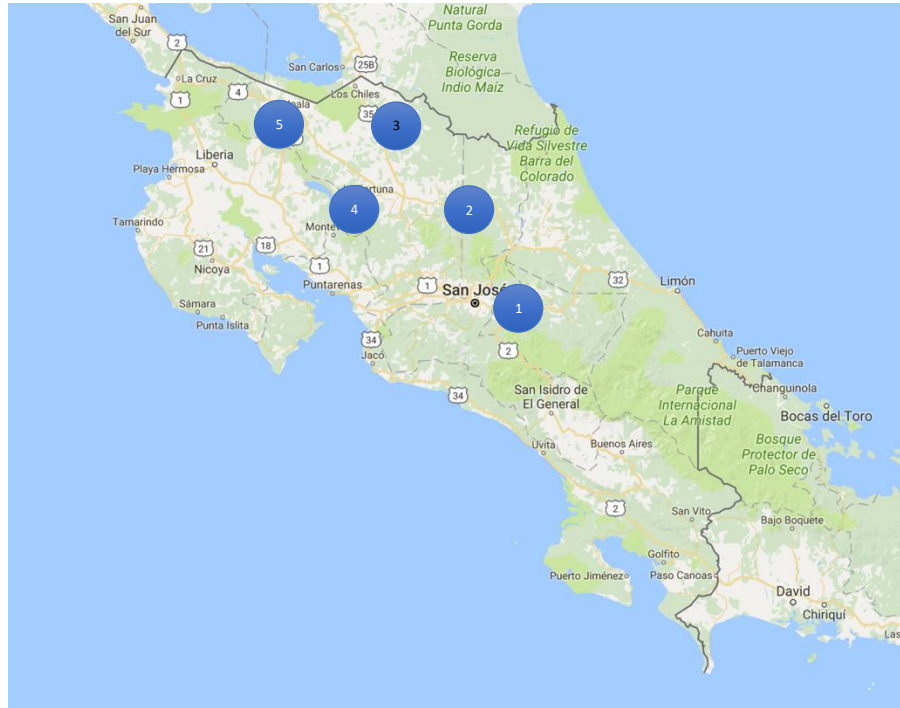


## COSTA RICA BIRDING TOUR: (STILL) UNTAMED NORTHERN COSTA RICA *February 2019*



*Locations on this Itinerary on the Costa Rica map; 1: San José, 2: Caribbean rainforest, 3: Caribbean wetlands, 4: Arenal Volcano Area. 5. Tenorio Volcano area.*



## Summary

**Feb 3, Day 1** –San José (night at El Robledal Lodge or similar)

*Arrival.*

**Feb 4, Day 2** – Caribbean Rainforest (night at Bamboo Hotel or similar)

Drive to the Sarapiquí area and stop on the way to birdwatching in Braulio Carrillo National Park.

**Feb 5, Day 3** – Caribbean Rainforest (night at Bamboo Hotel or similar)

*Birdwatch hotel's reserve La Selva OET then around hotel.*

**Feb 6, Day 4**– Northern Lowlands (night at Caño Negro Natural Lodge or similar)

*Bird the Caño Negro entrance road then around hotel.*

**Feb 7, Day 5**– Northern Lowlands (night at Caño Negro Natural Lodge or similar)

*Take a boat ride for specialties of the lowlands.*

**Feb 8, Day 6**– Arenal Volcano Area (night at Bijagua Lodge or similar)

*Birding at Arenal Bridges and then in La Península Road in National Park.*

**Feb 9, Day 7**– Arenal Volcano Area (night at Bijagua Lodge or similar)

*Birding around hotel for specialties of the foothills.*

**Feb 10, Day 8**– Tenorio Volcano (night at Bijagua Lodge or similar)

*Birding around hotel for specialties.*

**Feb 11, Day 9**– Tenorio Volcano (night at Bijagua Lodge or similar)

*Birding National Park and hanging bridges.*

**Feb 12, Day 10**– San José (night at Robledal Lodge or similar)

*Birding around hotel in the early AM and then hit the road stopping in the way back.*

**Feb 13, Day 11**– Airport-Flight

*Departure after breakfast*

# Costa Rica Birding Trip Itinerary

## **Day 1** –San José (night at El Robledal Lodge or similar)

Today we will have the whole day for arrivals at the Juan Santa Maria Intl. Airport. Our first hotel is located only 15 minutes away from the airport and you can arrive any time today, we suggested the afternoon as the best time to arrive. Depending on the arrival time of most of the tour participants we will have a bus or a smaller car at the airport and a representative of our company holding a sign with the logo of Partnership for International Birding.

You will meet your guide at the hotel reception at 6pm and he will have dinner with you at 7pm and explain you all the details of the adventure coming ahead. If your flight arrives later than this please notice you will need to cover the dinner on your own in the airport as the restaurants near the hotel will be closed by then.

## **Day 2** – Caribbean Rainforest (night at Bamboo Hotel or similar)

We will have breakfast at 7:00 am and depending on the group do some birding before breakfast along the gardens of the hotel then drive to Sarapiquí area. After 1 hour driving we will do a stop on the way to birdwatch in Braulio Carrillo National Park at a location known as the “El Tapir” searching to start the tour with two of the most elusive hummingbirds of Central America, the Black-crested Coquette and the Snowcap. This two jewels share a garden of Potterweed surrounded by primary forest of the national park. After lunch on the road we will drive another hour to reach our final destination. The Caribbean lowlands of Sarapiquí, home of La Selva Biological Station one of the most famous and accessible birding sites of Costa Rica and one of the habitats with the greatest biodiversity of all the neotropics.

Hopefully we will be arriving with enough time to do a short scouting close from our hotel to a site where Great Green Macaw likes to roost and have a chance for this highly endangered and iconic psitacid. Also Bat Falcon, Red-lored Parrot, Olive-throated Parakeet, Green Ibis, Thick-billed Seed Finch, Yellow-faced Grassquit, Cinnamon Woodpecker and many more like to show up in this area in late afternoon.

After this we will head to the hotel and have dinner at 7:00pm. and comfortably gather to count bird by bird all the species seen during the day, all with the help of our specialized bird-guide.

## **Day 3** – Caribbean Rainforest (night at Bamboo Hotel or similar)

We will start early birding around the hotel then breakfast around 6:30am to continue to La Selva Biological Station located only 10 minutes from our hotel. The birding here is always spectacular as it offers one of the most complete systems of trails through pristine Caribbean lowland forest. Passerinis Tanager, Red-legged Honeycreeper, Collared Aracari, Chestnut-headed and Montezuma Oropendula, Ornate Hawk Eagle, Bare-necked Umbrellabird, White-fronted Nunbird, Cinnamon and Chestnut-colored Woodpeckers and many more. We will have lunch in La Selva or nearby and then we will take a little break as the hot of mid-day in the lowlands can be very exhausting and as soon as it cool down we will do some more exploring in the gravel

roads around La Selva Biological Station looking for Rufous and Broad-billed motmots, Keel-billed and Yellow-throated toucan, Fasciated Antshrike among many others.

We will bird until we run out of light. Then early at night we will try for Spectacled Owl and Crested Owl near our hotel and then dinner and checklist at 7:30pm.

**Day 4– Northern Lowlands (night at Caño Negro Natural Lodge or similar)**

After some early morning birding around hotel and breakfast at around 7:00 am we will start our drive to the spectacular wetlands of Caño Negro. A unique system of wetlands in the far north that is maybe the best place in central america for getting all species of Kingfishers, Black-collared Hawk, Agami Heron, Pinnated and Least bitterns.

We will have lunch on the road and get to this stunning place after a 3 hour drive but stopping a few miles before our destination to birdwatch an open road that normally provides good chances for several species of common Herons and Egrets, American Kestrel, Ruddy-breasted Seedeater, Red-breasted Blackbird, Jabiru, White-throated Crake and the local regional endemic, Nicaraguan Seed Finch.

This afternoon we will spend the rest of the day around the hotel looking for the specialties of the Caño Negro town: Gray-headed Dove, Spot-breasted Wren and super range-restricted Nicaraguan Grackle.

Dinner and checklist in the hotel at 7pm.

**Day 5– Northern Lowlands (night at Caño Negro Natural Lodge or similar)**

We will start our early morning at 5:30am with a boat tour through Caño Negro wetlands; Green, Amazon, Ringed, Belted, American Pygmy and the elusive Green-and-rufous Kingfishers, Ahinga, Neotropic Cormorant, Agami Heron, Green and Glossy Ibis and even the Black-collared Hawk are among the birds we will find here from the comfortably seats with roof of our boat. After the boat tour at around 8:45 am we will head back to the hotel to get a late breakfast and then some scouting at the hotel feeders.

Mid-day break and then a late lunch in town will give us the right timing to drive back on the road to a nearby wetland called Medio Queso; this is a different kind of a wetland because is mainly composed by native rice growing on a very wet field in where we will get different species that are not present at Caño Negro wetland or are normally much more complicated there. Least Bittern, Spotted Rail (seasonal), Pinnated Bittern, Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, Black-collared Hawk and many more are likely here. In the way back we will wait until 6pm at a specific spot for an impressive Great Potoo that normally shows pretty well at eye level near the ground. Also Striped Owl and Pacific Screech-Owl are very likely to find in the way back to the hotel. Today we will have a late dinner after the owling night.

**Day 6– Arenal Volcano Area (night at Bijagua Lodge or similar)**

AM. Birding along the town and the river bank (if is possible we will try to use the seasonal canopy walk or canopy tower managed by the wildlife refuge). After this we will have a delicious breakfast at around 8:00 am and then head to our next destination Arenal Volcano area (2,5 hours on the road).

Birding is extraordinary at this location plus the constant presence of Arenal Volcano will always give great scenery. Potential target species of this area in general are Striped-breasted Wren,

White-throated Shrike-Tanager, Tawny-capped Euphonia, Ornate Hawk Eagle, Ocellated, Bicolored and Spotted antbirds, Keel-billed, Broad-billed and Rufous motmots, Great Antshrike among many others.

In the afternoon we will explore a famous feeding station called Bogarin reserve looking for Collared Aracari, the three species of Saltators (Black-headed, Grayish and Buff-throated), Gray-headed Chachalaca, Keel-billed and Yellow-throated toucans and even White-throated and Uniform crakes come out to this feeding site.

Dinner and checklist in town at 7pm.

**Day 7– Arenal Volcano Area (night at Bijagua Lodge or similar)**

Breakfast at around 6:30am and after this we will drive to a nice private reserve with great pristine forest that connects the cloud forest of Monteverde with the middle elevations forest of the Arenal Volcano National Park alternating with three hanging bridges that we will use to explore the treetops. This great forest gradient provides excellent habitat for species that are normally absent in other sites like Ocellated Antbird, Yellow-eared Toucanet, Song Wren, Blue-and-gold, Black and Yellow, Speckled, Rufous-winged and Emerald Tanagers, even birds like Bare-necked Umbrellabird, Ochre-breasted Antpitta, Rufous-browed Tyrannulet and Lanceolated Monklet are possible in this reserve.

Afternoon we will drive and walk a famous road for birding that goes around the Arenal lake and is called “Peninsula road” looking for Long-tailed Tyrant, White-fronted Nunbird, Keel-billed Motmot, White Hawk and Dull-mantled Antbird, Great Antshrike, Rufous-winged Woodpecker, Rufous Motmot among others.

We will head back to the hotel to be on time for dinner and checklist at 7:00pm.

**Day 8– Tenorio Volcano Area (night at Heliconias Lodge or similar)**

Breakfast at around 6:30am and after this we will departure to our next place not before stopping at Bogarin reserve in case we are still needing Uniform and White-throated Crake . Then drive to Heliconias for lunch time afternoon around the hanging bridges they have looking for some emblematic species like Tody Motmot, Ocellated Antbird, Yellow-eared Toucanet, Blue-and-gold and Rufous-winged Tanagers and with some luck Bare-necked Umbrellabird, Black-eared Wood Quail and Rufous-vented Ground Cuckoo.

Afternoon we will drive the roadsides toward the National Park Tenorio looking for Ornate Hawk-eagle, Central American Pygmy Owl among others.

**Day 9– Tenorio Volcano Area (night at Heliconias Lodge or similar)**

Early morning in the trails of the hotel again looking for the harder targets of the previous day. Afternoon to Tenorio National Park for a better try of the Bare-necked Umbrellabird and Black-eared Wood Quail plus the magnificent view of the famous blue-waterfall in this location.

**Day 10– San José (night at Robledal Lodge or similar)**

Today birding after breakfast will be variable as it depends on the birds we will be missing. It can be either to La Peninsula road again or to the gravel road on route to Fortuna’s Waterfall to look for more possibilities of Yellow-eared Toucanet, Barred Hawk and Lanceolated Monklet. Then we will be back to the hotel before lunch to start heading to another site to stop along the road. This

place has hummingbird feeders and is normally very reliable for Green Hermit, Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer, Green Thorntail and even sometimes Snowcap. Also is a good site to check for mixed species flocks that can include Golden-browed Chlorophonia, Black-and-yellow, Emerald, Bay-headed, Silver-throated, Crimson-collared tanagers and with some luck even a Blue-and-gold Tanager. We will have lunch at this spot around 1:00pm and then drive to the central valley to get close to the airport in late afternoon or night time. Dinner and the last checklist will be close to the hotel at 7:30pm.

### Day 11: Airport-Flight

After breakfast we will have the farewell meeting and then transfer to the airport or you will continue on your own. If you want to stay for longer in the hotel please consider the check-out of the room is at 10am.

## INCLUDED IN THE TOUR

- Transportation on spacious car with fuel included through the trip.
- Specialized guide/driver with Spotting Scope, Portable speaker + device with bird calls to play-back calls of a bird if necessary and a laser pointer to help locate birds in the field.
- Accommodation in all hotels listed.
- All times meals starting with Dinner on day 1 and finish with breakfast on day 8.
- Entrance fee to Braulio Carrillo and Tenorio National Park, La Selva Biological Station, Arenal Hanging Bridges and 2 boat tours in Caño Negro Wetland.

## NOT INCLUDED IN THE TOUR

- \* Tips for hotel staff, bird guide and driver are not included.
- \* Medical expenses, prescription drugs and other items of personal use.
- \* Additional tours offered in hotels (Spa, massage, etc.)
- \* Alcoholic beverages, cigarettes and anything else not listed on the menus of restaurants.
- \* Health insurance
- \* Laundry
- \* Souvenirs
- \* Any other expense or extra tour not listed as included above.

*Price per person according to number of participants in double room:*

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Double Room</b>
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Info: [www.lifertours.com](http://www.lifertours.com)



<b>4</b>	\$2898
<b>5</b>	\$2695
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Single supplement:  
\$495