

Southern Costa Rica | Species List

January 25 – February 4, 2018 | Compiled by Carlos Sanchez



With Carlos Sanchez, Willy Alfaro, and 7 participants:
Barbara, Harry, Sue, Steve, Phil, Judith, and Carolyn

(HO) = Distinctive enough to be counted as heard only

(RE) = Regional Endemics

(#) = Number of days encountered in parentheses

Summary

Our Southern Costa Rica route offers the opportunity to explore the southern edge of this amazingly diverse country, starting from the high mountains down to the lush lowland rainforests near the Osa Peninsula. The biogeography of the region is incredible. Due to their long isolation, the highlands host dozens of endemics shared only with Panama, while the lowlands offer many as well due to mountainous barrier. The result is a rich and unique avifauna that we got to really enjoy: Baird's Trogon and Fiery-billed Aracari, Black-cheeked Ant-Tanager and Charming Hummingbird, Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher and Black Guan, and so many more.

This route is also steeped in ornithological history. We paid a visit to the Skutch house at Los Cusingos, where the late ornithologist Alexander Skutch once lived and worked. We also got a small presentation from an Austrian graduate student at Esquinas Lodge, seeing Ochre-bellied Flycatcher and Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner in the hand. All in all, a great trip.

BIRDS (282 species recorded, of which 10 were heard only):

Tinamidae: Tinamous (1)

Great Tinamou *Tinamus major* (HO) (3) — the mournful whistle of this species was a common voice of the early morning chorus at Wilson Botanical Gardens and Esquinas Lodge.

Anatidae: Ducks and Geese (1)

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata* (1) — two seen in flight on the boat trip along the Tarcoles River.

Cracidae: Guans and Chachalacas (4)

Gray-headed Chachalaca *Ortalis cinereiceps* (2) — we saw this species really well at Wilson Botanical Garden, where several were frequenting a fruiting tree near Wilson's house.

Crested Guan *Penelope purpurascens* (4) — one posed for us in a bare tree one morning at Wilson Botanical Garden, showing its large and brilliant red dewlap. We had a couple more sightings at Esquinas Lodge.

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Black Guan *Chamaepetes unicolor* (RE) (1) — we saw a couple individuals on the forest trail at Trogon Lodge. This guan's closest relative is found in the Andes of South America.

Great Curassow *Crax rubra* (2) — several pairs of these incredible birds lived on the lodge grounds of Esquinas Lodge, but our best sighting was of a female crossing the access road mere feet from us!

Odontophoridae: New World Quail (1)

Spotted Wood-Quail *Odontophorus guttatus* (1) — wood-quails are almost always difficult to see, but a covey of this attractively marked species was feeding out in the open at Savegre Lodge.

Podicipedidae: Grebes (1)

Least Grebe *Tachybaptus dominicus* (1) — a trio seen in a roadside pond on the way to Esquinas Lodge from Wilson Botanical Gardens.

Ciconiidae: Storks (1)

Wood Stork *Mycteria americana* (2) — singles seen in flight in the agricultural field outside of Esquinas Lodge and against the setting sun on the Tarcoles River.

Fregatidae: Frigatebirds (1)

Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens* (2) — very common along the length of the Pacific Coast; two individuals were observed bathing in the Tarcoles River on our boat tour there, delicately dipping into the water while remaining in flight.

Phalacrocoracidae: Cormorants (1)

Neotropic Cormorant *Phalacrocorax brasilianus* (1) — a couple dozen observed on the Tarcoles River boat tour.

Anhingidae: Anhingas (1)

Anhinga *Anhinga anhinga* (1) — at least two birds perched with wings spread along the Tarcoles River.

Pelecanidae: Pelicans (1)

Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis* (2) — one seen in the distance from the Mar y Luna Restaurant during lunch and many more at the Tarcoles River mouth.

Ardeidae: Herons and Egrets (10)

Bare-throated Tiger-Heron *Tigrisoma mexicanum* (2) — a juvenile at the cement bridge outside of Esquinas Lodge impressed the group, and we saw a couple adults on the Tarcoles River as well.

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias* (1) — one oddly marked bird at the Rio Baru estuary — this species is a non-breeding winter resident in Costa Rica.

Great Egret *Ardea alba* (3) — a few individuals of this familiar species in the cattle pasture just outside of Esquinas Lodge, with a few more on the Tarcoles River.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula* (2) — six or so perched along the Tarcoles River.

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea* (4) — small numbers of these deep blue herons at Esquinas Lodge, Rio Baru, and Tarcoles River.

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Tricolored Heron *Egretta tricolor* (2) — one in the scope on the Rio Baru estuary with a few more on the Tarcoles River.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* (7) — seen frequently along the road on travel days in the lowlands, with additional sightings of small flocks in the cattle pasture near Esquinas and also the Rio Tarcoles.

Green Heron *Butorides virescens* (4) — nice views of singles at the roadside pond en route to Esquinas Lodge and the large pond on the Riverbend Trail at Esquinas Lodge proper.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron *Nyctanassa violacea* (1) — many birds on the Tarcoles River, where we had great studies of birds of all ages and plumages.

Boat-billed Heron *Cochlearius cochlearius* (1) — a couple birds quietly roosting in the mangroves on the Tarcoles River — this species feeds nocturnally on shrimp and small fish by lunging or scooping the surface of the water with their bills.

Threskiornithidae: Ibis and Spoonbills (2)

White Ibis *Eudocimus albus* (4) — small numbers in the cattle pasture outside Esquinas Lodge, Rio Baru, and Tarcoles River.

Roseate Spoonbill *Platalea ajaja* (1) — several of these lovely pink birds were resting in a mangrove tree on the Tarcoles River.

Cathartidae: New World Vultures (3)

Black Vulture *Corabyps atratus* (9) — widespread and abundant.

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura* (9) — widespread and abundant.

King Vulture *Sarcoramphus papa* (2) — a nice adult soared over the canopy at Esquinas Lodge, and we saw a couple more on a travel day en route to Villa Lapas.

Pandionidae: Osprey (1)

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* (1) — several wintering birds observed on the Tarcoles River tour.

Accipitridae: Hawks, Kites, and Eagles (14)

White-tailed Kite *Elanus leucurus* (1) — one of these elegant “dancing” raptors flew overhead on our first morning at Hotel Bougainvillea

Gray-headed Kite *Leptodon cayanensis* (1) — one soaring in view only briefly at Esquinas Lodge.

Swallow-tailed Kite *Elanoides forficatus* (3) — these graceful raptors were most common in the foothills, with small numbers seen regularly overhead at Wilson Botanical Garden and Mirador del Valle.

Black Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus tyrannus* (1) — one soared low overhead for part of the group on the Riverbend Trail at Esquinas Lodge.

Double-toothed Kite *Harpagus bidentatus* (1) — a pair catching thermals over the forest at Wilson Botanical Garden, seen from the cafeteria balcony!

Plumbeous Kite *Ictinia plumbea* (1) — a couple of these recently arrived migrants on the Tarcoles River, visually very similar to the Mississippi Kite that nests in the United States.

Tiny Hawk *Accipiter superciliosus* (1) — incredible views of this rare raptor perched high on a snag in the garden of Esquinas Lodge. Wow!

Crane Hawk *Geranospiza caerulescens* (1) — we accidentally flushed one of these unusual, long-legged raptors at Carara. It perched in view for only a few seconds before flying off into the forest.

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Common Black Hawk *Buteogallus anthracinus* (1) — we had great views of this crab-eating raptor on the Tarcoles River, where it was being pestered by caracaras.

Roadside Hawk *Rupornis magnirostris* (3) — great views of this small sit-and-wait predator at Wilson Botanical Garden, where a vocal pair was resident.

Gray Hawk *Buteo plagiatus* (1) — what an amazing experience to see one of these small raptors in an aerial dogfight with a Red-tailed Hawk!

Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus* (1) — one sitting on a wire en route to Wilson Botanical Garden.

Short-tailed Hawk *Buteo brachyurus* (2) — a dark morph soaring low together with Swallow-tailed Kites gave us our best views while we were watching the Mirador del Valle feeders.

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis* (5) — common in the Savegre Valley and the seasonally dry habitats north of the Tarcoles River.

Rallidae: Rails, Crakes, and Coots (3)

White-throated Crake *Laterallus albigularis* (1) — a calling bird in tall grass near Esquinas Lodge eventually flushed for one trip participant when we were not looking!

Gray-cowled Wood-Rail *Aramides cajaneus* (4) — a few of these large, chicken-sized rails lived on the grounds of Esquinas Lodge and the large pond on the Riverbend Trail.

Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio martinica* (1) — one in the cattle pasture near Esquinas Lodge.

Burhinidae: Thick-knees (1)

Double-striped Thick-knee *Burhinus bistriatus* (1) — excited to see a pair of these large shorebirds standing in a dry field on our last afternoon of birding.

Charadriidae: Plovers and Lapwings (2)

Black-bellied Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* (1) — one in the Rio Baru estuary.

Southern Lapwing *Vanellus chilensis* (2) — a recent invader from South America that has spread with deforestation, we scoped a pair in the Esquinas cattle pasture and another at Rio Baru.

Jacanidae: Jacanas (1)

Northern Jacana *Jacana spinosa* (2) — a couple of these long-toed lily trotters in the wet cattle pasture near Esquinas Lodge.

Scolopacidae: Sandpipers and Allies (4)

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* (1) — a single bird at the Rio Baru stop near Dominical, with a dozen or more seen well on the Rio Tarcoles boat tour.

Wilson's Snipe *Gallinago delicata* (1) — flushed late one afternoon in the cattle pasture near Esquinas Lodge. An uncommon bird in Costa Rica!

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularia* (1) — so many of them on the Rio Tarcoles boat tour! Dozens perched on floating limbs and tree roots with many more flying by the boat.

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca* (1) — a single bird at the Rio Baru stop.

Laridae: Gulls and Terns (2)

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Royal Tern *Thalasseus maximus* (2) — the common tern whenever we got near the coast, with a large flock loafing on the water's edge at Rio Baru.

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis* (1) — good numbers of these mixed in with the Royal Terns at Rio Baru.

Columbidae: Pigeons and Doves (12)

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia* (4) — unavoidable at all cities and towns.

Pale-vented Pigeon *Patagioenas cayennensis* (1) — nice numbers of these at Mar y Luna Restaurant, including a bird sitting on a nest. This is a pigeon of lowland secondary and disturbed habitats.

Scaled Pigeon *Patagioenas speciosa* (1) — one of these lovely pigeons perched in a bare tree at Wilson Botanical Garden was a special treat.

Red-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas flavirostris* (2) — present in small numbers around Hotel Bougainvillea.

Band-tailed Pigeon *Patagioenas fasciata* (1) — not as numerous as they can be, but we did see a perched bird really well at Savegre Lodge while most of the group watched the wood-quail.

Short-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas nigrirostris* (4) — conspicuous at Esquinas Lodge where we even got to see a pair courting and mating one afternoon.

Inca Dove *Columbina inca* (1) — a pair of these diminutive little doves in the dry fields north of the Rio Tarcoles, walking daintily in someone's driveway.

Ruddy Ground-Dove *Columbina talpacoti* (2) — seen a few times in the wet pastures just outside of Esquinas Lodge.

Blue Ground-Dove *Claravis pretiosa* (1) — heard often but not seen well by most — just a quick flyby overhead at Esquinas Lodge.

White-tipped Dove *Leptotila verreauxi* (6) — a common, plump dove in most habitats, including Hotel Bougainvillea, Mirador del Valle, and Esquinas Lodge.

Gray-chested Dove *Leptotila cassinii* (1) — a single bird on a forest trail at Esquinas Lodge for the group.

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica* (4) — we saw this familiar species really well at Hotel Bougainvillea on our first morning, with a few sightings elsewhere.

Cuculidae: Cuckoos (3)

Smooth-billed Ani *Crotophaga ani* (3) — a couple seen in a grassy field on the way to Esquinas Lodge with many more seen near Esquinas Lodge itself.

Groove-billed Ani *Crotophaga sulcirostris* (1) — a small family group in the dry fields north of Rio Tarcoles on our last afternoon.

Squirrel Cuckoo *Piaya cayana* (5) — relatively common in the foothills and lowland sites of this tour, such as Esquinas Lodge and Los Cusingos.

Strigidae: Owls (2)

Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl *Glaucidium brasilianum* (1) — great views of this feisty little owl just before boarding the boat at Rio Tarcoles.

Mottled Owl *Ciccaba virgata* (HO) — heard just outside our rooms at Wilson Botanical Gardens.

Caprimulgidae: Nighthawks and Nightjars (1)

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Common Pauraque *Nyctidromus albicollis* (1) — seen by a few on their pre-dawn walk to the main building of Villa Lapas.

Apodidae: Swifts (3)

White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris* (3) — common in good numbers in the highlands of Cerro de la Muerte and Savegre, always high in the sky like a swarm of black boomerangs.

Vaux's Swift *Chaetura vauxi* (1) — small numbers at Wilson Botanical Gardens from the cafeteria balcony, clearly seeing the darker rump pattern relative to the following species.

Costa Rican Swift *Chaetura fumosa* (RE) (1) — definitively seen on one day, when a group of swifts flew in low over the cattle pasture near Esquinas Lodge, showing us their nearly white rump pattern.

Trochilidae: Hummingbirds (19)

Band-tailed Barbthroat *Threnetes ruckeri* (1) — this uncommon hummingbird was visiting a cluster of *Heliconia* sp. only sporadically at Esquinas Lodge

Green Hermit *Phaethornis guy* (2) — a couple sightings at Wilson Botanical Gardens, including near the Wilson's house while we waited for hummingbirds to visit the Verbena.

Long-billed Hermit *Phaethornis longirostris* (5) — regular in the *Heliconia* sp. planted around Esquinas Lodge.

Stripe-throated Hermit *Phaethornis striigularis* (5) — this smallest of Costa Rican hermits was a regular in small numbers around Wilson Botanical Garden and Esquinas Lodge.

Lesser Violetear *Colibri cyanotus* (3) — easy to see in the feeders outside the Paraiso Quetzal Lodge Restaurant, where they managed to bully all other species. Mexican and Lesser Violetear were formally lumped together as Green Violetear.

Purple-crowned Fairy *Heliophryx barroti* (4) — this graceful hummingbird with the showy white tail markings was a regular at flowering bushes at Wilson Botanical Garden and Esquinas Lodge (but never at feeders!).

Talamanca Hummingbird *Eugenes spectabilis* (RE) (3) — not uncommon in highland sites such as Paraiso Quetzal Lodge, Savegre Lodge and Trogon Lodge. Rivoli's Hummingbird and Talamanca Hummingbird were formerly lumped together as Magnificent Hummingbird.

Fiery-throated Hummingbird *Panterpe insignis* (RE) (1) — several of these multi-colored glittering jewels at the feeders of Paraiso Quetzal Lodge.

White-throated Mountain-gem *Lampornis castaneiventris* (3) — small numbers (mostly females) at Savegre and Trogon Lodge.

Volcano Hummingbird *Selasphorus flammula* (RE) (3) — these tiny little hummers were common at Trogon Lodge, but we also saw them at Paraiso Quetzal and the Buenavista communication towers. The subspecies along this route has a lavender gorget.

Violet-headed Hummingbird *Klais guimeti* (2) — a couple nice sightings at Esquinas Lodge in the Verbena.

Scaly-breasted Hummingbird *Phaeochroa cuvierii* (2) — we saw this large and dull hummingbird in a productive flowering tree right outside the Wilson's house.

Crowned Woodnymph *Thalurania colombica* (2) — a couple sightings around Esquinas Lodge, including one right by the restaurant.

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Stripe-tailed Hummingbird *Eupherusa eximia* (1) — it played hard to get in the garden of Savegre Lodge, but we eventually all got nice looks of this distinctive hummingbird.

White-tailed Emerald *Elvira chionura* (RE) (2) — a couple sightings of this uncommon regional endemic at Wilson Botanical Garden, including one that came to a flowering bottlebrush near the banana feeder.

Charming Hummingbird *Amazilia decora* (RE) (5) — a few at Wilson Botanical Garden, but we got multiple studies on why this bird is so “charming” at Esquinas Lodge.

Mangrove Hummingbird *Amazilia boucardi* (RE) (1) — two on the Rio Tarcoles boat tour — an endangered hummingbird endemic to mangroves on the west coast of Costa Rica, where it specializes on nectar from the flowers of the tea mangrove *Pelluciera rhizophorae*.

Rufous-tailed Hummingbird *Amazilia tzactl* (7) — recorded daily except at true highland sites such as Trogon Lodge and Savegre. A truly adaptable and successful hummingbird!

Blue-throated Goldentail *Hylocharis eliciae* (1) — one feeding in a flowering tree over the trail at Carara National Park, showing off its brilliant red bill to nice effect.

Trogonidae: Trogons (5)

Resplendent Quetzal *Pharomachrus mocinno* (1) — a female came to a fruiting Aguacatillo tree right by the road one morning. The males are arguably the most beautiful birds in the world.

Slaty-tailed Trogon *Trogon massena* (2) — silhouette views at Esquinas Lodge were vastly improved by a male right by the restaurant at Villa Lapas.

Black-headed Trogon *Trogon melanocephalus* (1) — one along the trail at Carara National Park was a nice find, here at the southern edge of its range.

Baird's Trogon *Trogon bairdii* (RE) (1) — great views of a brilliant male at Carara, where the trogons really put on a show for us on our last morning.

Gartered Trogon *Trogon caligatus* (3) — the most commonly recorded trogon, but we got to see them really well at Carara National Park where the floodgates really opened for this colorful family.

Momotidae: Motmots (3)

Lesson's Motmot *Momotus lessonii* (8) — this colorful and charismatic bird was recorded on almost every day of the trip, winning the hearts of a slim majority of trip participants. **VOTED BIRD OF THE TRIP!**

Turquoise-browed Motmot *Eumomota superciliosa* (1) — a brief foray into the drier, more Mexican-type habitats north of Rio Tarcoles gave us several excellent new sightings, including this exquisite species. **VOTED BIRD OF THE TRIP!**

Alcedinidae: Kingfishers (1)

Green Kingfisher *Chloroceryle americana* (2) — seen in a roadside pond on the way to Esquinas Lodge, as well as on the Rio Tarcoles boat tour.

Bucconidae: Puffbirds (1)

White-whiskered Puffbird *Malacoptila panamensis* (1) — one of these sedentary birds gave away its presence by changing branches at Carara National Park.

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Galbulidae: Jacamars (1)

Rufous-tailed Jacamar *Galbula ruficauda* (1) — seen by some along the Riverbend Trail at Esquinas Lodge.

Ramphastidae: Toucans (2)

Fiery-billed Aracari *Pteroglossus frantzii* (RE) (3) — these colorful little toucans were common around Esquinas Lodge, sometimes foraging only mere feet from the ground.

Yellow-throated Toucan *Ramphastos ambiguus* (7) — commonly heard and seen at Wilson Botanical Gardens and Esquinas Lodge. Formerly known as Chestnut-mandibled Toucan.

Picidae: Woodpeckers (10)

Olivaceous Piculet *Picumnus olivaceus* (2) — seen a couple times in mixed feeding flocks at Wilson Botanical Gardens. It is the smallest woodpecker species in North America by a good margin — tiny!

Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus* (3) — common at highland mountain sites, especially around feeders at Miriam's Restaurant and Savegre Lodge.

Golden-naped Woodpecker *Melanerpes chrysauchen* (RE) (2) — a couple observations around Esquinas Lodge.

Red-crowned Woodpecker *Melanerpes rubricapillus* (4) — the most common woodpecker at Wilson Botanical Garden and Esquinas Lodge, looking and sounding much like a Red-bellied Woodpecker from the eastern USA.

Hoffmann's Woodpecker *Melanerpes hoffmannii* (RE) (3) — common at Hotel Bougainvillea, where the entire group got good looks.

Hairy Woodpecker *Picoides villosus* (2) — several individuals at Paraiso Quetzal Lodge gave us good looks on a forest trail. The subspecies found in these mountains is considerably sootier than the clean black-and-white birds of the eastern USA.

Rufous-winged Woodpecker *Veniliornis simplex* (RE) (2) — amazing view of a nesting bird at Esquinas Lodge along the Riverbend Trail, where we saw both the male and female.

Golden-olive Woodpecker *Colaptes rubiginosus* (2) — seen oh-so-well at Wilson Botanical Garden, where a bird was feeding so close, you could almost reach out and touch it.

Lineated Woodpecker *Dryocopus lineatus* (1) — scope views of a male at a cattle pasture near Esquinas Lodge — a close relative of Pileated Woodpecker.

Pale-billed Woodpecker *Campephilus guatemalensis* (HO) (1) — we heard the double-knock multiple times while exploring the trail system at Carara National Park.

Falconidae: Falcons and Caracaras (4)

Collared Forest-Falcon *Micrastur semitorquatus* (HO) (1) — we heard this shy species at close range at Carara National Park.

Crested Caracara *Caracara cheriway* (2) — our best sighting was on the Rio Tarcoles, where two birds were attempting to steal food from a Common Black Hawk.

Yellow-headed Caracara *Milvago chimachima* (7) — we saw this scavenger regularly in small numbers throughout our route except at high mountain sites.

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Laughing Falcon *Herpetotheres cachinnans* (4) — after hearing this attractive falcon at Wilson Botanical Garden and Esquinas Lodge almost every morning, some of the group finally laid eyes on this snake-hunter at Villa Lapas.

Psittacidae: Parrots (11)

Orange-chinned Parakeet *Brotogeris jugularis* (2) — really nice perched views of this little green parakeet while eating lunch at Restaurant Mar y Luna.

Brown-hooded Parrot *Pyrilia haematotis* (1) — a flock of four perched in a bare tree near the cafeteria balcony at Wilson Botanical Garden — not usually easy to see perched, so we were quite lucky!

Blue-headed Parrot *Pionus menstruus* (2) — small numbers around Wilson Botanical Garden, including a perched individual seen well through the scope.

White-crowned Parrot *Pionus senilis* (2) — flocks were common overhead at Wilson Botanical Garden, and we even got to see a few perched near the cafeteria one morning.

Red-lored Parrot *Amazona autumnalis* (3) — common around Esquinas Lodge, including really close ones in fruiting trees along the entrance road.

Yellow-naped Parrot *Amazona auropalliata* (1) — flocks were common in the mangroves along the Tarcoles River, a regional stronghold for this Vulnerable species.

White-fronted Parrot *Amazona albifrons* (2) — seen nicely one morning at Hotel Bougainvillea, a recent colonist into the Central Valley of San José.

Mealy Parrot *Amazona farinosa* (2) — small numbers around Esquinas Lodge, the largest *Amazona* parrot in Central America.

Sulphur-winged Parakeet *Pyrrhura hoffmanni* (RE) (1) — small flocks were regular overhead at Savegre Mountain Lodge, where their distinctive yellow underwings were diagnostic even from a great distance.

Scarlet Macaw *Ara macao* (2) — these large and spectacular macaws were delightfully common around the Rio Tarcoles and Carara, giving us synchronized flybys and several perched views.

Crimson-fronted Parakeet *Psittacara finschi* (RE) — abundant in large flocks at Wilson Botanical Garden, Hotel Bougainvillea and Esquinas Lodge

Thamnophilidae: Antbirds (6)

Barred Antshrike *Thamnophilus doliatus* (1) — lovely view of both the black-and-white male and rufescent female along the Meandrica Trail at Carara.

Black-hooded Antshrike *Thamnophilus bridgesi* (RE) (2) — we saw this blackish antshrike really well both at Esquinas and Carara National Park, a range-restricted endemic to Costa Rica and Panama.

Dot-winged Antwren *Microrhopias quixensis* (1) — a vocal pair gave brief views at Esquinas Lodge right after seeing the Rufous-tailed Jacamar.

Dusky Antbird *Cercomacroides tyrannina* (1) — a pair played hard to get on the Meandrica Trail at Carara National Park, but we all eventually got good views of the dusky male and more rufous female.

Chestnut-backed Antbird *Poliocrania exsul* (HO) (2) — often heard but never seen at Esquinas Lodge.

Bicolored Antbird *Gymnopithys bicolor* (1) — stellar performance from a pair at Los Cusingos.

Rhinocryptidae: Tapaculos (1)

Silvery-fronted Tapaculo *Scytalopus argentifrons* (HO) (1) — several heard on a quiet road above Paraiso Quetzal Lodge.

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Furnariidae: Ovenbirds (7)

Tawny-winged Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla anabatina* (2) — observed twice: one at Los Cusingos and another at Esquinas Lodge.

Wedge-billed Woodcreeper *Glyphorhynchus spirurus* (2) — we saw this tiniest of woodcreepers a couple times in mixed feeding flocks at Esquinas Lodge.

Cocoa Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus susurrans* (2) — heard and seen well at Esquinas Lodge.

Black-striped Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus lachrymosus* (1) — we saw this large and beautifully patterned woodcreeper on the Riverbend Trail at Esquinas Lodge, where it was associating in a mixed feeding flock that included many other great birds.

Streak-headed Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes souleyetii* (5) — the default woodcreeper of the lowlands.

Spot-crowned Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes affinis* (1) — seen well on the trail at Paraiso Quetzal Lodge.

Ruddy Treerunner *Margarornis rubiginosus* (RE) (2) — a regular in mixed feeding flocks at Paraiso Quetzal Lodge and Savegre Mountain Lodge.

Tyrannidae: Tyrant Flycatchers (29)

Southern Beardless-Tyrannulet *Camptostoma obsoletum* (2) — we observed this spritely little flycatcher a couple times in the scrubby growth just outside Esquinas Lodge.

Yellow-bellied Elaenia *Elaenia flavogaster* (3) — the shrill dawn call of this species was a common component of the dawn chorus at Wilson Botanical Garden, and a resident pair showed well in a small tree near the restaurant.

Mountain Elaenia *Elaenia frantzii* (2) — a medium-sized, very plain flycatcher of the highlands around Miriam's Restaurant and Trogon Lodge.

Torrent Tyrannulet *Serpophaga cinerea* (2) — nicely spotted for the entire group as we were leaving Trogon Lodge, feeding right on the lawn flanking the entrance road.

Olive-striped Flycatcher *Mionectes olivaceus* (1) — seen only once in a mixed feeding flock at Paraiso Quetzal Lodge.

Paltry Tyrannulet *Zimmerius vilissimus* (2) — a common little tyrant in the Wilson Botanical Gardens.

Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant *Lophotriccus pileatus* (1) — although often heard, this is not the easiest species to see, so very happy that we had a cooperative bird at Wilson Botanical Garden.

Northern Bentbill *Oncostoma cinereigulare* (1) — beautifully observed on the Meandrica Trail at Carara National Park, where we got close studies of the bizarre bill shape.

Common Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum cinereum* (4) — this little sprite was not too uncommon at all the foothill and lowland sites we visited, usually in pairs.

Yellow-olive Flycatcher *Tolmomyias sulphurescens* (1) — one of these non-descript flycatchers at Wilson Botanical Garden.

Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher *Terentotriccus erythrurus* (1) — could not ask for better views of this amazing little flycatcher at Carara National Park. The size, behavior, and feeding strategy reminds me of some of the Asian flycatchers.

Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher *Myiobius sulphureipygius* (2) — a nice case of convergent evolution with American Redstart, this species also fans its tail and feeds energetically in the pursuit of insects. Seen only at Esquinas Lodge.

Tufted Flycatcher *Mitrephanes phaeocercus* (1) — one on the forest trail at Paraiso Quetzal Lodge.

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Tropical Pewee *Contopus cinereus* (1) — nicely pointed out in the mangrove forest on the Rio Tarcoles boat tour.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher *Empidonax flaviventris* (1) — observed at Wilson Botanical Garden. Very cool to see it in such tropical surroundings, as it breeds in boreal bogs in the far north during the short summer.

Yellowish Flycatcher *Empidonax flavescens* (1) — several seen at close range on our walk at Savegre.

Black-capped Flycatcher *Empidonax atriceps* (RE) (2) — the whole group got onto this one on the forest trail at Paraiso Quetzal Lodge, working low in a mixed feeding flock.

Bright-rumped Attila *Attila spadiceus* (2) — heard many times at Esquinas Lodge, but some of us got to see a feisty pair on the Riverbend Trail while trying to locate a jacamar.

Dusky-capped Flycatcher *Myiarchus tuberculifer* (1) — we saw only a pair of these at Wilson Botanical Garden in a mixed feeding flock — usually a common species of wet forests in the Neotropics.

Panama Flycatcher *Myiarchus panamensis* (1) — one of these mangrove specialists showed itself on the Rio Tarcoles boat tour.

Great Crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus crinitus* (2) — seen in a fruiting tree along the entrance road to Esquinas one afternoon. A familiar flycatcher of eastern forests in the USA.

Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus* (7) — common and conspicuous at all foothill and lowland sites.

Boat-billed Flycatcher *Megarynchus pitangua* (2) — after some initial mediocre views at Wilson Botanical Garden, we finally caught up with this species on our morning at Villa Lapas.

Social Flycatcher *Myiozetetes similis* (7) — this smaller-billed cousin of the kiskadee was common and conspicuous at all foothill and lowland sites.

Gray-capped Flycatcher *Myiozetetes granadensis* (5) — best views were at Esquinas Lodge where pairs would often perch really low right by the cabins.

Streaked Flycatcher *Myiodynastes maculatus* (2) — a pair on the entrance road to Esquinas Lodge and another at Villa Lapas. Very similar in appearance to Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher, which breeds in Arizona.

Piratic Flycatcher *Legatus leucophaeus* (1) — one high in a tree at Esquinas Lodge was a recent arrival.

Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus* (8) — common and widespread almost everywhere.

Fork-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus savanna* (2) — a pair in the scope at the cattle pasture near Esquinas.

Pipridae: Manakins (2)

Orange-collared Manakin *Manacus aurantiacus* (RE) (6) — we heard a lek at Los Cusingos, saw many females at Esquinas Lodge, and eventually got to see brilliant fireball orange males on our last morning at Esquinas and Carara National Park.

Red-capped Manakin *Ceratopipra mentalis* (1) — the Hunters saw a male of this species at Esquinas while exploring on their own.

Tityridae: Tityras and Becards (4)

Black-crowned Tityra *Tityra inquisitor* (1) — one at the pond at Esquinas Lodge, sharing a *Cecropia* tree with a Golden-naped Woodpecker.

Masked Tityra *Tityra semifasciata* (1) — a pair of these mostly white birds in the tall tree near the restaurant at Wilson Botanical Garden.

White-winged Becard *Pachyramphus polychopterus* (1) — one on the Meandrica Trail at Carara.

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Rose-throated Becard *Pachyramphus aglaiae* (3) — the most common becard of the area by far, recorded at both Wilson Botanical Garden and Esquinas. Here, represented by a subspecies that lacks the pink throat.

Vireonidae: Vireos (5)

Rufous-browed Peppershrike *Cyclarhis gujanensis* (HO) (1) — heard only at Hotel Bougainvillea.

Lesser Greenlet *Pachysylvia decurtate* (4) — this drab little bird was common but inconspicuous in mixed feeding flocks throughout the lowlands, but the group really got to connect with this bird on the Meandrica Trail at Carara National Park.

Yellow-throated Vireo *Vireo flavifrons* (4) — a common winter visitor throughout the foothills and lowlands.

Yellow-winged Vireo *Vireo carmioli* (RE) (2) — always in mixed feeding flocks at Paraiso Quetzal Lodge and Savegre.

Philadelphia Vireo *Vireo philadelphicus* (1) — seemed very common at Hotel Bougainvillea but nowhere else.

Corvidae: Jays and Crows (1)

Brown Jay *Psilorhinus morio* (3) — present at Hotel Bougainvillea and Villa Lapas in raucous family parties, often nicknamed the “forest police” by the locals.

Hirundinidae: Swallows and Martins (6)

Blue-and-white Swallow *Pygochelidon cyanoleuca* (5) — the default swallow of the highlands.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis* (1) — seen on the Rio Tarcoles boat tour.

Southern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis* (1) — a bunch perched on a wire above the roadside pond on the way to Esquinas Lodge.

Gray-breasted Martin *Progne chalybea* (4) — nice studies near the boat dock at Restaurant Mar y Luna, where they were nesting in the roof of a gazebo-like structure.

Mangrove Swallow *Tachycineta albilinea* (1) — abundant along the Rio Tarcoles, even nesting in the life jackets of our tour boat!

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* (2) — numerous around Carara and Rio Tarcoles, feeding gracefully above the fields.

Troglodytidae: Wrens (8)

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon* (5) — common around the cabins at lodges outside the highlands.

Ochraceous Wren *Troglodytes ochraceus* (RE) (1) — one in a mixed feeding flock at Savegre, traipsing through mossy branches.

Rufous-naped Wren *Campylorhynchus rufinucha* (2) — great views of these big and colorful wrens at Hotel Bougainvillea.

Black-bellied Wren *Pheugopedius fasciatoventris* (RE) (HO) (1) — heard at the beginning of the Ocelot Trail at Esquinas, but they would not show themselves.

Rufous-breasted Wren *Pheugopedius rutilus* (1) — seen by Phil at Wilson Botanical Garden.

Isthmian Wren *Cantorchilus elutus* (RE) (1) — while we were waiting for the crane to come out near Esquinas, we saw this mostly brown, large wren. A recent split from the old “Plain Wren.”

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Riverside Wren *Cantorchilus semibadius* (RE) (4) — this beautifully patterned wren was very common by voice at Wilson Botanical Garden and Esquinas and most eventually got to see it well.

Gray-breasted Wood-Wren *Henicorhina leucophrys* (1) — came in close to the veranda at Savegre while we were waiting for lunch to be served. Nice!

Poliptilidae: Gnatcatchers (2)

Long-billed Gnatwren *Ramphocaenus melanurus* (HO) (1) — heard only at Carara.

Tropical Gnatcatcher *Poliptila plumbea* (1) — seen once at Esquinas Lodge.

Turdidae: Thrushes (9)

Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus gracilirostris* (RE) (2) — the whole group saw this one up close and personal at Paraiso Quetzal Lodge on their forest trail.

Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus aurantiirostris* (HO) (1) — only heard at Wilson Botanical Garden one morning.

Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus frantzii* (1) — one very tame individual hopping along the forest path at Savegre Lodge.

Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus* (2) — great views at the Mirador Valle del General feeders while we sipped on coffee. We also saw a couple in a fruiting *Ficus* tree on the entrance road to Esquinas.

Wood Thrush *Hylocichla mustelina* (1) — great views along the edge of a decorative planting at Hotel Bougainvillea.

Sooty Thrush *Turdus nigrescens* (RE) (2) — very common around Trogon Lodge on our first afternoon, as well as at the feeder at Miriam's Café. Looks very much like a pale-eyed Eurasian Blackbird.

Mountain Thrush *Turdus plebejus* (3) — abundant in the Savegre Valley, especially around Trogon Lodge and the road above it.

Clay-colored Thrush *Turdus grayi* (8) — the national bird of Costa Rica sure was common!

White-throated Thrush *Turdus assimilis* (2) — brief views at Wilson but much better views in the fruiting *Ficus* on the entrance road to Esquinas.

Mimidae: Mockingbirds (1)

Tropical Mockingbird *Mimus gilvus* (1) — two came into the bananas at the Mirador Valle del General feeders. A recent colonist that has spread into Costa Rica with deforestation.

Ptilonotidae: Silky-flycatchers (1)

Long-tailed Silky-flycatcher *Ptilonotus caudatus* (RE) (2) — delightfully common and conspicuous in the gardens around Savegre Mountain Lodge — a truly wonderful bird.

Parulidae: Wood-Warblers (18)

Northern Waterthrush *Parkesia noveboracensis* (1) — seen well along the river at Villa Lapas.

Golden-winged Warbler *Vermivora chrysoptera* (1) — one in a mixed feeding flock at Savegre. This winter visitor is in serious decline due to interbreeding with Blue-winged Warbler in the USA.

Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia* (4) — not uncommon in mixed feeding flocks throughout.

Prothonotary Warbler *Protonotaria citrea* (1) — a gorgeous individual in the Rio Tarcoles mangroves.

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Flame-throated Warbler *Oreothlypis gutturalis* (RE) (1) — seen at close range on the waterfall trail at Savegre Mountain Lodge.

Tennessee Warbler *Oreothlypis peregrine* (7) — seemed common everywhere but especially so in the highlands around Savegre and Trogon Lodge.

American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla* (2) — seen only a couple times at Wilson Botanical Garden.

Tropical Parula *Setophaga pitiayumi* (1) — seen once around Carara.

Blackburnian Warbler *Setophaga fusca* (2) — a couple in mixed feeding flocks at Wilson Botanical Garden. Most Blackburnian Warblers actually migrate further south into the Andes to spend the winter.

Yellow Warbler *Setophaga petechia* (2) — singles on the Rio Tarcoles boat tour and Meandrica Trail at Carara. “Mangrove” Yellow Warbler is arguably a good split, although there is extreme variation in the amount of chestnut on the head in all the different populations.

Chestnut-sided Warbler *Setophaga pensylvanica* (6) — a really common winter visitor to the foothills and lowlands of Costa Rica.

Black-throated Green Warbler *Setophaga virens* (2) — really nice views of a female at Paraiso Quetzal.

Rufous-capped Warbler *Basileuterus rufifrons* (1) — one in the garden of Hotel Bougainvillea.

Black-cheeked Warbler *Basileuterus melanogenys* (RE) (3) — seen really well at Paraiso Quetzal Lodge on the forest trail with additional sightings in the Savegre Valley.

Buff-rumped Warbler *Myiothlypis fulvicauda* (2) — great views at Esquinas Lodge and Villa Lapas, and the explosive song was a common background sound of the early morning.

Wilson’s Warbler *Cardellina canadensis* (5) — incredibly common in the highlands.

Slate-throated Redstart *Myioborus miniatus* (1) — several birds eventually gave us good views at Wilson Botanical Garden one morning.

Collared Redstart *Myioborus torquatus* (RE) (3) — these charming and friendly little birds were very common in the highlands.

Thraupidae: Tanagers and Allies (20)

Gray-headed Tanager *Eucometis penicillate* (1) — a few birds at the mini-ant swarm at the Skutch House. These unusual tanagers often attend army ant swarms.

White-lined Tanager *Tachyphonus rufus* (1) — a flock of these mostly black tanagers right at the entrance to the Meandrica Trail at Carara.

White-throated Shrike-Tanager *Lanio leucothorax* (RE) (1) — one in a mixed feeding flock on the Riverbend Trail kept distracting us while we tried to locate the Black-cheeked Ant-Tanagers.

Cherrie’s Tanager *Ramphocelus costaricensis* (RE) (6) — very common and conspicuous once we left the highlands, but the flaming red rump made it such a pretty one.

Blue-gray Tanager *Thraupis episcopus* (9) — the standard tanager at all sites, usually away from closed forest.

Palm Tanager *Thraupis palmarum* (5) — the more drab, lowland cousin of the Blue-gray but equally common in open habitats once we left the highlands.

Speckled Tanager *Ixothraupis guttate* (2) — small groups of these brightly colored tanagers were regular at Mirador Valle del General and Skutch house banana feeders.

Golden-hooded Tanager *Tangara larvata* (5) — these exquisite birds were regular in smaller numbers around Wilson Botanical Garden, Esquinas Lodge, and the Meandrica Trail at Carara.

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Bay-headed Tanager *Tangara gyrola* (4) — our best views were at the banana feeders at Wilson Botanical Garden, although we also saw it at Los Cusingos and Esquinas.

Silver-throated Tanager *Tangara icterocephala* (4) — the most common small tanager of this route, present in good numbers throughout except in true lowland sites.

Scarlet-thighed Dacnis *Dacnis venusta* (3) — the electric colors of this small songbird wowed the group at the Wilson Botanical Garden canopy tower.

Shining Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes lucidus* (1) — a nice male played hide-and-seek with us at the parking lot of Esquinas Lodge on our morning walk.

Red-legged Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes cyaneus* (3) — a scoped female at Esquinas and another at Carara.

Green Honeycreeper *Chlorophanes spiza* (4) — often at the feeders in the morning at Wilson Botanical Garden, and we also saw them a few times at Esquinas Lodge.

Slaty Flowerpiercer *Diglossa plumbea* (RE) (3) — these little nectar thieves were one of the most common songbirds in the highlands.

Variable Seedeater *Sporophila corvina* (7) — present every morning at the feeders at Wilson Botanical Garden, and we ran into a nice flock in the cattle pasture outside Esquinas.

Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola* (6) — common at Wilson Botanical Garden and Esquinas, often in small flowering shrubs.

Buff-throated Saltator *Saltator maximus* (7) — these hulking tanagers were common in the lowlands, with especially good looks at the Wilson Botanical Garden feeders.

Grayish Saltator *Saltator coerulescens* (2) — seen only at Hotel Bougainvillea, where there always seemed to be a few around.

Streaked Saltator *Saltator striatipectus* (2) — a regular at the banana feeder at Wilson Botanical Garden.

Emberizidae: Sparrows (9)

Sooty-capped Chlorospingus *Chlorospingus pileatus* (RE) (3) — common in the highlands, where they often moved around in good-sized flocks.

Common Chlorospingus *Chlorospingus flavopectus* (2) — common but not very numerous at Wilson Botanical Garden. This and the preceding species were formerly known as Bush-Tanagers until DNA research showed their true affinities.

Black-striped Sparrow *Arremonops conirostris* (3) — we saw this big, chunky sparrow at Wilson Botanical Garden and Esquinas Lodge.

Orange-billed Sparrow *Arremon aurantirostris* (5) — this brightly colored sparrow impressed many in the group at Wilson Botanical Garden and Esquinas Lodge. The bill is a bright carrot orange.

Volcano Junco *Junco vulcani* (RE) (1) — a few of these “angry” birds at Cerro Buenavista near the communication towers.

Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis* (6) — the “house sparrow” of Costa Rica, becoming increasingly less common as one drops down in elevation.

Large-footed Finch *Pezopetes capitalis* (RE) (3) — our first one was at Paraiso Quetzal Lodge under the restaurant building, and we saw several more on the beautifully landscaped grounds of Trogon Lodge.

White-eared Ground-Sparrow *Melospiza leucotis* (2) — this sparrow, with its beautiful facial pattern, showed itself a couple times at Hotel Bougainvillea.

Yellow-thighed Finch *Pselliophorus tibialis* (RE) (3) — regular in the highlands, with our best views at the Miriam’s Café feeders.

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Cardinalidae: Grosbeaks and Buntings (6)

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra* (7) — regular in small numbers at all sites along our route.

Flame-colored Tanager *Piranga bidentate* (3) — common in the highlands, with our best views at the Miriam's Café feeders.

Black-cheeked Ant-Tanager *Habia atrimaxillaris* (RE) (1) — a small, intrepid group tried again for this species on the Riverbend Trail, and we succeeded! A few noisy birds showed well in a fast-moving feeding flock that also included a shrike-tanager and Black-striped Woodcreeper.

Black-thighed Grosbeak *Pheucticus tibialis* (RE) (1) — this uncommon, distant relative of Rose-breasted and Black-headed Grosbeak was a great find on the forest trails at Savegre.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus* (1) — the Hunters and Phil saw two at Bougainvillea.

Blue-black Grosbeak *Cyanoloxia cyanooides* (1) — heard singing but only briefly seen at Esquinas.

Icteridae: Blackbirds and Orioles (7)

Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna* (1) — we flushed a couple in the dry fields north of Tarcoles.

Red-breasted Meadowlark *Sturnella militaris* (1) — a nice male singing in the scope at the cattle pasture near Esquinas Lodge.

Scarlet-rumped Cacique *Cacicus uropygialis* (2) — a flock at Esquinas Lodge gave us great views, as they fed rather low in a large tree.

Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula* (6) — one of the most common winter visitors in Costa Rica, present throughout at all sites.

Bronzed Cowbird *Molothrus aeneus* (1) — a couple flybys at the bridge on our way out of Esquinas.

Melodious Blackbird *Dives dives* (2) — nice views of these uniformly black birds at Hotel Bougainvillea.

Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus* (7) — common along the road on our travel days and abundant in the cattle pasture and secondary growth outside of Esquinas Lodge.

Fringillidae: Euphonias and Finches (6)

Golden-browed Chlorophonia *Chlorophonia callophrys* (RE) (1) — one of these verdant jewels in a mixed feeding flock at Savegre.

Yellow-crowned Euphonia *Euphonia luteicapilla* (RE) (1) — a singing male posed briefly at the Meandrica Trail.

Thick-billed Euphonia *Euphonia lanirostris* (3) — numerous at the feeders and around the gardens at Wilson Botanical Gardens.

Yellow-throated Euphonia *Euphonia hirundinacea* (1) — one on the Meandrica Trail.

Spot-crowned Euphonia *Euphonia imitans* (RE) (4) — the most common euphonia throughout the foothills and lowlands, with excellent views at Los Cusingos, Esquinas, and Wilson Botanical Gardens. This euphonia can only be found in southwestern Costa Rica and western Panama.

Lesser Goldfinch *Spinus xanthogastrus* (2) — a few present around Wilson Botanical Garden.

Passeridae: Old World Sparrows (1)

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* (1) — a few of these at a gas station on one of our travel days

MAMMALS (4 species recorded):

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White-throated Capuchin *Cebus capucinus* (1) — we observed a troop of these smart monkeys on the Meandrica Trail, feeding low in some bushes.

Red-tailed Squirrel *Sciurus granatensis* (4) — a few sightings around Wilson Botanical Garden, occasionally even raiding the banana feeder.

Variiegated Squirrel *Sciurus variegatoides* (3) — the common squirrel at Hotel Bougainvillea.

Central American Agouti *Dasyprocta punctate* (7) — this little cousin of the Capybara was a common garden animal at Wilson Botanical Garden and Esquinas Lodge.

REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS (8 species recorded):

Emerald Swift *Sceloporus malachiticus* (1) — seen while we were searching for Volcano Junco at Cerro Buenavista — incredible to see at such high elevation considering how cold it gets at night.

Common Basilisk *Basiliscus basiliscus* (4) — plenty around the restaurant at Esquinas Lodge, including some very nice adult males. This is the “Jesus Lizard” that can “walk” on water.

Black Spiny-tailed Iguana *Ctenosaura similis* (2) — a few of these husky, dark lizards sunning themselves at Villa Lapas.

Green Iguana *Iguana iguana* (3) — especially common around Villa Lapas and the mangroves along the Rio Tarcoles.

Common House Gecko *Hemidactylus frenatus* (5) — a constant little companion in our cabin rooms at all lowland sites.

Spectacled Caiman *Caiman crocodilus* (3) — seen well in the small fish ponds around Esquinas Lodge.

American Crocodile *Crocodylus acutus* (2) — seen on the Rio Tarcoles boat tour and from the bridge over the same river the following day.

Rosenberg’s Tree Frog *Hypsiboas rosenbergi* (1) — an unexpected visitor at dinner time, jumping right onto unsuspecting Phil. Often known as the “Gladiator Frog.”