

BEST OF COSTA RICA

February 18 – 27, 2022

10 Days / 9 Nights

\$2998*

Single Supplement \$250

Lowest per-day price among
US tour companies!

Register early!



*Price is estimated based on 2021 pricing and could change slightly when lodges provide 2022 prices.

Costa Rica has been a favorite spot for nature lovers and birders for decades, and for good reason. About 25% of the country is made up of protected national parks and rain forests which hold 5% of the world's diversity. Over 900 species of birds have been recorded there, and you are likely to encounter other wildlife as you search the forests for avian life. Sloths, Coatis, at least 3 different species of monkeys, and several species of lizard are but a small portion of the myriad of species that inhabit this naturalist's paradise. You can expect comfortable lodging and good food while exploring one of the best birding locations in Central America.

Day 1, February 18

Arrive in Costa Rica and transfer to the Hotel Robledal for welcome dinner and overnight. An after-dinner owl prowl could produce Tropical Screech-Owl and Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl.

Hotel Robledal (D)

Day 2, February 19

Pre-breakfast birding will offer an opportunity to become acquainted with some of Costa Rica's most common and widespread birds, including Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, Tropical Kingbird, Blue-gray Tanager, Great-tailed Grackle, and the country's national bird, the Clay-colored Thrush. Other likely species are Inca Dove, White-winged Dove, Squirrel Cuckoo, Lesson's Motmot, Grayish Saltator, Spot-breasted Oriole, and Melodious Blackbird.

After breakfast, we will begin our journey to the Caribbean lowlands. We'll make a stop at a middle elevation site with a spectacular waterfall. Hummingbird feeders here will provide a chance at species such as Green Thorntail, Coppery-headed Emerald, White-bellied and Purple-throated Mountaingems, and Violet Sabrewing.

Fruit eaters that come to feeding trays here include Prong-billed Barbet, Northern Emerald-Toucanet, Common Chlorospingus, and Silver-throated Tanager.



Green Thorntail



Violet Sabrewing

By afternoon, we'll reach our destination: La Selva Biological Station, where research projects are carried out on every conceivable aspect of the tropical forest system. Perhaps at the dinner table a young researcher will be glad to discuss their own studies with you.

La Selva (B/L/D)

Day 3, February 20

It can often be difficult to get to the cafeteria before the end of the breakfast meal time as so many birds can get in the way. The clearings around the main buildings are typically alive with birds ranging from the diminutive Bananaquit to the turkey-sized Great Curassow. We'll also hope to encounter species such as Slaty-breasted Tinamou, Green Ibis, Olive-backed Quail-Dove, Chestnut-colored Woodpecker, Great Green Macaw, Black-capped Pygmy-Tyrant, Snowy Cotinga, and Plain-colored Tanager, among many others.

La Selva (B/L/D)



Great Green Macaws

Day 4, February 21

Today we'll travel across the Central Valley and up into the Talamanca highlands. As we gain elevation the vegetation will change and the air temperature will become a bit cooler. Any given birding stop could yield highland endemics such as Black-capped Flycatcher, Black-and-yellow Silky-flycatcher, Yellow-winged Vireo, Flame-throated Warbler, and/or Yellow-thighed Finch.

El Toucanet Lodge (B/L/D)



Yellow-thighed Finch



Black-capped Flycatcher

Day 5, February 22

There are many special montane birds whose company we will enjoy, perhaps foremost among them the bustling hummingbirds at the feeders—Fiery-throated Hummingbird, Lesser Violetear, Talamanca Hummingbird, and Volcano Hummingbird. But the true object of our quest here in the highlands is the Resplendent Quetzal. After dark, we may go in search of Dusky Nightjar, Bare-shanked Screech-Owl, and Unspotted Saw-whet Owl.

El Toucanet Lodge (B/L/D)

Day 6, February 23

We will pack up and continue along the PanAmerican Highway, stopping at its highest point to look for Timberline Wren, Volcano Junco, and Peg-billed Finch. Dropping down into the Valley of El General, we'll begin spotting species such as Smooth-billed Ani, Red-crowned Woodpecker, Fork-tailed Flycatcher, and Tropical Mockingbird, while keeping an eye out for perched raptors, including Pearl Kite and Laughing Falcon.

Talari Mountain Lodge (B/L/D)



Bay-headed Tanager

Day 7, February 24

Birding the grounds of the lodge is always productive, with potentials that include Chestnut-collared Swift, White-crested Coquette, Snowy-bellied Hummingbird, Fiery-billed Aracari, Olivaceous Piculet, and Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush. We'll travel a short distance to Los Cusingos—the former home of the late Dr. Alexander F. Skutch, one of the great pioneers in neotropical bird studies. Prying our eyes away from the Green Honeycreepers, Bay-headed and Speckled Tanagers, and Buff-throated Saltators that may be visiting the fruit feeders, we could have the fortune of spotting a perched male Turquoise Cotinga up in the canopy trees surrounding the garden clearing. A walk along one of the forest trails might produce any number of surprises,

including Baird's Trogon, White-whiskered Puffbird, Rufous Piha, or Red-capped and Blue-crowned Manakins. Eventually, we'll leave the San Isidro area and travel down to the Pacific coast, where we head north up the coastal highway to Hotel Villa Lapas.

Hotel Villa Lapas (B/L/D)

Day 8, February 25

Though the hotel grounds are very birdy, much of today will be spent at the nearby Carara National Park. Here we will hope for a variety of "ant things" that include Black-hooded Antshrike, Dot-winged Antwren, Chestnut-backed Antbird, Black-faced Antthrush, and Streak-chested Antpitta. Fascinating flycatchers such as Stub-tailed and Golden-crowned Spadebill, Greenish Elaenia, Northern Bentbill, Slate-headed Tody-Flycatcher, and Bright-rumped Attila also inhabit the forest. However, the star attraction here is the raucous Scarlet Macaw. At some point during our time in this area, we'll also check out some mangroves for habitat specialists that include Northern Scrub-Flycatcher, Panama Flycatcher, Mangrove Vireo, the mangrove race of Yellow Warbler, and the endemic Mangrove Hummingbird.

Hotel Villa Lapas (B/L/D)



Scarlet Macaw

Day 9, February 26

Our final day in the field will give us one last opportunity to add a few more species to our by-now bulging species list, which in addition to hundreds of birds should include a dozen or more mammals along with numerous reptiles and amphibians. Eventually, we'll return to the Central Valley and overnight at the Hotel Robledal.

Hotel Robledal (B/L/D)

Day 10, February 27

Take the hotel shuttle to the airport for your departing flight.

End of services (B)

PRICING DETAILS

Price includes:

- ~ Lodging in comfortable hotel/lodges/B&Bs
- ~ All meals as indicated
- ~ All land transportation
- ~ Airport Transfers
- ~ Mangrove Boat Tour on the Tarcoles River
- ~ Entrance fees to all parks and reserves
- ~ Expert local birding guide Leo Garrigues
- ~ Pre-trip gift package
- ~ Post-trip electronic group checklist

Price does NOT include:

- ~ International airfare to San Jose, Costa Rica
- ~ Alcoholic drinks
- ~ Travel insurance
- ~ Gratuities
- ~ Expenses of a personal nature such as laundry, phone calls, extra drinks and snacks, etc.

PAYMENT INFORMATION:

Deposit of \$500 with registration (registration form can be downloaded from a link on the Cheepers! Birding on a Budget website). Balance is due on or before October 18, 2020 (4 months prior to trip start date).

Checks should be made payable to ***Cheepers! Birding on a Budget*** and mailed with the registration form to:

Cheepers! Birding on a Budget

Post Office Box 385

Spring Valley, OH 45370