

Tropical Birding Tours

Costa Rica: Birding with a Camera Tour



Resplendent Quetzal - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

Guide: Ben Knoot

The photos in this report were photographed by guide Ben Knoot unless otherwise stated.

Tour Introduction

Costa Rica is a perfect first-stop destination for new neotropical birders and photographers. It is easily accessible, full of stunning birds and animals and filled with incredibly friendly people. It is not only an excellent introduction to tropical birding and photography but it is one of those countries you can repeatedly revisit and always see and photograph new and beautiful species. This birding with a camera tour is an excellent combination of the Atlantic and Pacific Slopes as well as a combination of high and low elevations. In this report you will find summaries of our day-to-day activities, photos of some of the highlights from each day and of course, fun anecdotes from the guests, the guide and our overall experience while in this epic country. There were many excellent birds seen and photographed on this trip, but eventually the group was able to narrow down a list of their **TOP FIVE** and even a **TOP BIRD** of the trip.

Top Five Birds

1. **Resplendent Quetzal**
2. **Golden-browed Chlorophonia**
3. **American Pygmy Kingfisher**
4. **Sunbittern**
5. **Snowcap**

Top Three Photographic Opportunities

1. **Resplendent Quetzal at Nest**
2. **Sunbittern On and Near Nesting Site**
3. **Golden-browed Chlorophonia feeding in a Berry Bush**

Bird of the Trip



Resplendent Quetzal - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

Itinerary

March 7th.....	Arrival in San Jose/Night Robledal
March 8th.....	Cartago/Rancho Naturalista
March 9th.....	Rancho Naturalista
March 10th.....	Rancho Naturalista
March 11th.....	Rancho Naturalista/Talamanca
March 12th.....	Talamanca Highlands
March 13th.....	Talamanca/Talari Mountain Lodge
March 14th.....	Talari Lodge/Cusingos Reserve
March 15th.....	Talari Lodge/Esquinas Lodge
March 16th.....	Esquinas Rainforest Lodge
March 17th.....	Esquinas Lodge/Rincon
March 18th.....	Esquinas Lodge/San Jose
March 19th.....	Departures

Tour Summary

Day 1 (March 7th)

The tour began this evening with dinner at our lovely *Hotel Robledal* in San Jose. A few of the guests came to me and said they had a gorgeous view and a fun photoshoot with the local **Ferruginous Pygmy Owl**. We enjoyed a delicious dinner, reviewed the details and the plans for the trip and then went to bed, excited to get our tour started.



Ferruginous Pygmy Owl - Photo by guest Tim

Day 2 (March 8th)

On our first day, we began the morning with a walk around the grounds of ***Hotel Robledal***. The extremely windy conditions made the birding and photography difficult but we did manage to find and photograph some of the common local species; **Rufous-naped Wren, Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, White-winged Dove, Red-billed Pigeon, Inca Dove, Hoffman's Woodpecker, Great Kiskadee and Social Flycatcher** were all seen well. After a nice breakfast, we left for an ambitious task. We aimed at finding a regional endemic bird, the Cabanis's Ground Sparrow. This local bird thrives in the coffee plantations of ***Ujarras***. We tried several of the fields where I have had luck with this species in the past but a strong wind was making things difficult. I decided to try the local, ***Parque Ujarras*** to see if we could find some other local species. We were rewarded with; **Nutting's Flycatcher, Blue-vented Hummingbird, Black Pheobe, Summer Tanager, House Wren, Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, Northern Rough Wing Swallow** and by far the highlight of this small park, a tree full of nesting **Montezuma Oropendola**.



Montezuma Oropendola - Photo by guest Tim

Unwilling and unable to accept defeat so easily, I returned for one last attempt at the Cabanis's Ground Sparrow. With windy conditions still raging, I finally caught wind (pun intended) of a chip note that sounded just like our target, the **Cabanis's Ground Sparrow**. Unfortunately, because of the wind, the bird was not perching up very high so only two members of the group saw the bird and there were no good photo opportunities. No matter, with this behind us, our next stop was the famed *Rancho Naturalista*.

We arrived in time to enjoy the fantastic lunch that overlooks their famed feeding area. After enjoying some of the feeder birds, we took a quick walk down the road to see one of the more spectacular birds of this area, the **Lovely Cotinga**. Unfortunately, the bird was so distance that the best views we were provided were scope views and cell phone photos. We took some time to enjoy more of the beautiful birds at the feeders; **Bay-headed Tanager**, **Gray-headed Chachalaca**, **Red-billed Pigeon**, **Tennessee Warbler**, **Bananaquit**, **Orange-billed Sparrow**, **Yellow-faced Grassquit**, **White-tipped Dove**, **Montezuma Oropendola**, **Buff-throated Saltator**, **Blue-gray Tanager**, **Palm Tanager**, **Summer Tanager** and **Baltimore Oriole**. We ended the afternoon with a plethora of bird species down by the *Hummingbird Pools*. Those included; **Purple-crowned Fairy**, **Green Hermit**, **Strip-throated Hermit**, **Snowcap**, **White-crowned Manakin**, **Golden-winged Warbler**, **White-ruffed Manakin**, **Plain Xenops**, **Eyering Flatbill** and **Cocoa Woodcreeper**. We spent a great fist night and met with our local guide Harry who explained the plan for the next few days.



Montezuma Oropendola - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

Day 3 (March 9th)

Today was our first full day in **Rancho Naturalista**. We began this incredible day by visiting the **Insect Sheet**. Here, the warm light attracts a plethora of insects over the night and in the morning, hoards of birds descend on the vulnerable prey. The birds we managed to pick up were; **Red-crowned Ant-Tanager, Streak-headed Woodcreeper, Eyring Flatbill, Plain-brown Woodcreeper, Cocoa Woodcreeper, White-breasted Wood Wren and Golden-crowned Warblers** were abundant.



Eyring Flatbill - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

We returned to the table to find a lovely breakfast waiting for us. **Rancho Naturalista**, for those of you who have not been to this lodge, has some of the best breakfast, lunch and dinner options. Along with meal time, the group was entertained by a pair of beautiful **Tayra**, a single **White-nosed Coati** and a few other fun new bird species like; **Collared Aracari, Black-striped Sparrow, White-necked Jacobin, Green Mango, Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, Crowned Woodnymph, Stripe-throated Hermit and Green Hermit**.

After a fun breakfast, Harry took us down to the local river and was able to show us some excellent birds like; **Torrent Tyrannulet, Green Ibis, Gray-capped Flycatcher, Green Kingfisher** and everyone's favorite, two pair of nesting **Sunbittern**.



Green Ibis - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

Later, we visited a nearby garden where Verbena Flowers are prevalent, allowing us to find; **Snowcap**, **Stripe-throated Hermit**, **Black-crested Coquette**, **Green Thorntail** and the ever prevalent **Rufous-tailed Hummingbird**. We even had a flyby **Black Hawk Eagle** and several flocks of **White-crowned Parrot**. With the light now turning quite harsh and our stomachs beginning to growl, we retreated back to the lodge for another fantastic lunch. We took a two hour break during the heat of the day. This time is great for downloading images, taking a nap or simply relaxing with a good book.

Around 3:30 or so, we left for a nearby park with the acronym **C.A.T.I.E** and while I don't remember what the acronym stood for, I certainly remember the birds. Our first stop was a tiny section of trees that had a small viewing window where we were able to get fantastic looks at **Great Potoo**. We then visited the backside of the lake to look for a very special bird, the **Boat-billed Heron**. We were able to find a group of about six of these unique birds. Around this area we also found **Northern Jacana** and **Purple Gallinule**.



Boat-billed Heron - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

After some fantastic views of this species, we went around to the other side of the lake to check out the heron rookery. The first bird we were greeting by was a stunning **Ringed Kingfisher**. We then began examining the rookery and found; **Cattle Egret, Little Blue Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron and Great Egret**. As the sun began to sink and light began to dissipate, we went back to our lodge for another lovely dinner and a fantastic night in ***Rancho Naturalista***.



Ringed Kingfisher - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

Day 4 (March 10th)

Today was another full day with our local guide Harry. And what a day it was. We visited another insect sheet just down the road from the ranch. There were a few similar birds but with some exceptions. We were able to add the following birds to our list; **Rufous-capped Warbler**, **Mourning Warbler**, **Rufous Motmot**, **Lesson's Motmot**, **Brown Jay**, **Green-crowned Brilliant** and a surprise **Giant Cowbird**. Along with these new additions, we had much better photographic opportunities of some of the species we had already seen so it was a nice bonus for the more photographically inclined among us. On the way back up for breakfast, we spotted a group of **Keel-billed Toucan** just outside of the ranch.



Lesson's Motmot - Photo by guide Ben Knoot



Lesson's Motmot - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

After a stellar breakfast we quickly checked a small bamboo forest for a special little bird, the **Tawny-chested Flycatcher**. Harry then took us deep into the **Tuis Valley** to look for a variety of much tougher birds. We arrived in the valley and though it was a bit warm, we were on some great birds from the start. **Variable Seedeater, Ruddy Ground Dove, Broad-winged Hawk, Scarlet-rumped Tanager, Northern Rough Winged Swallow, Green Hermit and Bay Wren**. The few truly notable birds were; **Gartered Trogon, Buff-throated Foliage Gleaner and Crimson-collared Tanager**. The day started to really heat up. Temperatures started reaching mid-80's and our walk had started to take its toll so we decided to move back to the ranch for lunch. We enjoyed our lovely lunch, our two hour break and then we moved to Harry's next spot.



Tawny-chested Flycatcher Photo by guide Ben Knoot

Our next destination was a local lake that Harry has had some great success with in the past. The lake was huge and the habitat around the lake was beautiful so there were lots of opportunity to get some much needed species for the area. We were able to find some great birds like **Barred Antshrike, Snail Kite, Yellow Tyrannulet, Limpkin, Slaty Spinetail, Streak-backed Oriole, Red-billed Pigeon, Streak-headed Woodcreeper, Southern Lapwing, Lesser Yellowlegs, Turkey Vulture, Black Vulture and Spotted Sandpiper.**

The sun started to set and we were still a good hour and 20 minutes from Rancho so we left and started our return journey. While driving through the corn fields, I spotted a hovering **White-tailed Kite** and almost simultaneously Harry spotted a **Red-breasted Meadowlark** calmly sitting in the fields. Both were a bit far but we managed a few fun photos before the light completely disappeared. Our last full day ended with another fantastic dinner with the Rancho staff.



White-tailed Kite - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

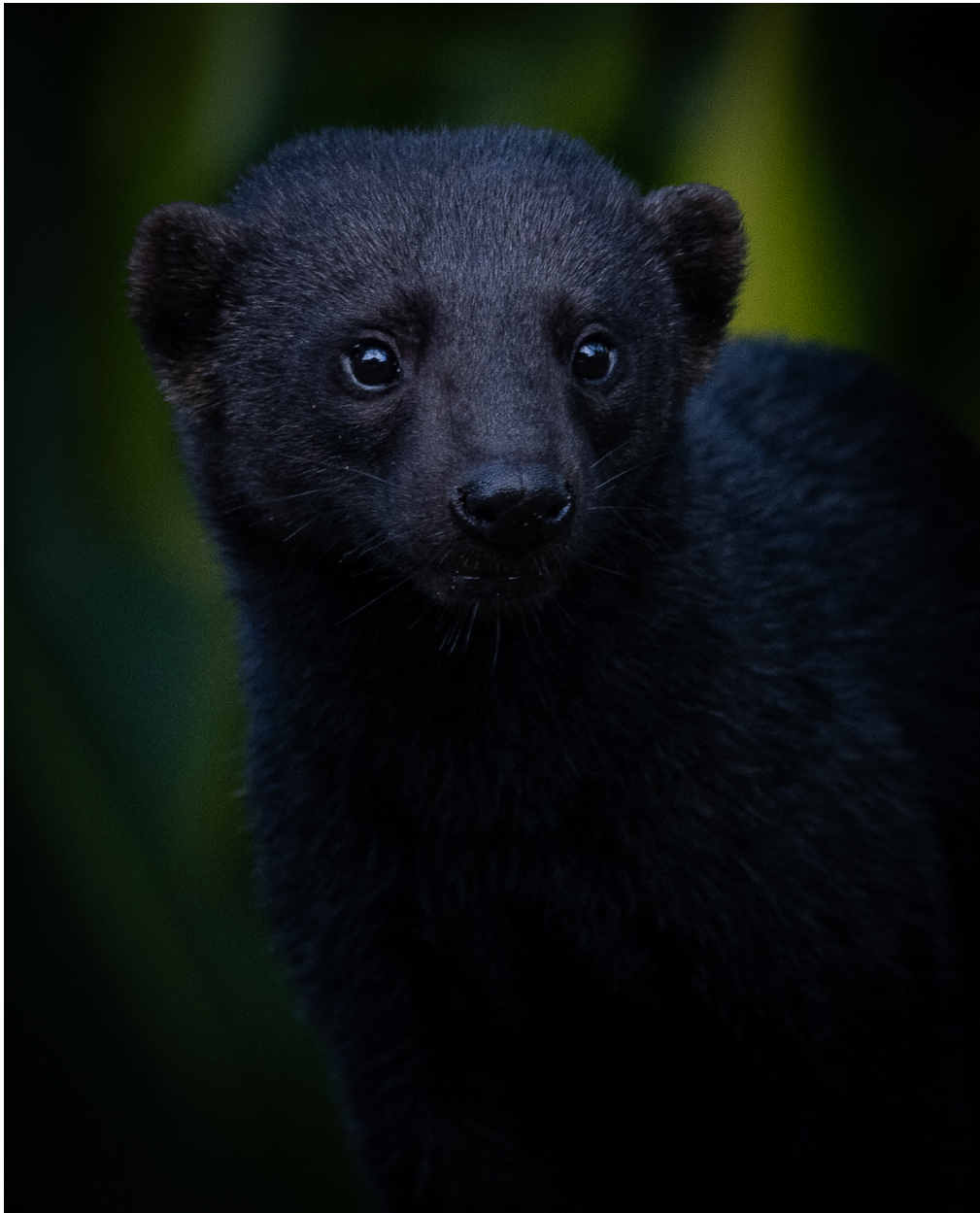


Red-breasted Meadowlark - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

Day 5 (March 11th)

We had one last walk around ***Rancho Naturalista*** before moving on to our next location. We started down the road and made our way to our next destination in the Talamanca Highlands. ***Toucanet Lodge*** is a fun little lodge and is situated nicely in the highlands. We were met by our gracious host and had a delicious lunch at the lodge. The hummingbird feeders provided us with some excellent views of the following birds; **Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, Magenta-throated Woodstar, Violet Sabrewing, Plain-capped Starthroat and Stripe-tailed Hummingbird.** And the fruit feeders yielded some impressive birds like, **Baltimore Oriole, Silver-throated Tanager, Tennessee Warbler, Flame-colored Tanager** and everyone's favorite lunch-time bird, the **Northern Emerald Toucanet.** We then broke from lunch to drive to one of my favorite places in ***Savegre Valley, Batsu Gardens.*** This garden is one of the best places to reliably find a male **Volcano Hummingbird.** Other birds we were treated too were; **Spotted Wood Quail, Acorn Woodpecker, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Large-footed Finch, Chestnut-capped Brushfinch, Ruddy-capped Nightingale Thrush, Rufous-collared Sparrow, Silver-throated Tanager, Flame-colored Tanager,**

Lesser Violetear, Talamanca Hummingbird, Scintillant Hummingbird, White-throated Mountain Gem, Slaty Flowerpiercer, Sooty-capped Chlorospingus, and White-naped Brushfinch.



Tayra - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

When you're in such a place as this, it is very difficult to leave but the fact was, as with everyday, the sun started to sink below the mountains and we did lose the light for photography. The Batsu manager came to pick us up in his 4x4 truck and we went back down the mountain. On the way day, we spotted a rather cool little bird, a **Tufted Flycatcher**. And just a few hundred feet further down the road we ran into another fun little bird, **Collared Redstart**. We hopped in our little bus and we started back towards our lodge for a terrific dinner and a lovely night.



Volcano Hummingbird - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

Day 6 (March 12th)

We began the day with a walk around ***Toucanet Lodge***. There is a fun bird here that is found elsewhere but is more easily seen around the grounds of this lodge, the **Rufous-browed Peppershrike**. We had a solo bird pose and provide excellent views as it bounced through the trees. We also had; **Indigo Bunting**, **Northern Emerald Toucanet**, **Black Phoebe** and a **Wilson's Warbler**. After a nice but quick breakfast I decided we should bird ***Provincia Road***. This is an excellent birding road where we were able to get great looks at the following birds; **Resplendent Quetzal**, **Yellow-winged Vireo**, **Band-tailed Pigeon**, **Spot-crowned Woodcreeper**, **Flame-throated Warbler**, **Black-throated Green Warbler**, **Black-capped Nightingale Thrush**, **Mountain Elaenia** and **Fiery-throated Hummingbird**.



Black-capped Nightingale Thrush - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

After this fantastic walk, we enjoyed a nice lunch in the Savegre Hotel restaurant. During lunch we noticed a commotion near the windows. Upon further investigation, we discovered that a **Northern Emerald Toucanet** had just caught and killed a young Clay-colored Thrush. A gruesome reminder of the ruthlessness of nature. We took a nice hour or so to visit the ***Savegre Lodge Feeders*** and we were able to find; **Scintillant Hummingbird, Melodius Blackbird, Acorn Woodpecker and Slaty Flowerpiercer.**

We left the comfort of the feeding area and hit the trails, hoping to find and photograph some birds we had missed before. We were able to find a few new birds including; **Dark Pewee, Spot-crowned Woodcreeper and Yellowish Flycatcher.** We left ***Sevegre Valley*** to reach Toucanet Lodge by dinner time. We enjoyed a nice last dinner in our lovely accommodation.

Day 7 (March 13th)

Today we left *Toucanet Lodge* very early to reach *Paraiso Quetzal* by 5:30am for our local guided quetzal tour. If you want to see Resplendent Quetzal, this is the best way to do it. Our guide took us down to the local farms so we could witness this one of a kind specimen. We were treated to three nest visits and great perch views of the male **Resplendent Quetzal**. We were unable to see the female at this nest site. Other birds around were, **White-naped Brushfinch**, **Flame-colored Tanager**, **Chestnut-capped Brushfinch**, **Barred Becard** and **Long-tailed Silky Flycatcher**.



Resplendent Quetzal - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

After some excellent views and photographic opportunities, we returned to *Paraiso Quetzal* for a nice breakfast. After an hour rest and some time with the local hummingbirds, which are; **Fiery-throated Hummingbird**, **Lesser Violetear**, **Talamanca Hummingbird** and **Volcano Hummingbird**, I asked the group if they would like to take a walk through the trail system of *Paraiso Quetzal*. I really enjoy walking these trails and they can be quite productive. And if there is not much activity, at the very least there is a 1000+ yr old Cyprus Tree which is absolutely stunning.

Here, the birding is excellent but the photography is tough. As we walked the trails, completely immersed by trees hundreds of years old, we were able to see the following birds; **Ochraceous Pewee**, **Black-and-Yellow Silky Flycatcher**, **Long-tailed Silky Flycatcher**, **Collared Redstart**, **Tufted Flycatcher**, **Mountain Thrush**, **Clay-colored Thrush**, **Large-footed Finch** and by far one of the coolest encounters, a male and female **Resplendent Quetzal**. One of the more annoying birds of the walk was a calling Golden-browed Chlorophonia that was calling constantly. Though I could never seem to find the male or female and because they were nesting, I was not going to call them in, I was starting to get a bit frustrated. And then, towards the end of the hike, while I had stopped to find a calling Barred Becard, I heard the call note of the chlorophonia right behind me. Sure enough, I turned to find a male and female **Golden-browed Chlorophonia** eating in the berry bush not 6ft from our group!! With a touch of hysteria, I notified the group and we were treated to some excellent views and photo opportunities of this amazing species.



Golden-browed Chlorophonia - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

That was quite a photoshoot...wow.

After a nice lunch, I gave the group another 2hrs of free time to explore the grounds and to use the fabulous photo deck. We saw more of the same species of bird but this time, we were able to get some great photos.



Fiery-throated Hummingbird - Photo by guide Ben Knoot



Fiery-throated Hummingbird - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

Day 8 (March 14th)

For the morning I decided we should walk the grounds of *Paraiso Quetzal*. We still had a few birds to look for so we went for it. The walk went well and we picked up; **Black-cheeked Warbler**, **Northern Emerald Toucanet**, **Gray-breasted Wood Wren**, **Yellow-thighed Finch**, **Olive-striped Flycatcher**, **Wrenthrush**, **Spangled-cheeked Tanager** and it was great to see a male **Resplendent Quetzal** flitting through the canyon, tail streaming in the wind! The birds were abundant and the photo opportunities were tough but the group managed some great photos.



Gray-breasted Wood Wren - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

We left this fantastic piece of land and ventured up to *Cerro del Muerte*. This location is perfect for one specific species, the Volcano Junco. Along the road, just about 5-minutes in we spotted a lovely **Volcano Junco** hanging out just on top of branch. The light was a bit harsh and I had a nice spot for this bird at the top of the hill so we continued on. We arrived to find the most beautiful view but to my surprise, no Volcano Junco. We continued looking in a different spot and finally, a few minutes of searching later and I found two birds actively feeding around a rocky outcrop. Watching two **Volcano Junco** actively feeding with such an amazing view was really a really cool experience.



View from Cerro del Muerte - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

After this successful trip to “the hill of death” we moved on towards our next destination ***Bosque del Tolomuco***. This small privately owned garden is an absolute gem. Among the grounds we found; **Ruddy Pigeon**, **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**, **Long-billed Hermit**, **White-tailed Emerald**, **Snowy-bellied Hummingbird**, **Magenta-throated Woodstar**, **Scarlet-thighed Dacnis** and **Mistletoe Tyrannulet**. The real surprise came when I heard the call of a bird I was not expecting to see, two beautiful **Elegant Euphonia** emerged through the trees and put on a fantastic display for the entire group, awesome bird!



Elegant Euphonia - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

For the afternoon, we traveled to our next destination, *Talari Mountain Lodge*. We spent the afternoon walking the grounds and found; **Striped Flycatcher, Piratic Flycatcher, Social Flycatcher, Red-crowned Woodpecker, Variable Seedeater, Scarlet-rumped Tanager, White-tipped Dove, Great Kiskadee, Red-legged Honeycreeper and Green Honeycreeper**. A few minutes later, the darkness replaced the sunlight so we enjoyed a nice dinner and a good nights rest.

Day 9 (March 15th)

We spent the day walking around the lodge and visiting some of the local yards where we could find a few specific target species. Our pre-breakfast *Talari Grounds Walk* proved very fruitful as we added, **Olivaceous Piculet, Rufous-breasted Wren and Amazon Kingfisher** to our ever growing list.



Olivaceous Piculet - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

After our walk and a nice breakfast we left for one of the local gardens. While driving along and nearing our destination, I spotted one heck of a bird, a **Laughing Falcon**. While we admired this striking falcon, a ton of new birds just started appearing out of nowhere...we added; **Tropical Mockingbird**, **Masked Tityra**, **Bronzed Cowbird**, **Piratic Flycatcher**, **Red-legged Honeycreeper** and my personal favorite was the sheer spectacle of witnessing hundreds upon hundreds of migrating **Broad-winged Hawk**. We continued on to our destination, **Cotinga B&B**. I come to this location for one specific reason, lekking **Orange-collared Manakin**. The other interesting bird for us was a nesting **Common Tody Flycatcher**.



Orange-collared Manakin - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

While we were waiting for the heat of the day to dissipate, the owner of this fine establishment provided us with an amazing glass of Iced Tea. Now quite hot, we returned to **Talari Mountain Lodge** for a bit of a R&R. After a few hours, we began our afternoon birding around the **Trails of Talari Mountain Lodge**. Here we found; **Speckled Tanager**, **Orange-collared Manakin**, **Yellow-throated Toucan**, **Bay-headed Tanager**, **Orange-billed Sparrow** and a **Black-hooded Antshrike** family. We enjoyed these birds until the dinner bell rang and our beds called to our heads.



Black-hooded Ant-Shrike - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

Day 10 (March 16th)

Today we left for our hike very early. We arrived at **Cusingos Reserve** right when they opened. This was going to be our longest and most grueling hike of the tour but I knew the group could handle it. So, we went off into the forest to find our target birds. Our walk started off well when we were able to find a roosting **Common Potoo** and a beautiful **Chestnut-backed Antbird**. The walk continued into the garden where we added; **Golen-winged Warbler**, **Russet Antshrike**, **Blue-throated Goldentail**, **Riverside Wren**, **Lesser Greenlet**, **Turkey Vulture**, **Roadside Hawk**, **Spot-crowned Euphonia**, **Gray-headed Tanager** and **Golden-olive Flycatcher**.



Chestnut-back Antbird - Photo by guide Ben Knoot



Riverside Wren - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

Further into the walk, we found some incredible birds like; **Ruddy Quail Dove**, **Baird's Trogon**, **Golden-crowned Spadebill**, **Rufous Piha**, **Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher**, **Grey-headed Kite**, **Dot-winged Antwren**, **Orange-collared Manakin**, **Red-capped Manakin** and **Blue-crowned Manakin**.



Blue-crowned Manakin - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

We had a fantastic walk but it was time to move on so we grabbed a quick lunch in a nearby cafe on the way to our next destination, ***Esquinas Rainforest Lodge***.

The journey was long but we did manage a new bird on the way into the lodge grounds, a beautiful **Fork-tailed Flycatcher**. We continued to the lodge grounds, had our orientation from the fantastic host and had a terrific dinner before heading off to bed. But not before a quick look at the local **Spectacled Caiman** on the way to our rooms.

Day 11 (March 17th)

We started very early today so we could beat the heat. The pond in front of restaurant was very productive, providing us with; **Red-rumped Cacique**, **Yellow-throated Toucan** and everyone's favorite for the morning, a pair of **Great Currasow**.



Great Curassow - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

When we finally got going on the walk, we managed to find some excellent birds. Including the local specialty, **Black-cheeked Ant-Tanager**. Other birds we were able to locate were; **Black-faced Ant-thrush**, **Buff-rumped Warbler**, **Chiriqui Foliage Gleaner**, **Red-capped Manakin** and **Charming Hummingbird**. We returned for our quick and delicious breakfast. We wanted to make this quite quick so we could beat the heat (that's what it's all about in the tropics) in our next destination. After breakfast we traveled towards the beautiful **Rincon Natural Area**. Here we'd be looking for two rather special birds. Within minutes, a medium sized white bird flew by and I

called out “**Yellow-billed Cotinga**” and just then, we checked off one of the birds we were looking for. Though we searched and searched, we could not find the other, a Turquoise Cotinga. It started getting very hot but we managed a few of the local birds like; **Gray-chested Martin**, **Amazon Kingfisher**, **White Ibis**, **Tricolored Heron**, **Whimbrel**, **Ruddy Turnstone**, **Yellow-throated Toucan**, **Ruddy Ground Dove**, **Spotted Sandpiper** and **Spot-crowned Euphonia**. The birds here were a bit far so I decided it was time to go to the coast for lunch. We went to the beautiful little town of **Corcovado** and had an amazing seafood lunch right on the water, a brilliant way to burn two hours while we waiting for the heat to die down.



Yellow-billed Cotinga - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

After lunch we returned to the **Rincon Natural Area** to see if we could see some of the birds we missed the first time. We were able to add; **Riverside Wren**, **Common Black Hawk**, **Black-crowned Tityra**, **Golden-naped Woodpecker**, **Gartered Trogon**, **Bairds's Trogon** and my personal highlight, the **White-necked Puffbird**. With the light fading, Mantled Howler Monkeys croaking away and the beautiful sun setting, we returned back to **Esquinas Rainforest Lodge** for dinner and a lovely evening.



Common Black Hawk - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

Day 12 (March 18th)

For our last full day of the tour, I reserved our morning walk for the ***Lagoon Trail*** and along the ***Riverbed Trail***. On these trails we managed to find; **Black-cheeked Ant-Thrush, Chestnut-backed Antbird, Northern Bentbill, Purple Gallinule, Long-billed Hermit, Charming Hummingbird, Band-tailed Barbthroat, Plain Xenops, Northern Jacana, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Black-bellied Wren, Dot-winged Antwren, Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, American Pygmy Kingfisher, Gartered Trogon, and Gray-chested Dove**. After lunch, the realization started to sink in and our 5hr drive to San Jose began. We made great time thanks to our excellent driver who throughout the entire trip was absolutely superb. We made it back in time for a delicious dinner, our final list and our goodbyes.



American Pygmy Kingfisher - Photo by guide Ben Knoot

Day 13 (February 19th)

Guest departures.

Species Account

*Seen - We saw this species but from the guides perspective, it was not a good photo opportunity

*Photographed - This species was photographed but more of an identification/far off photo

*Photographed Well - From the guides perspective, there was a great photographic opportunity

*Guide Only - Only the guide was able to see this bird

Species	Seen	Photographed	Photographed Well	Guide Only
Birds				
<i>Ducks, Geese and Waterfowl</i>				
Black-bellied Whistling Duck				
Muscovy Duck				
Blue-winged Teal				
Lesser Scaup				
<i>Guan, Chachalacas and Curassows</i>				
Gray-headed Chachalaca				
Crested Guan				
Black Guan				
Great Curassow				
<i>New World Quail</i>				
Spotted Wood Quail				
<i>Frigatebirds</i>				
Magnificent Frigatebird				
<i>Anhingas</i>				
Anhinga				
<i>Cormorants and Shags</i>				
Neotropic Cormorant				
<i>Pelicans</i>				

Species	Seen	Photographed	Photographed Well	Guide Only
Brown Pelican				
<i>Herons, Egrets and Bitterns</i>				
Bare-throated Tiger Heron				
Great Egret				
Snowy Egret				
Little Blue Heron				
Tricolored Heron				
Cattle Egret				
Green Heron				
Black-crowned Night Heron				
Yellow-crowned Night Heron				
Boat-billed Heron				
<i>Ibises and Spoonbills</i>				
White Ibis				
Green Ibis				
<i>New World Vultures</i>				
Black Vulture				
Turkey Vulture				
King Vulture				
<i>Osprey</i>				
Osprey				
<i>Hawks, Eagles and Kites</i>				
Swallow-tailed Kite				
White-tailed Kite				
Gray-headed Kite				
Black Hawk Eagle				

Species	Seen	Photographed	Photographed Well	Guide Only
Common Black Hawk				
Snail Kite				
Roadside Hawk				
Broad-winged Hawk				
Short-tailed Hawk				
Red-tailed Hawk				
<i>Rails, Gallinules and Coots</i>				
Gray-cowled Woodrail				
<i>Limpkin</i>				
Limpkin				
<i>Stilts and Avocets</i>				
Black-necked Stilt				
<i>Plovers and Lapwings</i>				
Southern Lapwing				
<i>Jacanas</i>				
Northern Jacana				
<i>Sandpipers and Allies</i>				
Spotted Sandpiper				
Willet				
Greater Yellowlegs				
Whimbrel				
Ruddy Turnstone				
Least Sandpiper				
<i>Gulls, Terns and Skimmers</i>				
Laughing Gull				
Sandwich Tern				

Species	Seen	Photographed	Photographed Well	Guide Only
Royal Tern				
<i>Pigeons and Doves</i>				
Rock Pigeon				
Pale-vented Pigeon				
Scaled Pigeon				
Ruddy Pigeon				
Red-billed Pigeon				
Band-tailed Pigeon				
Ruddy Quail Dove				
Inca Dove				
Common Ground Dove				
Ruddy Ground Dove				
White-tipped Dove				
Gray-chested Dove				
White-winged Dove				
<i>Cuckoos</i>				
Squirrel Cuckoo				
Smooth-billed Ani				
Groove-billed Ani				
<i>Owls</i>				
Bare Shank'd Screech Owl				
Ferruginous Pygmy Owl				
<i>Nightjars and Allies</i>				
Lesser Nighthawk				
Common Parakeet				
<i>Potoos</i>				

Species	Seen	Photographed	Photographed Well	Guide Only
Great Potoo				
Common Potoo				
<i>Swifts</i>				
White-collared Swift				
Vaux's Swift				
Costa Rica Swift				
Gray-rumped Swift				
<i>Hummingbirds</i>				
White-necked Jacobin				
Band-tailed Barbtail				
Green Hermit				
Long-billed Hermit				
Stripe-throated Hermit				
Lesser Violetear				
Purple-crowned Fairy				
Great-breasted Mango				
Green Thorntail				
Green-crowned Brilliant				
Black-crested Coquette				
Talamanca Hummingbird				
Fiery-throated Hummingbird				
White-throated Mountain-gem				
Magenta-throated Woodstar				
Volcano Hummingbird				
Scintillant Hummingbird				
Violet Sabrewing				

Species	Seen	Photographed	Photographed Well	Guide Only
Bronze-tailed Plumateer				
Crowned Woodnymph				
Stripe-tailed Hummingbird				
White-tailed Emerald				
Garden Emerald				
Snowcap				
Charming Hummingbird				
Snowy-bellied Hummingbird				
Long-billed Starthroat				
Plain-capped Starthroat				
Blue-vented Hummingbird				
Rufous-tailed Hummingbird				
Cinnamon Hummingbird				
Violet-headed Hummingbird				
Blue-throated Goldentail				
<i>Trogons</i>				
Resplendent Quetzal				
Baird's Trogon				
Gartered Trogon				
Collared Trogon				
<i>Motmots</i>				
Lesson's Motmot				
Rufous Motmot				
<i>Kingfishers</i>				
Ringed Kingfisher				
Belted Kingfisher				

Species	Seen	Photographed	Photographed Well	Guide Only
Amazon Kingfisher				
Green Kingfisher				
American Pygmy Kingfisher				
<i>Puffbirds</i>				
White-necked Puffbird				
<i>Jacamars</i>				
Rufous-tailed Jacamar				
<i>New World Barbets</i>				
Red-headed Barbet				
<i>Toucans</i>				
Northern Emerald Toucanet				
Collared Aracari				
Yellow-throated Toucan				
Keel-billed Toucan				
<i>Woodpeckers</i>				
Olivaceous Piculet				
Acorn Woodpecker				
Black-cheeked Woodpecker				
Red-crowned Woodpecker				
Hoffmann's Woodpecker				
Hairy Woodpecker				
Golden-naped Woodpecker				
Golden-olive Woodpecker				
<i>Falcons and Caracaras</i>				
Crested Caracara				
Yellow-headed Caracara				

Species	Seen	Photographed	Photographed Well	Guide Only
Laughing Falcon				
Bat Falcon				
<i>New World & African Parrots</i>				
Orange-chinned Parakeet				
White-crowned Parrot				
Red-lored Parrot				
Mealy Parrot				
Sulphur-winged Parrot				
Orange-fronted Parakeet				
Scarlet Macaw				
Crimson-fronted Parakeet				
<i>Typical Antbirds</i>				
Plain Antvireo				
Barred Antshrike				
Black-hooded Antshrike				
Russet Antshrike				
Dot-winged Antwren				
Checker-throated Antwren				
Slaty Antwren				
Chestnut-backed Antbird				
<i>Anthruses</i>				
Black-faced Ant-Thrush				
<i>Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers</i>				
Plain-brown Woodcreeper				
Cocoa Woodcreeper				
Streak-headed Woodcreeper				

Species	Seen	Photographed	Photographed Well	Guide Only
Spot-crowned Woodcreeper				
Spotted Woodcreeper				
Plain Xenops				
Buff-throated Foliage-Gleaner				
Chiriqui Foliage-Gleaner				
Ruddy Treecreeper				
Slaty Spinetail				
<i>Tyrant Flycatchers</i>				
Yellow-bellied Tyrannulet				
Southern Beardless-Tyrannulet				
Yellow Tyrannulet				
Greenish Elaenia				
Yellow-bellied Elaenia				
Mountain Elaenia				
Torrent Tyrannulet				
Ochre-bellied Flycatcher				
Slaty-capped Flycatcher				
Mistletoe (Paltry) Tyrannulet				
Common Tody Flycatcher				
Northern Bentbill				
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher				
Yellowish Flycatcher				
Eyering Flatbill				
Yellow-olive Flycatcher				
Black-capped Flycatcher				
Golden-crowned Spadebill				

Species	Seen	Photographed	Photographed Well	Guide Only
Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher				
Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher				
Tawny-chested Flycatcher				
Tufted Flycatcher				
Black Phoebe				
Dusky-capped Flycatcher				
Nutting's Flycatcher				
Ochraceous Pewee				
Dark Pewee				
Bright-rumped Atilla				
Great-crested Flycatcher				
Great Kiskadee				
Boat-billed Flycatcher				
Social Flycatcher				
Gray-capped Flycatcher				
Streaked Flycatcher				
Piratic Flycatcher				
Tropical Kingbird				
Fork-tailed Flycatcher				
<i>Cotingas</i>				
Lovely Cotinga				
Turquoise Cotinga				
Yellow-billed Cotinga				
Rufous Piha				
<i>Manakins</i>				
White-collared Manakin				

Species	Seen	Photographed	Photographed Well	Guide Only
White-crowned Manakin				
Red-capped Manakin				
Orange-collared Manakin				
Blue-crowned Manakin				
<i>Tityras and Allies</i>				
Masked Tityra				
Black-crowned Tityra				
Barred Becard				
Cinnamon Becard				
Rose-throated Becard				
<i>Vireos, Shrike-Babblers and Erpornis</i>				
Rufous-browed Peppershrike				
Lesser Greenlet				
Yellow-winged Vireo				
Yellow-throated Vireo				
Philadelphia Vireo				
Brown-capped Vireo				
<i>Crows, Jays and Magpies</i>				
Brown Jay				
<i>Swallows</i>				
Blue-and-white Swallows				
Northern Rough-winged Swallow				
Gray-breasted Martin				
Mangrove Swallow				
Barn Swallow				

Species	Seen	Photographed	Photographed Well	Guide Only
<i>Wrens</i>				
House Wren				
Timberline Wren				
Rufous-naped Wren				
Riverside Wren				
Bay Wren				
Black-bellied Wren				
Rufous-breasted Wren				
White-breasted Wood Wren				
Gray-breasted Wood Wren				
<i>Gnatcatchers</i>				
Tropical Gnatcatcher				
<i>Thrushes and Allies</i>				
Orange-billed Nightingale Thrush				
Black-billed Nightingale Thrush				
Ruddy-capped Nightingale Thrush				
Wood Thrush				
Swainson's Thrush				
Sooty Thrush				
Mountain Thrush				
Clay-colored Thrush				
<i>Mockingbirds and Thrashers</i>				
Tropical Mockingbird				
<i>Silky-Flycatchers</i>				

Species	Seen	Photographed	Photographed Well	Guide Only
Black and Yellow Silky-Flycatcher				
Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher				
<i>New World Warblers</i>				
Northern Waterthrush				
Golden-winged Warbler				
Flame-throated Warbler				
Tennessee Warbler				
Black-and-white Warbler				
Yellow Warbler				
Mourning Warbler				
Kentucky Warbler				
American Redstart				
Tropical Parula				
Chestnut-sided Warbler				
Black-cheeked Warbler				
Golden-crowned Warbler				
Black-throated Green Warbler				
Buff-rumped Warbler				
Wilson's Warbler				
Rufous-capped Warbler				
Slate-throated Redstart				
Collared Redstart				
<i>Tanagers and Allies</i>				
Grey-headed Tanager				
White-shoulder Tanager				
White-lined Tanager				

Species	Seen	Photographed	Photographed Well	Guide Only
Crimson-collared Tanager				
Scarlet-rumped Tanager				
Blue-gray Tanager				
Palm Tanager				
Speckled Tanager				
Golden-hooded Tanager				
Spangled-cheeked Tanager				
Plain-colored Tanager				
Silver-throated Tanager				
Bay-headed Tanager				
Scarlet-thighed Dacnis				
Red-legged Honeycreeper				
Green Honeycreeper				
Slaty Flowerpiercer				
Variable Seedeater				
Yellow-bellied Seedeater				
Morrelett's Seedeater				
Bananaquit				
Yellow-faced Grassquit				
Buff-throated Saltator				
Black-headed Saltator				
<i>Buntings and New World Sparrows</i>				
Sooty-capped Chlorospingus				
Common Chlorospingus				
Orange-billed Sparrow				
Chestnut-capped Brushfinch				

Species	Seen	Photographed	Photographed Well	Guide Only
Rufous-collared Sparrow				
Black-striped Sparrow				
Cabanis's Ground Sparrow				
Volcano Junco				
Large-footed Finch				
Yellow-thighed Finch				
White-naped Brushfinch				
<i>Wrenthrush</i>				
Wrenthrush				
<i>Cardinals and Allies</i>				
Summer Tanager				
Flame-colored Tanager				
White-winged Tanager				
Red-throated Ant Tanager				
Black-faced Ant Tanager				
Rose-breasted Grosbeak				
Indigo Bunting				
<i>Troupials and Allies</i>				
Red-breasted Meadowlark				
Red-winged Blackbird				
Melodious Blackbird				
Great-tailed Grackle				
Bronzed Cowbird				
Giant Cowbird				
Black-cowled Oriole				
Baltimore Oriole				

Species	Seen	Photographed	Photographed Well	Guide Only
Chestnut-headed Oropendola				
Montezuma Oropendola				
Scarlet-rumped Cacique				
<i>Finches, Euphonias and Allies</i>				
Thick-billed Euphonia				
Olive-backed Euphonia				
Elegant Euphonia				
Spot-crowned Euphonia				
Golden-browed Chlorophonia				
<i>Old World Sparrows</i>				
House Sparrow				
Mammals/Other Fauna				
Red-tailed Squirrel				
Variegated Squirrel				
White-nosed Coati				
Central American Agouti				
Tayra				
Masked Treefrog				
Common (Plumed) Basilisk				
Spinytail Iguana				
Boa Constrictor				
Spectacled Caiman				
American Crocodile				
Common Blue Morpho				

Guests Top 5

