



Violet Sabrewing by Stefanie Plein



COSTA RICA

INTRODUCTION TO NEOTROPICAL BIRDING

with Ventura Audubon Society

February 10 – 16, 2022



If you've always wanted to go birding in Costa Rica—or never taken a birding trip abroad at all—this program is a great introduction to the neotropical birds of Central America. You'll spend time in the Caribbean lowlands and the mountainous southern highlands, seeking out species typical of the differing elevations and habitats. Your local birding guide is an expert at identification by both sight and sound, and will help ensure your group spots as many of the country's 900-plus species as possible. Combine that with its accessibility and friendly people, and Costa Rica is a perfect destination for beginners and more advanced birders alike. Plus, you'll discover wildlife like frogs, monkeys, bats, and sloths.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Take a guided hike in the private, 500-acre rainforest reserve at Selva Verde Lodge, which provides habitat to more than 350 bird species, including the endangered Great Green Macaw.
- Ascend the 100-meter suspended walkway at Tirimbina Biological Reserve for the chance to see species that spend their time high within the forest canopy layer.
- Visit El Tapir, a private reserve adjacent to Braulio Carrillo National Park and a good place to see the Snowcap.
- Search for the Resplendent Quetzal, Slaty Flowerpiercer, Ruddy Treerunner, and other high-elevation species in the cloud forests of the Talamanca Mountains.

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ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

FEBRUARY 10 - SAN JOSÉ

Arrive in San José and transfer to your hotel. Check in at the hotel and enjoy the property's gardens. Check-in is at 3 pm. *Overnight at Hotel Bougainvillea.*

FEBRUARY 11 - SARAPIQUÍ

This morning, meet for breakfast and an orientation in the hotel restaurant, followed by an introduction to tropical birding from a local expert. Check out of the hotel and travel by bus to La Paz Waterfall Gardens, where you will have lunch and then visit the hummingbird gardens and butterfly farm. Continue to Selva Verde Lodge & Rainforest Reserve, stopping en route at a cafe in Cinchona known for its many hummingbird feeders. This afternoon, take a hike in the reserve with your guide. Protecting 500 acres of rainforest, Selva Verde offers many covered walks, birding trails, and lookout points, with opportunities to see species such as the Keel-billed Toucan, Great Green Macaw, White-winged Becard, Sunbittern, Acadian Flycatcher, and Wood Thrush. Boots are available for use if the trails are muddy. Take an optional walk after dinner to discover nocturnal frogs and insects. Note: The elevation changes from 3,000 feet above sea level in San José to approximately 225 feet above sea level in Sarapiquí, with the highest point visited today at 6,200 feet at La Paz Waterfalls. *Overnight at Selva Verde Lodge. (BLD)*

FEBRUARY 12 - SARAPIQUÍ

Early morning birding before breakfast. Then set out to explore the reserve again on a different trail. The Selva Verde Reserve is home to one of the largest almond trees in all of Central America, which provides habitat for the endangered Great Green Macaw. Return in time for lunch, then later this afternoon visit Tirimbina Biological Reserve for a guided hike. The trails at Tirimbina are designed to approach areas of high interest for viewing highlights of rainforest wildlife and biodiversity. As a greater proportion of life in the rainforest thrives in the forest canopy, Tirimbina visitors can experience the richness of treetop flora and fauna from a 100-meter suspended canopy walkway spanning one of the many stream valleys in the reserve. After dinner at Tirimbina, enjoy an informative talk on the lives of bats. *Overnight at Selva Verde Lodge. (BLD)*

FEBRUARY 13 - SARAPIQUÍ

Depart early this morning for the Organization for Tropical Studies La Selva Biological Station. Established in 1968, La Selva is world-renowned for scientific



Resplendent Quetzal by Ann and Rob Simpson

research on rainforest ecosystems. Be on the lookout for the Ornate Hawk-Eagle, Crested Guan, Great Tinamou, Pied Puffbird, and Spectacled Owl as possible sightings. Return to the lodge for lunch. Your afternoon is free to participate in optional activities such as a boat ride on the Sarapiquí River, whitewater rafting or horseback riding (arranged at reception after your arrival and paid on-site), spending time by the pool, or looking for avian visitors in Selva Verde's botanical garden area. Later this afternoon, enjoy a guided birdwatching hike or take in the river views from the patio overlooking the Sarapiquí River. *Overnight at Selva Verde Lodge. (BLD)*

FEBRUARY 14 - SAN GERARDO DE DOTA

Early this morning, check out of the lodge and depart for San Gerardo de Dota. En route, stop at El Tapir, a hidden gem for birding. Due to its slightly higher elevation and heavier rainfall, this area holds many specialty birds not typically found in the Sarapiquí region. Regular sightings include Lattice-tailed Trogon, Yellow-eared Toucanet, Streak-crowned Antvireo, Tawny-faced Gnatwren, White-throated Shrike-Tanager, Ashy-throated Chlorospingus, and Tawny-crested, Emerald, and Blue-and-gold Tanagers. Rarities seen here on occasion include Rufous-fronted Wood-Quail, Red-fronted Parrotlet, Rufous-vented Ground-Cuckoo, Black-crowned Antpitta, Gray-headed Piprites, and Sharpbill. Have lunch en route and then check in at the hotel in San Gerardo de Dota, a small community in the Talamanca Mountains that sits at an elevation of 7,220 feet. The forest surrounding the hotel is home to massive oaks, colorful plants, and an incredible variety of animal life: birds, insects, mammals, and amphibians alike. The pristine valley is a paradise

for birdwatchers, with more than 170 species of birds. The crown jewel is the magnificent Resplendent Quetzal, which lives in the region year round. *Overnight at Hotel Suria. (BLD)*

FEBRUARY 15 - SAN GERARDO DE DOTA

Spend the morning exploring the upper trails at the nearby Savegre Reserve in search of Resplendent Quetzal and some of the other species present here. (Note: The beginning of the trail is about a one-mile uphill climb.) The large centennial oaks of the forest are laden with lichens and mosses that contrast with the colorful bromeliads, adding to the striking atmosphere of this forest. Explore the trails in search of such specialties as Spotted Wood-Quail, Costa Rican Pygmy-Owl, Resplendent Quetzal, Collared Trogon, Buffy Tuftedcheek, Ruddy Treerunner, Ochraceous Pewee, Barred Becard, Wrenthrush, and Golden-browed Chlorophonia, just to name a few. After lunch, journey to Cerro Buena Vista in Los Quetzales National Park to look for Volcano Junco, among other high-elevation (10,400 ft.) species. Dinner is at the lodge this evening. *Overnight at Hotel Suria. (BLD)*

FEBRUARY 16 - FAREWELL!

Group transfer to the airport in time to catch your afternoon flight home. Participants should book flights departing after 2 pm. *(B)*



Great Green Macaw by Dick Daniels



Slaty Flowerpiercer by Sarah Murray

LAND PRICING

\$1,875 (10 participants)

Cost includes meals, accommodations, and activities as indicated in the itinerary, in-country transportation, full time guide for duration of program, bottled water on the bus, and donation to Ventura Audubon.

Does not include international airfare, estimated at \$999 from Los Angeles, tips/gratuities, or items of a personal nature.

TRAVEL PROTECTION

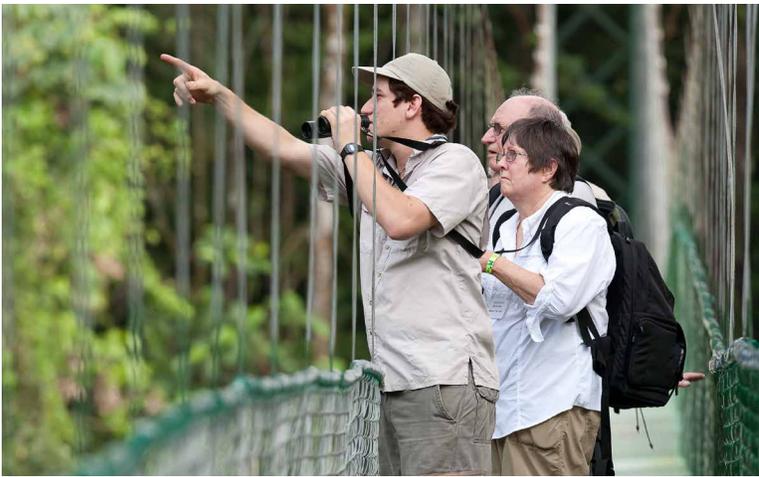
Holbrook Travel purchases Travel Protection on behalf of all participants. These plans help provide coverage once the trip has departed and offer benefits for Baggage/Personal Effects, Accident & Sickness Medical Expenses, Emergency Evacuation and more.

Optional additional coverage is available in the form of the Group Deluxe Plan, which offers benefits for Trip Cancellation/Interruption, in addition to many other insurance benefits and non-insurance assistance services. If interested in this optional plan, we can provide you with rates and plan details.

THE FINE PRINT

Cost is based on double occupancy; for a single room throughout the trip add \$125 per person. A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form are required to reserve your space on the trip. This deposit is refundable excluding a \$100 cancellation fee until November 7, 2021 at which time non-refundable final payment is due.

Please note: Itineraries may be subject to change due to protocols and adjustments related to the COVID-19 pandemic. For the latest information regarding our COVID-19 policies, please visit holbrooktravel.com/covid19



FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL

Visit holbrook.travel/ventura-cr22 or contact Debbie Jordan at debbie@holbrooktravel.com or 866-748-6146.

PHOTOS BY

Joanna Livingstone, Greg Basco, Joaquin Garcia, Dominic Sherony, and Brian Ralphs