – seen at ESQ, identified by a local guide

Central American Smooth Gecko *Thecadactylus rapicauda* – ESQ

Rose-bellied Spiny Lizard *Sceloporus variabilis* – Savegre area

Brilliant Forest Frog *Rana warszewitschii* – seen at ESQ

Hourglass Tree Frog *Hyla ebraccata* – one on the night walk at ESQ

Marine Toad *Bufo marinus* – ESQ, La Leona Tented Camp and COR

Red-eyed Leaf Frog *Agalychnis callidryas* – one on the night walk at ESQ

Masked Tree Frog *Smilisca phaeota* – one on ESQ night walk

Strawberry poison-dart frog *Dendrobates pumilio* - two seen at La Selva

Green-and-black poison-dart frog *Dendrobates auratus* – one seen on the trail at the 1850 metre mark at La Selva

Emerald Glass Frog *Centrolene prosoblepon* - one on the night walk in ESQ

Smokey Jungle Frog/Bull Frog *Leptodactylus pentadactylus* - one at night on the Arriera-Zompopa trail in La Selva, one on the night walk at ESQ.

Helicopter Damselfly spp. - two at La Selva

Blue Morpho spp. – a few at ESQ, COR, Monteverde and La Selva

Caligo/Owl Butterfly spp. – two different species seen at La Selva, MOCFR and ESQ/COR

Postman Butterfly spp. – one at MOSE

Bullet Ant *Paraponera clavata* - about 3-4 of these on the CCC trail in La Selva

Lesser Tarantula ?? – one the night walk at ESQ

At Esquinas several unidentified snakes were seen (all were all brown above with a creamy/yellowish ventral side). Many other lizards, butterflies, etc. were seen at La Selva, Esquinas and Corcovado.