



**COSTA RICA BIRDING TOUR: THE PACIFIC RAINFOREST  
ADVENTURE**

**16–26 JANUARY 2027  
21–31 JANUARY 2028**



*White-crested Coquette, a true gem of the Pacific lowlands (photo Vernon Campos).*

This exciting birding tour explores Costa Rica's Pacific lowlands and southern regions, covering a wide range of habitats including dry forest, mangrove forest, lowland rainforest, foothill forest, wetlands, and mid-elevation cloud forest. The itinerary is designed to maximize species diversity while targeting many of the country's most sought-after regional specials and endemics such as **Yellow-billed Cotinga**, **White-crested Coquette**, **Fiery-billed Aracari**, the endemic **Black-cheeked Ant Tanager**, **Mangrove Hummingbird**, **Coppery-headed Emerald**, **Scarlet Macaw**, **Costa Rican Brushfinch**, and **Cabanis's Ground Sparrow**, among many other amazing birds and hummingbirds.

This is a wonderful opportunity for returning visitors to explore a less-visited part of the country, and to enjoy the birds and natural beauty of this outstanding destination.



*Cabanis's Ground Sparrow is a Costa Rican endemic that we will target on this tour (photo Vernon Campos).*

## Itinerary (11 days / 10 nights)

### Day 1. Arrival in San José and transfer to hotel

Upon arrival at Juan Santamaría International Airport, you will be met by your Birding Ecotours leader and transferred to our hotel in San José. Depending on arrival times, we may enjoy some light introductory birding in the hotel gardens. Possible species include **Rufous-backed Wren**, **Hoffmann's Woodpecker**, **Finsch's Parakeet**, **Baltimore Oriole**, **Squirrel Cuckoo**, **Cinnamon-bellied Saltator**, **American Yellow Warbler**, **White-winged Dove**, **Rufous-tailed Hummingbird**, **Clay-colored Thrush**, and our first **Ferruginous Pygmy Owl**.

Overnight: Hotel Robledal

## Day 2. San José to Punta Leona and Tárcoles River

We depart San José and travel south toward Punta Leona near Jacó, entering the Pacific lowlands. En route, we explore dry and deciduous forest habitats, targeting species largely restricted to this ecosystem. These may include **White-throated Magpie-Jay**, **Cinnamon Hummingbird**, **Blue-vented Hummingbird**, **Double-striped Thick-knee**, **Turquoise-browed Motmot**, **Hoffmann's Woodpecker**, **Yellow-throated Vireo**, **Streaked Flycatcher**, **Lesser Greenlet**, **Banded Wren**, **White-lored Gnatcatcher**, **Spot-breasted Oriole**, **Orange-fronted Parakeet**, and **Nutting's Flycatcher**.



*We will look for the distinctive **Fiery-billed Aracari** on this tour (photo Francesco Veronesi).*

Special attention will be given to the calls of the much-desired **Long-tailed Manakin**, which may be displaying at this time of the year. Other possible sightings include **Pacific Screech Owl**, **Zone-tailed Hawk**, **King Vulture**, and **Olive Sparrow**.

In the afternoon, we will enjoy a boat trip along the Tárcoles River, one of Costa Rica's best mangrove birding sites. Species may include **Brown Pelican**, **Magnificent Frigatebird**, **Royal Tern**, **Sandwich Tern**, **White Ibis**, **Mangrove Swallow**, **Wood Stork**, **Anhinga**, **Bare-throated Tiger Heron**, **Yellow-crowned Night Heron**, **Roseate Spoonbill**, **Common Black Hawk**, **American Pygmy Kingfisher**, **Prothonotary Warbler**, and **Grey-cowled Wood Rail**. On this boat cruise, we may also encounter numerous waders, **American Crocodile**, **Scarlet Macaw** and, with luck, the endemic **Mangrove Hummingbird**.

Once we get back from our boat cruise, we have our first chance of finding the highly sought-after **Fiery-billed Aracari** around the lodge grounds.

Overnight: Punta Leona



*Mangrove Hummingbird* will hopefully be found in the mangrove forests along the Tárcoles River (photo Jorge Obando Nature Photo).

### Day 3. Carara National Park

Carara National Park is one of Costa Rica's most important protected areas and likely supports the country's largest population of **Scarlet Macaw**. With over 400 recorded bird species across 5,335 hectares of transitional rainforest, birding here can be highly rewarding, though sometimes slow due to consistently warm temperatures.

While exploring forest trails, we may encounter the elusive **Streak-chested Antpitta**, **Black-faced Anthrush**, **Great Tinamou**, **Red-capped Manakin**, **Northern Bentbill**, **Golden-crowned Spadebill**, **Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher**, **Northern Schiffornis**, **Crested Guan**, **Olivaceous Woodcreeper**, **Slaty Antwren**, **Dusky Antbird**, **Chiriquí Foliage-gleaner**, **Slaty-tailed Trogon**, **Lineated Woodpecker**, **Northern Barred Woodcreeper**, **Rufous-breasted Wren**, and **Black-hooded Antshrike**.

Key targets here include **Orange-collared Manakin** and our first opportunity for the range-restricted **Fiery-billed Aracari** and **Riverside Wren**.

Overnight: Punta Leona

### Day 4. Transfer from Punta Leona to Golfito

We then continue south toward Golfito, a picturesque town surrounded by lush rainforest near the entrance to the Osa Peninsula. Birding stops along the long drive allow us to search for localized species such as **Sapphire-throated Hummingbird** and the scarce **Veraguan Mango**. Other key species include **Black-striped Woodcreeper**, **Charming Hummingbird**, **Baird's Trogon**, and

the localized **Black-cheeked Ant Tanager**, a highly sought-after Costa Rican endemic, especially for birders who want to see all four of the world's ant tanager species!

Overnight: Golfito

### Day 5. Rincón Bridge and La Gamba

An early pre-dawn start brings us to the famous Rincón Bridge at first light, one of the best sites for the highly sought-after **Yellow-billed Cotinga**. Other targets include **Turquoise Cotinga**, **Short-billed Pigeon**, **Band-tailed Barbthroat**, **Golden-naped Woodpecker**, **White-crowned Parrot**, **Scarlet Macaw**, **Yellow-throated Toucan**, **Fiery-billed Aracari**, **Black-striped Sparrow**, **Orange-billed Sparrow**, **Slaty-tailed Trogon**, **Lesson's Motmot**, and a variety of aquatic species.

We return toward Golfito making birding stops in areas such as La Gamba, where additional species may include **Black-hooded Antshrike**, **Black-faced Antthrush**, **Black-striped Woodcreeper**, **Eye-ringed Flatbill**, **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**, **Chestnut-backed Antbird**, **Buff-rumped Warbler**, and further chances for **Fiery-billed Aracari**.

Overnight: Golfito



*Yellow-billed Cotinga is an important target on this Costa Rica tour (photo Bruno Conjeaud).*

### Day 6. Coto 47 Wetlands and Wilson Botanical Garden

We depart Golfito and explore wetlands and aquatic habitats around Coto 47 before continuing to the renowned Wilson Botanical Garden at Las Cruces. This internationally recognized garden is part of the Las Cruces Research Station and supports extraordinary biodiversity.

The gardens and surrounding forest harbor over 425 recorded bird species, along with hundreds of butterflies, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. The area lies within the La Amistad Biosphere Reserve, one of Central America's most important conservation landscapes.

Overnight: Las Cruces OTS

### Day 7. Wilson Botanical Garden and Cerro Paraguas

We spend the morning birding the botanical garden in search of the stunning and elusive **White-crested Coquette**. Other possible species include **Snowy-bellied Hummingbird**, **Charming Hummingbird**, **Olivaceous Piculet**, **Gartered Trogon**, **Brown-hooded Parrot**, **Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush**, **Thick-billed Euphonia**, **Spot-crowned Euphonia**, **Speckled Tanager**, **Isthmian Wren**, **Bay-headed Tanager**, **Golden-hooded Tanager**, **Red-faced Spinetail**, **White-throated Thrush**, **Rufous-breasted Wren**, and **Crimson-fronted Parakeet**.

In the afternoon, we travel to higher elevations around Cerro Paraguas, targeting mid-elevation species such as **Costa Rican Brushfinch**, **Elegant Euphonia**, **Chestnut-capped Brushfinch**, **White-naped Brushfinch**, **Black-bellied Wren**, **Spotted Wood Quail**, **Scaled Pigeon**, **Red-headed Barbet**, **Brown-billed Scythebill**, **Ruddy Foliage-gleaner**, **White-throated Spadebill**, **Ochraceous Wren**, **Black-faced Solitaire**, **Golden-winged Warbler**, **Collared Trogon**, and **Smoky-brown Woodpecker**. After dusk, there is a chance to see **Striped Owl**.

Overnight: Las Cruces OTS



*The large and colorful **Scarlet Macaw** is always a fan favorite.*

### Day 8. Talamanca Reserve and Skutch Biological Corridor

We explore the Talamanca Reserve on the slopes of Cerro Chirripó, where we may have another opportunity for **White-crested Coquette**. Additional species may include **Magenta-throated Woodstar**, **Garden Emerald**, **White-tailed Emerald**, **Brown Jay**, **Scarlet-thighed Dacnis**, and **Sulphur-winged Parakeet**.

Later, we bird the Alexander F. Skutch Biological Corridor near San Isidro, searching for **Tawny-winged Woodcreeper**, **Northern Plain Xenops**, **Rufous Piha**, **Yellow-throated Vireo**, **Red-crowned Ant Tanager**, **Rufous-tailed Jacamar**, **Purple-crowned Fairy**, **Golden-naped Woodpecker**, **Green Shrike-Vireo** (whose call sounds like “can’t see me,” inspiring its informal nickname), the elusive **White-throated Crake**, **Blue-throated Sapphire**, **Black-chested Jay**, and **White-tailed Emerald**. We will also pay special attention to the near-endemic **Red-fronted Parrotlet**, as well as **Ocellated Crake**, **Rosy Thrush-Tanager**, and **Pearl Kite**.

Overnight: Talamanca Reserve

### Day 9. Talamanca Reserve to Hotel Quelitales

We depart Talamanca and travel toward Cachí, searching for the shy and localized **Cabanis’s Ground Sparrow**. At Hotel Quelitales excellent birding may produce **Coppery-headed Emerald**, **Green-fronted Lancebill**, **Sooty-faced Finch**, **White-bellied Mountain-gem**, **Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrush**, **White-eared Ground Sparrow**, **Chestnut-capped Warbler**, **Black-headed Saltator**, **Tawny-capped Euphonia**, **Tufted Flycatcher**, **Spotted Barbtail**, **Zeledon’s Antbird**, **White-ruffed Manakin**, and possibly the secretive **Scaled Antpitta**, which occasionally visits the worm feeders. **Sunbittern** is often seen around the hotel grounds.

Overnight: Hotel Quelitales



*The exquisite male Coppery-headed Emerald (photo Cephass).*

**Day 10. Hotel Quelitales to San José**

After a final morning of birding at Hotel Quelitales, we return to San José for our farewell group dinner. With luck, a daytime-roosting **Mottled Owl** may be found at the hotel.

Overnight: Hotel Bougainvillea San José



*The delightful **Spot-breasted Oriole** can be seen in the forests of Costa Rica.*

**Day 11. Departure**

We will transfer to the airport for international flights home after an unforgettable Costa Rica birding adventure.

*Please note that the itinerary cannot be guaranteed as it is only a rough guide and can be changed (usually slightly) due to factors such as availability of accommodation, updated information on the state of accommodation, roads, or birding sites, the discretion of the guides, and other factors. In addition, we sometimes have to use a different guide from the one advertised due to tour scheduling or other factors.*

<b>Duration:</b>	11 days
<b>Group size:</b>	6–8
<b>Dates:</b>	16–26 January 2027 21–31 January 2028
<b>Start:</b>	San José, Costa Rica
<b>End:</b>	San José, Costa Rica
<b>Prices:</b>	\$5,980 per person sharing (2027) \$6,590 per person sharing (2028)
<b>Single Supplement:</b>	\$1,030 \$1,130

**Price includes:**

All accommodation (from Day 1 until Day 10)  
Land and river transportation  
All meals (from dinner on Day 1 until breakfast on Day 11)  
Tour leader  
Local guides  
Admission fees  
Airport transfers  
Water in the bus for all days in the field

**Price excludes:**

International flights  
Medical and trip cancellation insurance  
Personal expenses such as laundry, soft drinks, and alcoholic drinks  
Gratuities (please see [our tipping guidelines blog](#))  
Any activity not described in the itinerary  
Early check-ins and late check-outs