

Costa Rica Birding and Nature Species List | January 5-12, 2026 Pacific Coast Extension January 12-15, 2026 With Naturalist Journeys



Compiled by guide James Petersen with local guide Johan and Gustavo. Our clients included Rosemary, Ed, Brenda, Kate, Cindy, Ben, Steve and Ross.

Everyone met for our first bird walk of the afternoon at Hotel Bougainvillea. After the bird walk which was full of Brown Jays, a Mottled Owl, Red-billed Pigeons and multiple flocks of Crimson-fronted Parakeets. We got an overview of Costa Rica from our guide, Johan. He went over the mountainous terrain of Costa Rica, formed by the mashing together of tectonic plates, cause multiple mountain ranges which has led to the varied habitats and extreme birds, mammal, wildlife diversity that calls this country home (850 + bird species and 200+ mammal species).

We started out the next day making a circuit route from San Jose with the next couple days birding the Talamanca Mountains and working our way down to the Caribbean lowlands. The highlights in the Talamanca range were getting resplendent views of not one but 6 Resplendent Quetzals, 3 early in the morning and additional 3 after breakfast! The cherry on top was wandering on the trails among the towering oaks of the cloud forest, many dripping with arial plants. Here we got to see Collared Redstart, and small mixed species flocks as they moved up or down from the slopes. Some of the feeders we visited here had a fantastic hummingbird show with Talamanca Hummingbird as well as White-throated Mountain Gems.

From here, we made our way to Rancho Naturalista where we got fantastic views of Keel-billed Toucan, Snowcap and Golden-hooded Tanager. We slowly continued working our way down to the Caribbean lowlands, visiting La Selva Biological station with their fantastic Great Green Macaws as well as 2 species of Manakins (Red-capped and White-ruffed) as part of an enormous mixed species flock made up of 15+ different species of birds. We can't forget about the non-birds, with looks at an Eyelash Viper and a massive swarm of Army Ants. From here, a few clients continued onto the extension where we had crab-eating Racoons, 300+ Brown Pelicans, multiple shorebird species and Turquoise-browed Motmot as we took in the wildlife on the Pacific Side.

By the time the trip was finished, we had observed 308 species of birds, 11 species of mammals, 13 species of reptiles and 11 species of insect!

BIRDS 308 species were recorded of which 14 were heard only, 1 were endemic, 33 regional endemic and 1 were introduced. Details are included below.

The eBird link below details the 308 species of birds our group observed during the tour. If you're new to eBird, be sure to click "Show All Details" on the right side of the list to expand the report and reveal where and when each of the birds were seen and how many.

[Costa Rica Birding and Nature | January 5-15, 2026 | eBird Trip Report](#)

Following is a list of the birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians we were fortunate to observe during the trip.

MAMMALS: — (11)

Hoffmann's Two-toed Sloth *Choloepus hoffmanni* — Seen twice throughout the trip, both in the mornings, one at the Pierella Ecological Gardens and the next day while birding La Selva in the morning.

Honduran White Bat *Ectophylla alba* — A fantastic sighting, we were shown a small family group of these small white bats roosting underneath a leaf while at Pierella Ecological Gardens in the afternoon.

Greater Sac-winged Bat *Saccopteryx bilineata* — We had a small group of these bats roosting on the side of the building while at Pierella Ecological Gardens.

Central American Agouti *Dasyprocta punctata* — We only observed this species 3 times, they were most common early in the morning eating the seeds while at Rancho Naturalista.

Variegated Squirrel *Sciurus variegatoides* — Our most common squirrel, seen in multiple places after the first couple of days. We got good looks at this squirrel as it came into numerous feeding stations.

Red-tailed Squirrel *Sciurus granatensis* — This squirrel species with a reddish tail was only observed within the first few days, while at Savegre.

White-throated Capuchin *Cebus capucinus* — We only observed this species of monkey while on the extension. We were able to watch a group work their way towards, moving through the canopy with agility while at Sendero Laguna Meandrica.

Mantled Howler Monkey *Alouatta palliata* — We saw and heard this species multiple times while on both the Caribbean side and the Pacific side (extension) of the trip. Their thunderous roar was a common sound in those areas.

Crab-eating Raccoon *Procyon cancrivorus* — We only observed this species once, while on the boat trip on the Tarcoles River. They were walking on the mudflats on the edge of the mangroves.

White-nosed Coati *Nasua narica* — We observed a family group on our way to the lunch spot on the last day of the main tour. One was also observed the last day of the extension.

Collared Peccary *Pecari tajacu* — A small group of Peccaries was observed foraging and laying in the grass while at La Selva.

Coyote *Canis latrans* — This species was only heard on the extension, while at La Ensenada lodge.

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS: — (13)

Spectacled Caiman *Caiman crocodilus* — We observed this small Caiman while on the Sarapiqui boat tour.

American Crocodile *Crocodylus acutus* — This species was only observed while on the extension. We observed an extremely large individual while on the Tarcoles boat trip.

Black River Turtle *Rhinoclemmys funereal* — We only observed this species once throughout the trip, with the individual spotted on the Sarapiqui boat tour, resting on either a rock or a tree branch.

Emerald Swift *Sceloporus malachiticus* — This all emerald, green lizard was observed while birding at Savegre hotel trails.

Black Spiny-tailed Iguana *Ctenosaura similis* — We only observed this species while on the pacific extension, the common Iguana of the area.

Green Iguana *Iguana iguana* — We observed this massive green Iguana square off with a 2nd one while on the Sarapiqui

river boat trip. We also observed this Iguana on the last day of the extension at our lunch spot.

Green Basilisk *Basiliscus plumifrons* — We observed this all-green lizard that can run on water while at the La Selva Biological Station.

Common Basilisk *Basiliscus basiliscus* — We only observed this brown species of Basilisk while on the extension.

Eyelash Viper *Bothriechis schlegelii* — A fantastic sighting, we observed this bright yellow snake curled up on a tree branch while at the La Selva Biological Station.

Fer-de-lance (Terciopelo) *Bothrops asper* — This venomous snake was observed while right before dinner while at the La Quinta de Sarapiqui lodge.

Costa Rican Coral Snake *Micrurus mosquitensis* — We only observed this species once on the trip, a snake that was found by the Rancho Naturalista staff and shown to us before dinner.

Crowned Tree Frog *Triprion spinosus* — We only observed the tadpole life stage of this species, while on the night hike at Rancho Naturalista. The tadpole was in a piece of bamboo!!

Red-eyed Tree Frog *Agalychnis callidryas* — We only observed this strikingly colored frog once throughout the trip, with it being while at Pierella Ecological Garden.

Strawberry Poison Dart Frog *Oophaga pumilio* — This species was a heard only while spending the morning birding the La Selva Biological Station.

Insects: (11)

Monarch Butterfly *Danaus Plexippus* — This butterfly species was a common sight only in the afternoon while at the Hotel Bougainvillea gardens.

Cream-spotted Tigerwing *Tithorea tarricina* — This species was only seen while birding the Rancho Naturalista trails.

Netcatching Spider *Deinopidae species* — This group of spiders was only seen on the night hike while at Rancho Naturalista. It's a family group made up of multiple species.

Wolf Spider *Lycosidae species* — Another species only seen on the night hike at Rancho Naturalista.

Orange-kneed Taraentla *Brachypelma hamorii* — This large spider was seen hiding under a rock while on the night hike at Rancho Naturalista.

Costa Rican Grass Mantis *Thesprotia insolita* — This species was found while birding the Rancho Naturalista grounds.

Whip Scorpion *Thelphonida species* — A common species on the night hike while at Rancho Naturalista.

Python Millipede *Nyssodesmus python* — We observed this species twice, once while on the night hike at Rancho Naturalista and once while at La Selva Biological Station.

Leafcutter Ants *Formicidae species* — We observed this species throughout the trip, many times having the carefully step over their highways as they brought leaves back to their nest.

Bullet Ant *Paraponera clavata* — We saw one of these large ants while birding La Selva Biological Research Station.

Army Ant *Eciton burchelli* — We witnessed a truly massive swarm of these ants while at La Selva Biological Research Station.