



Costa Rica

Endemics and Specialties with Tucson Bird Alliance

Tour Leaders: Rob Ripma and Tucson Bird Alliance Ambassador

February 23 - March 5, 2028

Itinerary Overview:

February 23: Arrival in San José, Costa Rica

February 24: Quetzal Valley Natural Reserve - Transfer to Hotel Punta Leona

February 25: Carara National Park and Surroundings

February 26: Boat Ride on the Tarcoles River - Transfer to Danta Corcovado

February 27: Danta Corcovado and Surroundings

February 28: Neily Fields and Las Pangas Wetlands - Transfer to San Vito

February 29: Las Cruces Biological Station and Surroundings

March 1: Las Cruces and the Aracari Birding Deck - Transfer to El Pelicano

March 2: El Pelicano and Cerro Buenavista - Transfer to the Savegre Valley

March 3: Savegre Valley

March 4: Savegre Valley - Transfer to Hotel Bougainvillea

March 5: Departure from San José, Costa Rica

Detailed Itinerary:

February 23: Arrival in San José, Costa Rica

You will be met by your guides outside the customs area of Juan Santamaría International Airport in San José. From there, we'll make the short drive to Hotel Robledal. We'll do some birding around the property in the afternoon if time permits. Some highlights might include Spot-breasted Oriole, Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, and Cinnamon Hummingbird among others. We'll have a wonderful welcome dinner and plenty of time to relax before our adventures begin early the next morning.

-Overnight: Hotel Robledal



Coppery-headed Emerald

February 24: Quetzal Valley Natural Reserve - Transfer to Hotel Punta Leona

We will start the morning by driving for about an hour to Quetzal Valley Natural Reserve. Here, we will be looking for another Costa Rican endemic, the Coppery-headed Emerald. This reserve has a great mix of species from a few different habitat types, creating the potential for a long list of birds. Purple-throated Mountain-gem, Violet Sabrewing, Sunbittern, Ornate Hawk-Eagle, Resplendent Quetzal, Long-tailed Manakin, Prong-billed Barbet, and Golden-browed Chlorophonia are among the many species we will be looking for here. After lunch in the area, we will continue our drive to Hotel Punta Leona where we will be staying for the next two nights.

-Overnight: Hotel Punta Leona or similar

February 25: Carara National Park and La Ceiba Area

We'll spend most of this day birding in Carara National Park, a unique location where the Pacific lowland rainforest meets the tropical dry forest. This meeting of habitats makes Carara an incredible birding destination with a huge variety of species. While here, we should expect to see a variety of trogons, motmots, antbirds, woodcreepers, flycatchers, and much more! We will walk a few of the trails throughout this national park which provide good access to find many difficult species to see such as Marbled Wood-Quail, White-whiskered Puffbird, Streak-chested Antpitta, and Chiriqui Foliage-gleaner.



Long-tailed Manakin

We'll spend the afternoon birding a nearby backroad through a drier forest habitat. Many of the birds in this area are more common in the dry northwestern part of the country, so this will be our only chance to see them. Some of the highlights could include White-throated Magpie-Jay, Pacific Screech-Owl, Turquoise-browed Motmot, Black-headed Trogon, Striped Cuckoo, Long-tailed Manakin, Stripe-headed Sparrow, Scrub Euphonia, and many others.

-Overnight: Hotel Punta Leona or similar

February 26: Boat Ride on the Tarcoles River - Transfer to Danta Corcovado Lodge

Early this morning, we'll enjoy a boat ride on the Tarcoles River, looking for shorebirds, waders, and mangrove species, especially the Mangrove Hummingbird (endemic). Other species we will be looking for include Muscovy Duck, Elegant Tern, Collared Plover, Bare-throated Tiger-Heron, Reddish Egret, 5 species of kingfishers including American Pygmy, Mangrove Vireo, and Mangrove Yellow Warbler. Afterwards, we will have a long drive to Danta Corcovado where we will be staying for the next couple of nights. On our drive, we'll make a stop for lunch and a couple other brief stops as we head south throughout the afternoon.

-Overnight: Danta Corcovado Lodge

February 27: Danta Corcovado and Surroundings

Today, we will leave the hotel before dawn and drive to the bridge over Rio Rincon to look for the elusive, near-endemic, Yellow-billed Cotinga. Other highlights might include several species of kingfishers, Scarlet Macaw, Black-bellied Wren, and a number of waterbird species. Then we'll come back to the lodge for breakfast and spend the rest of the day birding the trails and surrounding habitats for Osa Peninsula specialties. We should have an impressive list of species today with highlights such as Baird's Trogon, Fiery-billed Aracari, Golden-naped Woodpecker, Black-hooded Antshrike, and the Costa Rican endemic Black-cheeked Ant-Tanager.

-Overnight: Danta Corcovado Lodge



Black-cheeked Ant-Tanager

February 28: Neily Fields and Las Pangas Wetlands - Transfer to San Vito

After breakfast, we'll drive to the lowlands and stop at Neily for birding in open areas and rice fields. Here, we'll be looking for Sapphire-throated Hummingbird, Plain-breasted Ground Dove, Smooth-billed Ani, Pale-breasted Spinetail, Scrub Greenlet, and Isthmian Wren among other more common species. In some nearby forested habitat, we will be looking for Red-rumped Woodpecker and Gray-lined Hawk. And by the late morning, we will spend time birding at Las Pangas Wetlands. The wetlands typically have throngs of ducks, shorebirds, and other waterbirds. This is also the best place to look for Rusty-margined Flycatcher and Lesser Kiskadee on our itinerary. After lunch, we will drive to our next lodge, where we will be able to bird around their back deck and gardens looking for White-crested Coquette among many other species.

-Overnight: Las Cruces Biological Station

February 29: Las Cruces Biological Station and Surrounding

We will spend our day searching for middle elevation species, beginning with early morning birding around the gardens and banana feeders. After breakfast, we'll explore the trails and canopy tower at the biological station. From the lodge, we will keep our eyes out for Scaled Pigeon and White-fronted Tyrannulet, both of which regularly perch nearby. At the tower, we will be scanning for soaring birds such as King Vulture, Gray-headed Kite, and Black Hawk-Eagle. On the forest trails, we'll be looking for Baird's Trogon, Ruddy and Chiriqui Foliage-gleaners, White-ruffed Manakin, Rufous Piha, and Red-crowned Ant-Tanager.

In the afternoon, we'll visit neighboring hotspots for some additional specialty species of the area. Where we go is flexible depending on what species we still need to see, but some of the many possible highlights include Lance-tailed Manakin, Sepia-capped Flycatcher, and White-lined Tanager.

-Overnight: Las Cruces Biological Station



Fiery-billed Aracari

March 1: Las Cruces Biological Station and the Aracari Birding Deck - Transfer to El Pelicano

We will start our morning with more birding around the biological station looking for any species we may have missed the previous day. After breakfast we will begin our drive to the San Isidro Valley. Along the way, we will make several birding stops. On one of these stops, we'll be looking for the beautiful Rosy Thrush-Tanager. For lunch, we will make a stop at the Aracari Birding Deck which will give us a good chance to see some special species such as Streaked Saltator and Fiery-billed Aracari. The home-cooked meal here tends to be one of the favorite meals of the trip! In the late afternoon, we might have some time to bird on the grounds of our hotel for the night. This area is good for the near endemic Costa Rican Brushfinch, the beautiful, White-crested Coquette, and many more!

-Overnight: Hotel de Montaña El Pelicano

March 2: El Pelicano and Cerro Buenavista - Transfer to the Savegre Valley

We'll spend our morning birding around the grounds of our lodging. If we haven't seen a Costa Rican Brushfinch or White-crested Coquette, we will be sure to spend time on them this morning. Other species we could see include Magenta-throated Woodstar, White-tailed Emerald, Speckled Tanager, and many others. After a leisurely morning, we will start our drive to the Savegre Valley. In San Isidro, we will make a stop in town to scan a forest edge for the beautiful, Turquoise Cotinga. Next, we'll stop at a roadside cafe to see what's visiting their feeders. Snowy-bellied Hummingbirds and Violet Sabrewings are almost always present and we'll have a chance to see a Brown Violetear. Several species of tanagers, Baltimore Oriole, and Buff-throated Saltators visit the feeders and, if we're lucky, we might see a Red-headed Barbet.



Volcano Junco

Afterwards, we will drive up into the Talamanca Mountains to the highest spot on the Pan-American Highway, Cerro Buenavista. The paramo habitat here will give us a good chance to see Volcano

Hummingbird, Volcano Junco, Timberline Wren, Wrenthrush, and Peg-billed Finch. We'll make a couple more stops as we continue our drive to our next lodge. We should see a good number of high elevation species such as Fiery-throated Hummingbird, Large-footed Finch, and Sooty Thrush.

-Overnight: Sueños del Bosque Lodge or similar

March 3: Savegre Valley

The Savegre Valley is home to numerous birds including the extraordinary Resplendent Quetzal. In fact, it's one of the best places in the world to see this special species! We'll spend the day exploring a variety of elevations in this area and enjoying all that this beautiful area has to offer. We will likely visit some trails above Savegre Mountain Lodge that provide access to pristine primary forest habitat. We will also visit Batsu Gardens, a property with great feeders, gardens, and trails. Some possible highlight species for the day include Ruddy Treerunner, Yellow-winged and Brown-capped Vireos, Ochraceous Wren, Black-faced Solitaire, Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush, Flame-throated and Black-cheeked Warblers, Collared Redstart, Golden-browed Chlorophonia, and if we're lucky an Ochraceous Pewee.

-Overnight: Sueños del Bosque Lodge or similar

March 4: Savegre Valley - Transfer to Hotel Bougainvillea

We'll spend this day visiting a number of high elevation locations looking for any species we may have missed in the last day and a half. In the morning, we will likely visit the nearby Waterfall Trail where we could see such highlights as Flame-throated Warbler, Spangle-cheeked Tanager, Ruddy Treerunner, and Black-thighed Grosbeak. Another location we are likely to visit is Providencia Road. The forests along this road are great for many species including Black-capped Flycatcher, Barred Becard, and if we're lucky a Silvery-throated Jay might make an appearance. We'll have lunch in the area and continue looking for any last species we may still be looking for. Afterwards, we'll drive back to Hotel Bougainvillea. We'll make sure to arrive early enough to make a short drive to a coffee plantation. This is the home of our last targeted endemic, the Cabanis's Ground-Sparrow. Back at Hotel Bougainvillea we will have a farewell dinner before our flights out the following day.

-Overnight: Hotel Bougainvillea

March 5: Departure from San José, Costa Rica

Trip Details:

Cost:

Price per person (double occupancy), from San José, Costa Rica: \$7,799

Single Supplement: \$1,000

Minimum Participants: 6

Maximum Participants: 10

Price Includes:

- 2 Expert Guides
- Ground Transportation in Costa Rica
- All Lodging
- All Meals
- Park Entrance Fees
- Portion of Proceeds to Tucson Bird Alliance

Price Does Not Include:

- Airfare to and from San José, Costa Rica
- Airport Taxes
- Passport and Visa Fees
- Alcoholic Beverages
- Personal Items
- Travel Insurance
- Tips

Deposit:

A deposit of \$500 per person is required to hold your spot on this tour. The remaining balance is due no later than 3 months prior to the scheduled start date of the tour (November 25, 2027).

If you have any questions about this tour or would like to sign up for it, please contact us at info@sabrewingnaturetours.com, by phone at 317-324-8505, or register through our website at sabrewingnaturetours.com.

Responsibility/Disclaimer Statement:

Sabrewing Nature Tours acts only as an agent for the various independent suppliers that provide hotel accommodations, transportation, sightseeing, activities, or other services connected with this tour. Such services are subject to the terms and conditions of those suppliers. Sabrewing Nature Tours and their respective employees, agents, representatives, and assigns accept no liability whatsoever for any injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or any other incident which may be caused by the negligence, defect, default of any company or person in performing these services. Responsibility is not accepted for losses, injury, damages, or expenses of any kind due to sickness, weather, strikes, hostilities, wars, terrorist acts, acts of nature, local laws, or other such causes. All services and accommodations are subject to the laws and regulations of the country in which they are provided. Sabrewing Nature Tours is not responsible for any baggage or personal effects of any individual participating in the tours/trips arranged by Sabrewing Nature Tours. Individual travelers are responsible for purchasing a travel insurance policy, if desired, that will cover some of the expenses associated with the loss of luggage or personal effects.