

Costa Rica, 23.4.-17.5.2016

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I spent almost one month in Costa Rica, first on a family vacation and then on a botanical field trip with students. Mammal watching was thus not the single main focus.

Itinerary:

23.4. Arrival in San José
24.4. Drive to Manuel Antonio NP
25.-26.4. Manuel Antonio NP, Damas mangroves
27.4. Drive to Monteverde
28.-29.4. Monteverde
30.4. Drive to Tirimbina
1.5. Drive to La Selva
2.5. La Selva
3.5. Drive to Cahuita
4.-5.5. Cahuita and Manzanillo
6.5. Drive to San José
7.5. Braulio Carrillo NP and Irazú NP
8.5. Poás NP and drive to Fortuna
9.5. Arenal NP
10.5. Los Chiles
11.5 Drive to Rincón de la Vieja NP via Lomas de Barbudal NP
12.5. Rincón de la Vieja NP
13.5. Drive to La Gamba near Golfito
14.-16.5. La Gamba
17.5. Flight to San José and back home

General comments: We hit an El Niño year, which meant that it was very dry especially on the Pacific side. At La Selva, there had been no significant rainfall for three months and many understory plants were dry and partly dead. This affected mammal watching: at many sites, local guides told us that mammal activity was very low and that many species were hard to find. This affected several key species: Despite two afternoons of searching, we found no Silky Anteaters at Damas mangroves. Likewise, the Olingo at the Monteverde hummingbird gallery had not shown up for about two weeks. At Tirimbina, many bats had lower weight than usual at this time of year and the fact that most females were pregnant or lactating meant that we stopped mistnetting after five bats. To add insult to injury, at Monteverde some researcher was putting out Sherman traps, but I was unable to find out who that was to ask if I could join him/her when checking the traps... So despite 43 species seen, 20 of which were new for me, I left Costa Rica with a slightly unhappy feeling...

Species seen:

Common Opossum (*Didelphis marsupialis*): One in a day roost in a palm at La Gamba.

Gray Four-eyed Opossum (*Philander opossum*): One at night at Hotel El Bosque in Monteverde and one at night in La Gamba.

Zeledon's Mouse Opossum (*Marmosa zeledoni*): One fell at night from the roof into the bed of one of the ladies while staying at La Gamba, causing a bit of an uproar...

Central American Woolly Opossum (*Caluromys derbianus*): One at night at Tirimbina and one at night near Fortuna.

Northern Tamandua (*Tamandua mexicana*): One at a day roost in Damas mangroves.

Hoffman's Two-toed Sloth (*Chloepus hoffmanni*): Common at Manuel Antonio, scattered ones elsewhere.

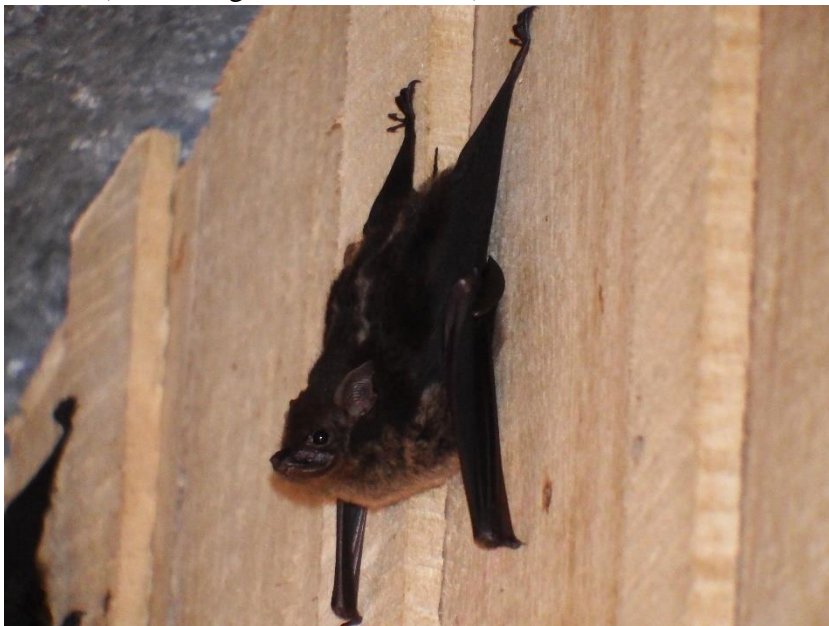
Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth (*Bradypus variegatus*): Common at Manuel Antonio, scattered ones elsewhere.

Nine-banded Armadillo (*Dasypus novemcinctus*): Several at Tirimbina, one at la Selva.



Proboscis Bat (*Rhynchonycteris naso*): Damas mangroves, La Selva (roosting on researcher houses) and Caño Negro near Los Chiles.

White-lined Bat (*Sarcopteryx bilineata*): Several day roots: Manuel Antonio, La Selva, Arenal (on the huge *Ceiba* in the NP), La Gamba.



Chestnut Short-tailed Bat (*Carollia castanea*): Two caught at Tirimbina.

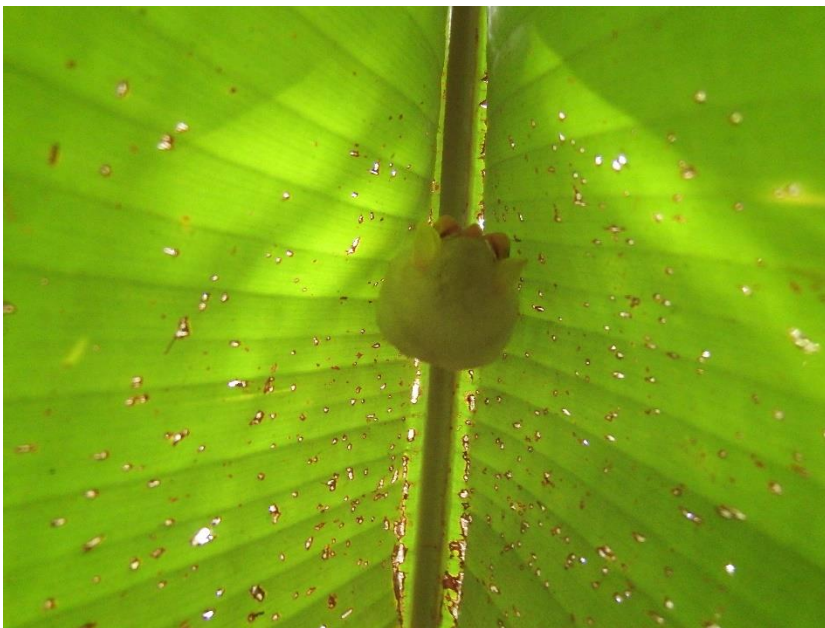
Common Tent-making Bat (*Uroderma bilobatum*): One caught at Tirimbina.

Brown Tent-making Bat (*Uroderma magnirostrum*): One caught at Tirimbina.

Striped Yellow-eared Bat (*Vampyressa nymphaea*): Day roosts at Tirimbina and La Gamba.



Honduran White Bat (*Ectophylla alba*): One at a day roost at La Selva; still not present at Tirimbina after the flood. A local guide at Tirimbina told me that several roosts are known at nearby Bijagual Reserve, where there are also caves with about 8 bat species, but I had no time to check this out.



Thomas's Fruit-eating Bat (*Artibeus watsoni*): One roost in a palm on the hotel grounds at Fortuna.

Jamaican Fruit-eating Bat (*Artibeus jamaicensis*): One caught at Tirimbina.

Pale Spear-nosed Bat (*Phyllostomus discolor*): One roosting in a hollow dead tree at La Gamba.

Common Big-eared Bat? (*Micronycteris microtis*): Presumably this species foraging at night around La Gamba, and briefly using night roosts.

Fringe-lipped Bat? (*Trachops cirrhosus*): Presumably this species checking out the calling frogs at ponds at La Gamba.

Grayish Myotis (*Myotis albescens*): Several in a day roost at La Selva.

Common Moustached Bat? (*Pteronotus parnellii*): Presumably this mid-sized species zooming along the streams at night at La Gamba.

Spix's Disc-winged Bat (*Thyroptera tricolor*): One roost at La Gamba.

Red-backed Squirrel Monkey (*Saimiri oerstedii*): Two large troupes at Manuel Antonio.

White-faced Capuchin (*Cebus capucinus*): Everywhere except at La Gamba where despite ample habitat, monkeys are surprisingly rare, perhaps as a result of past pest outbreaks.

Mantled Howler (*Alouatta palliata*): Everywhere bar La Gamba.



Central American Spider Monkey (*Ateles geoffroyi*): Two troupes at La Selva, one at Rincón de la Vieja.

Variegated Squirrel (*Sciurus variegatoides*): Widespread.



Red-tailed Squirrel (*Sciurus granatensis*): Widespread.

Deppe's Squirrel (*Sciurus deppei*): Common at Monteverde.

Alfaro's Pygmy Squirrel (*Microsciurus alfari*): One at Braulio Carrillo (Quebrada Gonzales).

Montane Squirrel (*Syntheosciurus brochus*): One at Poás.

Mexican Porcupine (*Shiggurus mexicanus*): One at night at Hotel El Bosque in Monteverde.

Central American Agouti (*Dasyprocta punctata*): Widespread.

Eastern Cottontail (*Sylvilagus floridanus*): Common at night on the grounds of Hacienda Guachipelín at Rincón de la Vieja.

Gray Fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*): One crossing the road near Lomas de Barbudal.

Northern Raccoon (*Procyon lotor*): Several at night at Manuel Antonio.

White-nosed Coati (*Nasua narica*): Common at Monteverde, a few at Rincón de la Vieja.

Kinkajou (*Potos flavus*): One at night at La Selva.



Tayra (*Eira barbara*): One briefly crossing the road at La Gamba.

Hooded Skunk (*Mephitis macroura*): One at night near Hacienda Guachipelín at Rincón de la Vieja.

Costero (*Sotalia guianensis*): Two groups on a boat trip at Manzanillo. According to the boat guide, they are seen on 90% of the trips, with Bottlenose Dolphins on 60% and Atlantic Spotted Dolphins on 40% of the trips.



Collared Peccary (*Pecari tajacu*): Common at La Selva.



Plus many indetermined bats and a few mice.