



Photo by Jerry Goffe  
Violet Sawbrewing Hummingbird  
*Campylopterus hemileucurus*

# CENTRAL, SOUTH PACIFIC, AND HIGHLANDS: SCARLET MACAWS TO QUETZALS COSTA RICA BIRDING 2010



Costa Rica is a lush and vibrant paradise for birders; set in the heart of Central America, it is one of the New World's prime migratory corridors, a sojourn for migratory species, as well as home to a myriad of endemic species. Of North America's songbirds, about 255 species are neo-tropical migrants, many of which we will seek to observe in their wintering grounds. This 11 day program is designed to focus on Southern Costa Rica supporting many species that continue their migration through to South America. Our journey will take us to the dry forest of Carara National Park, a key habitat for the Scarlet Macaw. We will continue south to the coastal forest and lowlands of Hacienda Baru and Piedras Blancas National Park. A visit to the Las Cruces Biological Field Station, operated by the Organization for Tropical Studies, will introduce us to tropical research and here we will seek to observe over 400 species of both resident and migratory species. Our final stop will bring us to the higher elevation, montane forest, of the renowned birding destination of Savegre Lodge and Reserve, located in the Talamanca Mountains. Our search for the Resplendent Quetzal and the Three Wattled Bellbird, often heard but not seen, make up a key highlight of our travels. With a bird count list that will soar well above 350-450 species in this 11 day adventure, a wide mix of formal and informal activities, discussions and birding observation will provide a balanced natural history birding adventure.

## H I G H L I G H T S

- Journey to Los Lagos for the opportunity to observe the famed and captivating Resplendent Quetzals
- Spot nocturnal birds and mammals, including owls, on guided nighttime hikes
- Visit Cerro de la Muerte, or "Mountain of Death," to see amazingly diverse mountainous species of birds
- Hike the lively trails of Carara National Park, one of the birding hotspots of Costa Rica, and view the amazing flight of the Scarlet Macaw near the Tarcoles River
- Explore the marshes of San Vito and identify various species of waterbirds
- Traverse the Tárcoles River by boat to the mangroves to observe crocodiles and a multitude of coastal birds
- Explore the remote and pristine jungles of Piedras Blancas National Park
- Investigate the massive Las Cruces Biological Reserve and learn about its abundant species of flora and avifauna

## T R I P D E T A I L S

### SUGGESTED TRIP MONTHS

All Year

Preferred months  
November - April

### TRIPLENGTH

11 days

### LAND PRICING

Prices starting at  
\$1797 per person  
in group of 10  
double occupancy

Single Supplement  
is \$197



Rates are based on double occupancy for participants. Holiday surcharges may apply. Program may incur unforeseen fuel surcharges. A \$200.00 per person deposit and enrollment form is due upon booking and no later than four months prior to departure. This deposit is refundable until 95 days prior to departure excluding a \$100.00 cancellation fee. Final payments are due no later than 95 days prior to departure. Cancellations received less than 95 days prior to departure are not refundable. Travel/trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. For more information call 800-243-3174. Holbrook's agency number is 15849.

## Day 1 San José

Upon arrival in Costa Rica you will transfer to the hotel for check in. **Overnight at Hotel Buena Vista or similar.** No meals are included.

## Day 2 Central Pacific - Carara

After breakfast and a short orientation to the program you will depart for Hotel Villa Lapas, located in the Central Pacific area. En route is a stop at Orotina Park, to visit a well known day roost of the Black-and-white Owl. Lunch will be followed by a leisurely afternoon boat ride along the Tárcoles River. The Tárcoles River is famous for its abundance of crocodiles and over 50 species of migratory, resident, and coastal birds, including Roseate Spoonbills, Scarlet Macaws, and Crested Caracaras. The river is a perfect spot to catch a glimpse of mangrove specialties such as the rare Rufous-necked Wood-Rail, Mangrove Hummingbird, Pygmy Kingfisher, Panama Flycatcher, Mangrove Vireo, Mangrove (Yellow) Warbler, and Scrub Greenlet. In the evening you will take a guided night walk to observe more owls. **Overnight at Hotel Villa Lapas.** (BLD)

## Day 3 Central Pacific - Carara

The day will begin with an early morning guided bird walk before breakfast. Later you will visit Carara National Park for the day, one of the birding hotspots of Costa Rica. The park consists of transitional forest and is home to many humid forest bird species which are only found in southwestern Costa Rica. In addition to the Golden-naped Woodpecker, Baird's Trogon, Orange-collared Manakin, and Riverside Wren. Before dinner at the lodge you will be able to spot macaws from a nearby bridge. **Overnight at Hotel Villa Lapas.** (BLD)

## Day 4 Golfito

After an early morning bird walk before breakfast you will depart for the remote area of Golfito. En route, you will enjoy a guided walk along the trails of Hacienda Baru and see birds such as honeycreepers, toucans, petrels, jaegers, egrets, herons, whimbrels, sandpipers, plovers, and many more. Hacienda Baru consists of 815 acres of varied habitats, from wetlands and secondary rainforest in the lowlands to primary rainforest on the highland coastal ridge, attracting over 350 species of birds. Birds indigenous to the area include the Golden-naped Woodpecker, Fiery-billed Aracari, Black-hooded Antshrike, Bairds Trogon, Riverside Wren, and the rare Black-cheeked Ant-Tanager. In the afternoon you will check into the Esquinas Lodge before another guided bird walk in the rainforest. **Overnight at Esquinas Rainforest Lodge.** (BLD)

## Day 5 Piedras Blancas National Park

Today will be spent exploring the thousands of acres of tropical rainforest at Esquinas Lodge and the surrounding area. Hidden in the jungle of Piedras Blancas National Park, a large number of Costa Rica's finest bird species call this untouched wilderness home, including large and small seabirds, water birds, herons, ducks, shorebirds, sandpipers, kites, falcons, raptors, parrots, hummingbirds, swifts, swallows, and hundreds more. Specific species frequently spotted in the area include the Ruddy-breasted Seed-eater, Red-breasted Blackbird, Black-cheeked Ant-Tanager, Baird's Trogon, Fork-tailed Flycatcher, Blue-crowned Manakin, and Thick-billed Euphonia. Sightings have even been noted of the rare Uniform Crane and Pearl Kite. **Overnight at Esquinas Rainforest Lodge.** (BLD)

## Day 6 Las Cruces Station

The day will begin with an early morning bird walk and breakfast before departing for the coastal mountain region of San Vito. Your next destination is Las Cruces Biological Station, a contiguous 632-acre forest reserve with over 7000 species of plants that attract

over 400 species of birds, including many hummingbirds, tanagers, warblers, and at least five different species of trogons. Afternoon birding in the gardens will allow you to become acquainted with the area. After dinner at the station, a guided night walk will provide the opportunity to spot nocturnal birds and mammals. **Overnight at Las Cruces Station.** (BLD)

## Day 7 Las Cruces Station

After a morning of guided birding at Las Cruces, you will spend the afternoon at a nearby property in San Vito. San Vito, located 3214 ft above sea level, is surrounded by mountains and has a cool climate with marshes that are home to the Masked Duck and the Masked "Chiriqui" Yellowthroat. The wetlands of San Vito attract many species of water birds, including wild ducks, gallinules, and White-throated Crakes. Dinner will be at the station followed by a guided night walk. **Overnight at Las Cruces Station.** (BLD)

## Day 8 Savegre

After one final early morning bird walk at Las Cruces your journey continues at Cerro de la Muerte. Cerro de la Muerte, or "Mountain of Death," is an area located at the top of the Cordillera de Talamanca and famous for its diversity of endemic wildlife. Consisting of temperate forest and páramo habitats between elevations of 7000 and 11,000 ft, the natural vegetation at Cerro de la Muerte attracts species such as the rare Red-fronted Parrotlet, Costa Rican Pygmy-Owl, Dusky Nightjar, Fiery-throated, Volcano, and Scintillant hummingbirds, Gray-tailed Mountain-gem, Ruddy Treerunner, Buffy Tuftedcheek, Silvery-fronted Tapaculo, Ochraceous Pewee, Silvery-throated Jay, and the magnificent Resplendent Quetzal. You will have a chance to stop to admire these species and others during stops at Cerro de la Muerte and La Georgina en route to the Savegre Lodge. The afternoon will be spent birding at the lodge before dinner. **Overnight at Savegre Lodge.** (BLD)

## Day 9 Savegre

Savegre Lodge is located in a small community in the Talamanca Mountains and houses its own private biological reserve. The high elevation habitat of mostly oak forest and highland cloud forest attracts a huge variety of avifauna, including the Tufted Flycatcher, Flame-colored Tanager, Long-tailed Silky Flycatcher, Volcano Hummingbird (Talamanca race), Scintillant Hummingbird, Gray-tailed Mountain Gem, Silvery-throated Jay, Slaty Flower Piercer, Black-thighed Grosbeak, Collared Redstart, Sooty-capped Bush Tanager, Turrent Tyrannulet, Golden-browed Chlorophonia, Emerald (blue-throated) Toucanet, Collared Trogon, Dusky Nightjar, Ochraceous Wren, and the Resplendent Quetzal. You will spend the morning birding along the local trails in the cloud forest before heading to Los Lagos in the afternoon to view the striking beauty of the Quetzals. Dinner will be followed by a guided night walk. **Savegre Lodge.** (BLD)

## Day 10 San José

The day begins with an early morning guided bird walk before breakfast and checkout at the lodge. Lunch will be provided during the transfer to San Jose and the afternoon will be free for your own leisure. A farewell dinner will be served at a local restaurant in San Jose. **Overnight at Holiday Inn Express.** (BLD)

## Day 11 Departure

After breakfast you will check out and transfer to San José International Airport for your flight home. (B)