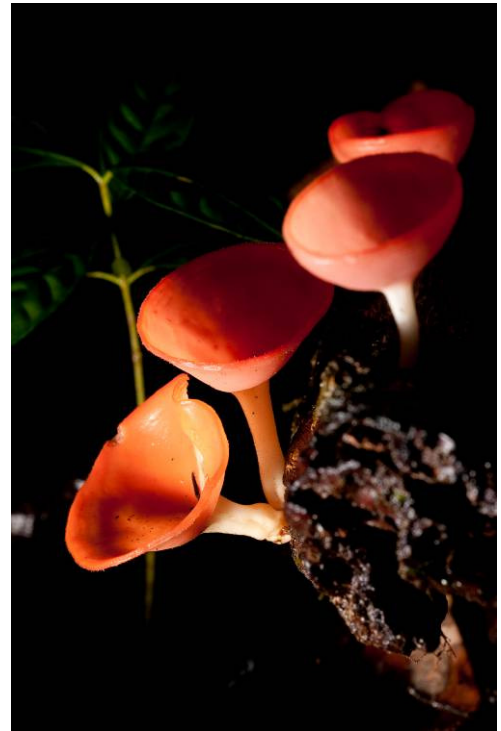




COSTA RICA
2011



TRIP TO COSTA RICA: 31.10 – 01.12.2011

The aim of this trip was to see as much of Costa Rica's diverse wildlife as possible. We were not very familiar with searching for wildlife in the tropics, so we considered every encounter a lucky success. We also wanted to relax during our holidays, so we were only on 95% of searching-for-wildlife-modus. For this trip report we focus on the mammal sightings we enjoyed and we hope that the information here can be useful for mammal watchers in the future.

Tim and Stefi

This trip report includes

1. List of sightings for each location + pictures
2. Extra information on the locations
3. Some general comments
4. Other Animal sightings (birds, amphibians and reptiles)

List of locations

- A. Póas Vulcano NP
- B. Tirimbina
- C. RaRa Avis Ecolodge
- D. La Selva Biological Station
- E. Tortuguero NP
- F. Arénal Volcano Area
- G. Monteverde Area
- H. Carara NP
- I. Manuel Antonio NP and Area
- J. Corcovado NP and Area
- K. San Gerardo De Dota



Locations and English names	Info
A. Poás Volcano National Park	We visited this park twice (31.10 & 30.11), both times in the morning (9-11am). Both times it was drizzling and very foggy.
1. Red-tailed Squirrel <i>Sciurus granatensis</i>	The first time we saw a squirrel running through the bushes while walking on one of the paths. We didn't get to see it well enough to make sure which species it was. It seemed rather small, but as we found out later, red-tailed squirrels aren't exactly giants so we certainly don't go for Poas squirrel. The second time we saw around three or four squirrels around the main viewpoint. They were red-tailed squirrels and they are sometimes fed by tourists, as they were begging.
B. Tirimbina	We visited this reserve twice (31.10 - 02.11 & 10 - 11.11).
2. Variegated squirrel <i>Sciurus variegatoides</i>	On our first morning we saw two variegated squirrels foraging in a large tree along the entrance path towards the reception. We saw them a second time, in the afternoon. This time they were further away and we had to enter a small garden-like area, on the left side of the entrance path. They were in the trees bordering the lodge grounds. (<i>S.v. belti/thomasi</i>)
3. Black myotis <i>Myotis nigricans</i>	This bat was caught on the evening we did the bat workshop. It was a rainy evening.
4. Chestnut sac-winged bat <i>Cormura brevirostris</i>	This bat was caught on the evening we did the bat workshop. It was a rainy evening.
5. Proboscis bat <i>Rhynchonycteris naso</i>	Next to Tirimbina is another hotel (I don't remember the name). You can enter those hotel grounds using the path behind the reception of Tirimbina. If you ask at the reception if you can go see the bats, they will probably let you. A colony of proboscis bats roosts out in the open in the lobby of this hotel. One day there were even two bats out in the open on the wooden structure at the entrance of the hotel. They are quite small, so look well. Some of them are ringed.
6. Greater white-lined bat <i>Saccopteryx bilineata</i>	We saw these also in the hotel next to Tirimbina. These bats are roosting in the dining room, just past the reception (walk in and look to your left side). At the end of the room are a few steps and if you walk up those steps, you will see them hanging on the ceiling.
7. Shaggy bat <i>Centronycteris centralis</i>	We saw this species during a bat-focused walk. It was roosting underneath a large leaf which hung over a track in the reserve. It was so easy to see if you knew it was there, but then again there are quite a few of kilometers of tracks, with lots of leaves hanging over them, so you'd quickly miss something like this.
8. Pygmy round-eared bat – <i>Lophostoma brasiliense</i>	We saw this species during a bat-focused walk. It was roosting in a termite nest at eye height. If you see large termite nests, and there is a hole in the bottom, it's always worth taking a look (if you have a flashlight).
9. Chestnut short-tailed bat – <i>Carollia castanea</i>	We saw this species during a bat-focused walk. Two individuals were roosting under a tree log in the forest. At first they were disturbed and they flew away, but they returned immediately.
10. Honduran white bat <i>Ectophylla alba</i>	We saw this species during a bat-focused walk. They are the coolest bats ever. We saw them twice. Once a guide of another group gave us directions to find them. Two individuals were under a quite small leaf just a meter above the ground. The second time we saw a group of 9 in a large leaf which was hanging right next to the path.
11. Pygmy fruit-eating bat <i>Artibeus phaeostis</i>	We saw this species during a bat-focused walk. We saw this species twice. The first time two individuals were in a leaf at eye height, the second time two adults and a juvenile were hidden quite well in a large leaf a meter off the ground in a bushy plant.

12. Mantled howler <i>Alouatta palliata</i>	Mostly we only heard them, but once we saw them on both suspension bridges.
13. Hoffmann's two-toed sloth <i>Choloepus hoffmanni</i>	One was high up in a tree, almost impossible to see, just before the suspension bridge to enter the reserve.
14. Nine-banded armadillo <i>Dasypus novemcinctus</i>	We saw one at around 4.30pm on the crossing of the Botarrama and the Ceiba trails in the reserve. We heard some noise coming from the bushes next to the track and a few seconds later this great animal quickly crossed the road, showing off really well.
C. Rara Avis Ecolodge	Dates: 02 - 04.11
Squirrel sp.	This was probably a red-tailed squirrel or an alfaró's pygmy squirrel but we only saw a glimpse so it's impossible to know for sure without experience with both species.
D. La Selva	Dates: 05 – 07.11
Hoffmann's two-toed sloth	We saw one pretty well during the guided tour that was included in the overnight stay. It was hanging in a tree next to the football field next to the reception (Hence, not in the actual reserve but before crossing the suspension bridge).
15. Forest rabbit <i>Sylvilagus gabbi</i>	We saw one while walking back from the restaurant to the cabins at around 9pm. There is a paved trail of 1-2km and there are a few grassy trails crossing the paved trail. The rabbit was on one of these.
16. Central American agouti <i>Dasyprocta punctata</i>	We saw a few, including a family with a cute youngster that was running around as if it was suffering from ADD. They were not too difficult to see, but we didn't run into them constantly. We saw them on the SOR and CCL trails.
17. Collared peccary <i>Pecari tajacu</i>	There is a very large population of peccaries. They are not scared of people at all. Sometimes you smell them before you see them, sometimes they would startle us if they suddenly started to make their weird noises (grunting, clicking their teeth, ...). We also saw them while spotlighting, so they seem to be active 24/7.
18. Common opossum <i>Didelphis marsupialis</i>	We saw three while spotlighting on the paved tracks in the reserve. There is an arboretum (which seems to be under construction as not many nice plants were in it). Just before entering the arboretum there is a small bridge. On the stretch before crossing the bridge we saw a large opossum crossing the track. In the arboretum we saw a second one which ran off, giving nice views of fleeing opossum. As we walked back, we saw two more opossums on the spot where we saw the first one. This time, one of the two was quite brave/curious and came closer to inspect us. It was great to see it so well. They are very big, much bigger than we expected and it also seemed much bigger than the maximum 43cm size given in the field guide.
19. Central American spider monkey <i>Ateles geoffroyi</i>	Just like all monkeys, you'd generally first hear them (branches moving a lot, things dropping to the ground...) and then see them. We saw them in the same parts of the reserve as the howler monkeys (CES/CEN trails). One female had a quite small baby.
Mantled howler	We heard them on all days. The first time we saw them with the guide on the CES trail but as we walked more in this part of the reserve, we saw another quite large group (STR trail). They were just crossing the track and we really enjoyed them jumping and climbing from tree to tree. They however didn't like their audience all that much, especially not the alpha male, so we did keep our distance.
E. Tortuguero National park	Dates: 08 – 10.11
20. Paca <i>Cuniculus paca</i>	We were canoeing up the canal Harol. At first the habitat is nice and green, like on the other canals. Then the canal straightens and seemed a bit boring as we were moving along slowly. Here you do get to see the river bank as there is less undergrowth. We decided

	to turn around after a while (also because of the mosquitoes). As we were paddling along, Tim suddenly spotted an animal running along the river bank in our direction. It turned out to be a paca. The paca passed us. It was just a few meters away. It went all very very fast, but it was all out in the open and we enjoyed this amazing sighting.
21. Neotropical river otter <i>Lontra longicaudis</i>	This was an amazing encounter, just minutes after seeing the paca. We saw two otters and we approached them carefully in our canoe. They hadn't noticed us. One animal climbed upon a log that was laying in the water. It took him almost a minute before he noticed us – or rather the clicking of Tim's camera. We had amazing views from just a few meters away. As they noticed us, they gave an alarm call and dived off. They showed up again, right next to the canoe, just an arm-length away. They were making breathing sounds as they were inspecting us, which much resembled spy-hopping in cetaceans. After they had made clear we were not welcome, they disappeared. We saw them around 12am in one of the last bends just up the canal Harol.
22. White-faced capuchin <i>Cebus capucinus</i>	We saw them a couple of times, although less frequently than the other monkeys. We saw them on all canals, except on canal Harol.
Central American spider monkey	They were omnipresent and we got some great views. We also saw them in on the trails at the headquarters. There was a fruiting tree and we got great views of the monkeys feeding on the fruits.
Mantled howler	This species was also omnipresent. We saw them many times when we were in the canoe. One time we encountered a group which were very wild and exited. It seemed that there was something on the forest floor which agitated them very much. One large monkey even went down the tree and was reaching for something on the ground. However, as the bushes were really dense, we couldn't see what was going on. Possibly there was a predator (snake,...) which made them wild. There were even groups from much further away answering the screams (it weren't calls anymore).
F. Aréñal area	Dates: 11 – 13.11
23. White-nosed coati <i>Nasua narica</i>	At Aréñal Observatory Lodge, we saw one climbing down a tree where we parked the car. Later we saw a group on the track going to the waterfall.
Central American spider monkey	We saw a couple at around 4pm on the Saino trail at Aréñal Observatory Lodge.
Mantled howler	Just before seeing the spider monkeys, we saw a group of howlers.
Variegated squirrel	A variegated squirrel was feeding on the berries of a tree just upon walking into the Saino trail at Aréñal Observatory Lodge. (<i>S.v. belti/thomasi</i>)
G. Monteverde area	Dates: 13 – 17.11
24. Watson's climbing rat <i>Tylomys watsoni</i>	We were enjoying the hummingbirds at the feeders of the hummingbird gallery next to the Monteverde reserve. Someone was doing maintenance works on the building. He was taking down a part of the roof. As he took down some wooden construction he suddenly screamed "a zorillo y dos ratones". We turned around and we saw two small rodents on the ground and one very big one that ran off immediately. It turned out that they had destroyed the den of a Watson's climbing rat female. Her two young were trying to hide under the wooden parts on the floor. We picked them up and put them in the greens next to the hummingbird gallery. Hopefully the female came back to pick up her offspring.
25. Bushy-tailed olingo <i>Bassaricyon gabbii</i>	The first evening we arrived at the hummingbird gallery well after dark at around 6pm. We saw a lot of bats but nothing else. The second day we arrived at around 4pm to look at the hummingbirds. The guy of the hummingbird gallery told us that the olingo comes at around 5-5.30pm. He had in fact already visited the feeders earlier that day at 10am. We waited patiently and at 5.15 the olingo

	suddenly turned up. He hesitated for a moment as some last visitors came out of the souvenir shop. Right after that, he quickly climbed down to the feeder. He grabbed the feeder in his little arms and started licking the sugar water from it. He only stayed for a couple of minutes and then quickly disappeared again. We stayed for an hour or two, but only the bats were visiting the feeders during that time.
26. Underwood's long-tongued bat <i>Hylonycteris underwoodi</i>	At the hummingbird gallery we took pictures of the bats and we identified this species from the pictures. It seemed to be the most abundant species.
27. Geoffroy's hairy-legged bat <i>Anoura geoffroyi</i>	At the hummingbird gallery we took pictures of the bats and we identified this species from the pictures
28. Orange nectar bat <i>Lonchophylla robusta</i>	At the hummingbird gallery we took pictures of the bats and we identified this species from the pictures. The bat seems to have a shorter nose than pictured in the field guide but based on the orange fur and clearly visible tail membrane we came to this identification.
29. (?) Pallas's long-tongued bat <i>Glossophaga soricina</i>	At the hummingbird gallery we took pictures of the bats and we identified this species from the pictures. We are however not sure. It is somewhat similar to the orange nectar bat but the fur is rather gray than orange and the animals had rounder ears. Any help with this one would be appreciated! Pictures are on page 12 and page 21
Variegated squirrel	A variegated squirrel was hanging around in the trees behind the café at our B&B (Belcruz, just before entering Santa Elena). We visited the "Hidden Valley/Valle Escondito" private reserve. It is not the greatest forest but it was not too difficult to see animals. Just past the reforestation area, there were some small trees which seemed to hold fruits as the squirrels were hanging around here. When we first passed this spot there were at least 5-10 but unfortunately they saw us before we noticed them. Afterwards we saw 2-3 more variegated squirrels. We also saw one at the entrance of the reserve. (all <i>S.v.rigidus</i>)
Red-tailed Squirrel	We saw 2-3 individuals in the fruiting trees at the Hidden Valley where we also saw the variegated squirrels. We saw one more crossing the track in the far end of the reserve.
Central American agouti	At the Hidden Valley, an agouti found something nice to eat on the track next to the reforestation area, giving great views.
H. Carara National Park	Dates: 17 – 18.11
Central American agouti	We saw 2 times 2 individuals on the first and the second loop trails at the headquarters.
White-nosed coati	While driving the waterfall road (which passes hotel Villa Lapas) for bird watching, we saw a funny looking dog crossing the street. Upon closer inspection it turned out to be a coati which had lost its tail.
I. Manuel Antonio Area	Dates: 18 – 20.11
29. Brown-throated tree-toed sloth <i>Bradypus variegates</i>	During two days in the park we saw quite a few of these. A female was hanging in a tree just over the path that goes to the view point (sendero Escondito). She had offspring and both gave nice close up views. The second day, only the youngster was in the tree. Five individuals (three adults and 2 youngsters) were in one tree at the crossing of the main dirt road and sender Escondito. We saw a male in a tree up high along the entrance dirt road and one large adult was climbing into a tree on the cliff just on the far end of the Manuel Antonio Playa.
30. Northern raccoon <i>Procyon lotor</i>	They were rather common on the Manuel Antonio playa and around the garbage bins close to the playa. A mum with two large youngsters was trying to steal some food from the tourists. Earlier in the morning we saw probably the same three individuals on the punto Catedral trail. We also saw a female climbing up a liana next to the sender Escondito.

31. Lesser white-lined bat <i>Saccopteryx leptura</i>	One individual was roosting on a tree during the mangroves boat tour in the Quepos area.
32. White-tailed deer <i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>	We saw a female eating from the grass next to the main dirt road at around 4pm.
33. Red-backed squirrel monkey <i>Saimiri oerstedii</i>	We had three encounters. Two individuals who didn't show very well were seen from the track that goes off from the sender Escondito. On the sender Escondito we saw a couple feeding off some berries (just a few meters past the sloth mum with her baby). We saw some more crossing the main dirt road high up in the trees.
White-faced capuchin	These were the most common monkeys in the park. We saw them along the dirt road and on the Manuel Antonio beach where they were trying to steal food from the tourists. We also saw two from a far distance during the mangroves boat tour.
Mantled howler	We heard them and saw one individual in a glimpse from the first track to the left upon entering the reserve, the sendero Catarata.
Central American agouti	We saw one foraging on the river bank next to the sendero Catarata, another one from the sendero Escondito, one while walking the sender Punto Catedral and one in the bushes next to the main dirt road.
White-nosed coati	One was trying to look cute to get some food at Manuel Antonio beach.
Hoffmann's two-toed sloth	We saw one high up in the trees along the dirt road. One was showing off in a tree right between the palms at Manuel Antonio beach. We also managed to sit down on the beach right underneath a tree with a sloth, without noticing it until someone pointed it out at us.
Variegated squirrel	We saw at least 4 while driving to the start-point for the mangroves boat tour (<i>S.v. melania</i> and <i>S.v.rigidus</i>).
J. Corcovado surroundings	Dates: 21 - 27.11
34. Grey four-eyed opossum <i>hilander opossum</i>	We saw this opossum from the paved road between Puerto Jimenez and La Palma at around 7-8pm. It was sitting in a tree.
35. Northern Tamandua <i>Tamandua mexiacana</i>	We spotted a first Tamandua in the gardens of our lodge. It was laying on the ground and upon closer inspection we discovered that it was badly hurt (possible it had fallen out of a tree). We informed the rangers at the park headquarters but it died before they found the time to come and pick it up. We saw a second tamandua sleeping in a tree a few kilometers down the dirt road to Carate. It was in the trees bordering a field, just next to the road.
Northern raccoon	During our last spotlighting session on the road from Puerto Jimenez out of the Osa Peninsula, we saw one in a tree and two more in a field a bit further, all before reaching the town of La Palma.
Red-tailed Squirrel	We saw one on our first day in Puerto Jimenez in a tree on the open area on the left just before entering the main street into the village (opposite of Cabinas Jimenez).
K. Corcovado National Park	Dates: 23 – 25.11
36. Braid's tapir <i>Tapirus bairdii</i>	At La Sirena, we had just gone to sleep. We noticed that there were a lot of people walking around and whispering. We got quickly up and we saw to our surprise that a large tapir was eating from the leaves of a plant right next to the headquarter building. It wasn't impressed at all by all the cameras and people and we had great long views. It was a bit surrealistic – tapir watching in your nightwear. The next day we only saw tapir tracks on the beach but the last day we encountered an animal which was foraging right next to the beach. We had great day-time views of this big male. Many more were seen during our stay, but not by us (including a

	mother and youngster crossing the airstrip at around 8am).
37. Red brocket deer <i>Mazama americana</i>	We saw one crossing the airstrip on two occasions. The first time was at around 9am (while it was raining and we were standing on the porch of the ranger station). The second time was at around 4pm while we were walking back to the ranger station.
38. Dusky rice rat <i>Melanomys caliginosus</i>	We saw one in the grass on the airstrip.
39. Vesper rat <i>Nyctomys sumichrasti</i>	A rodent had managed to get up to our food bag (which was pulled up with a string) at La Sirena. The next night we put out some bait (a cookie) and waited for it to come back. It did come back but it ran off quite quickly after we spotted it. We got to see it quite good, but there was no time for a photograph. We are quite sure that it was this species. It seemed smaller than described in the field guide but it had a warm brown color, large black eyes, small round ears and a long fluffy tail.
40. Common tent-making bat <i>Uroderma bilobatum</i>	Two bats were roosting in the leaves of a plant at La Sirena ranger station. When walking from the entrance porch to the kitchen and passing the camping area, it was on the left.
Red-tailed Squirrel	One quickly climbed into a tree on the Guanacaste trail.
Central American agouti	We saw one on the Sirena trail.
White-nosed coati	We saw quite a few while walking from La Leona to the first river crossing. They were looking for crabs, which they dug up easily – the poor crabs didn't stand a chance. At the beach near the airstrip a coati had also dug up a turtle nest and eaten all the eggs.
Red-backed squirrel monkey	We only had one encounter with at least 2 individuals on the last day on the Claro trail at around 8am.
White-faced capuchin	We only saw them on the last day. One was climbing in the trees next to the airstrip and a mum and a baby climbed up a palm tree on the beach next to the airstrip.
Mantled howler	We often heard them but we only saw them on our last day on the Sirena trail and in the trees at the beach between Sirena river and the air strip.
Central American spider monkey	We saw quite a few while walking into the park from La Leona. We also saw them on the Guanacaste trail.
Northern Tamandua	We saw one on the Naranjo trail at around 10am. It was raining quite hard. This animal was foraging in a tree just above our heads. We had great views but due to the rain, taking pictures was very hard.
Collared peccary	We saw one on the Naranjo trail and the last day we saw one more on the Sirena trail.
Common opossum	The second night, we saw two opossums which were searching for food in the plants behind the kitchen and bathroom area.
Brown-throated tree-toed sloth	One was sleeping in a tree on the Naranjo path, but we would have never seen it if a guide hadn't pointed it out to us.
L. San Gerardo de Dota	Dates: 27 – 29.11
Red-tailed Squirrel	These squirrels were quite common on the trails of the Savegre Mountain Lodge. We saw two or three without really looking for them.

Grey four-eyed opossum - *Philander opossum*



Common opossum – *Didelphis marsupialis*



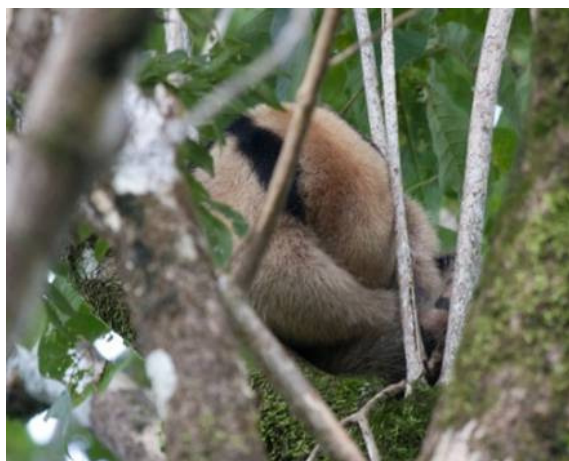
Brown-throated tree-toed sloth – *Bradypus variegates*



Hoffmann's two-toed sloth – *Choloepus hoffmanni*



Northern Tamandua - *Tamandua mexicana*



Nine-banded armadillo – *Dasypus novemcinctus*



Black myotis – *Myotis nigricans*



Chestnut sac-winged bat – *Cormura brevirostris*



Proboscis bat – *Rhynchonycteris naso*



Lesser white-lined bat – *Saccopteryx leptura*



Greater white-lined bat – *Saccopteryx bilineata*



Shaggy bat – *Centronycteris centralis*



Pygmy round-eared bat – *Lophostoma brasiliense*



Chestnut short-tailed bat – *Carollia castanea*



Honduran white bat – *Ectophylla alba*



Pygmy fruit-eating bat – *Artibeus phaeostis*



Geoffroy's hairy-legged bat – *Anoura geoffroyi*



Orange Nectar bat – *Lonchophylla robusta*



Underwood's long-tongued bat – *Hylonycteris underwoodi*



Common tent-making bat – *Uroderma bilobatum*



(?) Pallas's long-tongued bat *Glossophaga soricina*



Variegated squirrel – *Sciurus variegatoides*



Red-tailed Squirrel - *Sciurus granatensis*



Dusky rice rat – *Melanomys caliginosus* (juvenile)



Watson's climbing rat – *Tylomys watsoni* (juvenile)



Central American agouti – *Dasyprocta punctata*



Paca – *Cuniculus paca* (blurry, but it's truly one)



Forest rabbit – *Sylvilagus gabbi*



Neotropical river otter – *Lontra longicaudis*



White-nosed coati – *Nasua narica*



Bushy-tailed olingo – *Bassaricyon gabbii*



Northern raccoon – *Procyon lotor*



Braid's tapir – *Tapirus bairdii*



Red brocket deer – *Mazama Americana*



White-tailed deer - *Odocoileus virginianus*



Collared peccary – *Pecari tajacu*



Red-backed squirrel monkey – *Saimiri oerstedii*



White-faced capuchin – *Cebus capucinus*



Central American spider monkey – *Ateles geoffroyi*



Mantled howler – *Alouatta palliate*



Some extra info on the places we visited

Alajuela

The first and last night we stayed in a hotel in Alajuela called Casa Tago. It was a nice and clean hotel, close to the airport. The owners were nice, the breakfast was good and the parking safe.

A. Poás Volcano National Park

This is a small park with just a few trails. We don't expect that you can see many species of mammals here, just the squirrels. We saw some nice birds here. Unfortunately we never got to see the volcano crater because of the fog. We quickly learned how important it is to have a good poncho when visiting Costa Rica as it was raining all the time. The entrance fee was 10\$ pp + 3\$ for the car. All trails are well maintained, most are even in concrete. You can easily walk here without rubber boots. It was quite cold when we visited, so we were happy with our sweaters.



B. Tirimina

This is a very nice place. We stayed here twice. The first time was right at the start of our trip and we were so excited about exploring the forest that we didn't take any guided tour. We saw a lot, but we did miss out on many nice things. We only found empty bat tents. Hence, we decided to stay a



second time (upon returning from Tortuguero and heading to Arénal). This second time we did arrange a bat tour which was a fantastic decision. The first nights we stayed in a cheap ficus room with bunk beds, which was not so nice. The second time we visited we stayed in the more expensive rooms which were very nice. Both have airco though. The restaurant was ok but nothing special. You had to make prior reservations (before 5pm for diner). You could enter the reserve from around 6am to 5pm. The suspension bridge was nice and the trails in the reserve offered some good

wildlife watching opportunities. Most were quite well maintained but we did like to wear rubber boots. The guides here are great because they really know the reserve. If doing any guided walks, I'd recommend you to do it here. In other places, such as Monteverde, Manuel Antonio etc. the guides didn't seem to be so nice or to know the place as well. If you



want to go looking for bats, make sure that you arrange this well in advance as this kind of walks are not part of what is normally offered. The bat program was nice but not as expected. If you want to take part in the actual netting process, you'd also have to ask this well in advance as it is not part of the regular bat program. It is not allowed to enter the reserve on your own after 5pm. We didn't do a guided night walk, although this might have been nice. They regularly see something on these walks



(sometimes tamandua and once they even saw an ocelot with its iguana-kill). There is a garden-like part with concrete trails (quite small) where the buildings are. You are allowed to walk here at night so we did some spotlighting but we only saw big insects. We didn't see any cats, only ocelot tracks. On the island part of the reserve, there are many strawberry poison-dart frogs. Other nice encounters included a turtle in a stream, great tinamou, rufous mot-mot, broad-billed mot-mot and a sunbittern seen from the suspension bridge.

C. RaRa-Avis Ecolodge

If you plan to go here you have to know one thing: it's really not a lodge. You sleep in a very humble



wooden building. It's more like camping under a roof. The food is served in a cantina-like building and all in all there is no luxury here (apart from hot water showers). We like this kind of places, but it's a bit misleading to call a place like this a lodge. It's more a super cool (quite expensive) field center. This is a place where you get in touch with the jungle. The paths are in such amazingly bad condition that we were sorry we didn't bring a manchette. It was very slippery and we looked very muddy after just one day. There is a lot of primary jungle and it is very difficult to find animals here. If you are looking for mammals (and if that is your only interest) don't go here. They have a very divers mammal fauna and researchers who do fieldwork encounter the most amazing creatures (tapir, anteaters, cats, ...) but without hours

and hours in the field you might be leaving with nothing. We didn't see mammals but we saw other creatures and all in all we fell in love with the place.

The nicest sightings included tanagers (blue and gold, spectacled, black and yellow, emerald, ...), two species of ghost-eyed frogs and an eyelash viper. If you are staying at the main lodge building: keep an eye open for the Watson's climbing rat. We didn't see it but it was apparently running through the room on the ground floor!



D. La Selva

If you want to see animals easily: this is the place to go! If you are staying at the reserve facilities you get to enter on your own, otherwise you have to take guided tours. Guests are also allowed to enter after dark for spotlighting (we just went, without asking first but we were never stopped). The food is true cantina food, not too great but you won't be left hungry. The rooms were very much ok but without airco. The trail system was good. The concrete trails are perfectly maintained. The trails further in the forest are dirt tracks and can be muddy. You can



better explore them with rubber boots. We only explored the concrete trails as there was already so much to see that we didn't manage to get any further. The whole forest is a researcher's playground and everywhere a person can come crawling out of the bushes with some samples or such. What was sad about the place was that it is close to the main road and you can hear the cars (especially the noisy trucks) almost constantly. This does take away a bit of the experience but the animal watching is really good. Don't skip the wooden bridge through the swamp (trail CCC) if you go spotlighting. We saw many frogs here and a caiman which was eating a huge crab. Our favorite sightings were a white-lipped mud turtle crossing trail CEN, the many strawberry poison-dart frogs, the black and green poison-dart frog at around km 1.7 on trail STR, the red-eyed leaf frogs, the iguanas at the

suspension bridge, the vermiculated screech owls in the trees at the end of the suspension bridge, the American pygmy kingfisher at the swamp, ...



E. Tortuguero

After leaving La Selva, we first drove to El Tapir Hummingbird garden which is next to the Braulio Cardillo National Park. No one was there, so we just drove onto the



premises. It all looked weird (a house which was almost a ruin and a small garden with tall grass) but the hummingbirds were there, including some snowcaps! Then we drove to Cariari, stayed there for the night (Vista al Tortuguero, an ok motel) and the next day we drove on to la Pavona to take the public boat to Tortuguero village. If you follow the instructions you can find on the website of the Tortuguero village (<http://www.tortuguervillage.com/>) it's not too hard to find (we also got a printout

of the little map at our motel). We parked the car for 10\$ a day and we took the boat for around 3\$ pp. The trip was nice and we already saw a huge caiman and a very beautiful green basilisk. We arrived at the village, which is quite small and reminded us of an African settlement. We decided to stay at cabinas Icaco which is at the far end of the village, right next to the beach. It was an ok place with hot shower, potable water but other



than that it was quite hostel-like. Everybody tries to sell you their tours. The standard tours by the licensed guides are ok with respect to price (as advertised on the website). However, we wanted something different than the standardized 3 hour canoe trips, we wanted to go out all day. This was rather pricy so we decided to try and go on our own. That afternoon we rented a canoe to try it out and it worked perfectly fine. We rented one for 10\$, we paid our entrance fee to the park (10\$ pp) and we went off. We rented the canoe right next to the headquarters from a guy called Ruben Bananero. There are not many canals so you can't get lost (you get a map at the headquarters). There was no current, so was very chill to peddle on your own. We arranged for a canoe for 6am the next day and we did the same. We saw more or less the same things as the tours, but we got to do it on



our own, without noisy people and at our own pace. Of course at 30\$ for two it was also a lot cheaper than a customized whole day tour (for which the guides charged around 180\$). We loved it. Other than that we walked the trails of the park headquarters, but the forest was full of mosquitoes, so we quickly moved to the beach. We walked the beach every afternoon and evening looking for hatching turtles. We only saw one but it was extremely cool to

see it moving to the sea and running into the waves. The licensed guides seemed quite knowledgeable. Unfortunately we were almost scammed by a (probably) unlicensed guide. He told us he would bring us to a garden (hotel garden?) to show us nice birds. We liked the idea to get to learn some of the flycatchers, doves and pigeons that you see a lot but that are not always as easy to recognize. After about 15min it was clear that the guy couldn't tell apart a flycatcher from a warbler and we stopped the tour. He was not aggressive or anything, but it was an awkward moment. Luckily we didn't lose a lot of time and we hadn't paid in advance! It was the guide who was based at restaurant "el muellecito".

The nice sightings included on the canals: boat-billed heron, yellow crowned night heron, female great curassow, green heron, jacana, caimans, small basilisks running over the water, ...

Other than that: the crabs on the beach and at the ranger station and especially the baby turtle.



F. Arénal area

La Fortuna is quite close to the Arénal national park, but it's still about 25km. The Arenal observatory lodge is much closer to the park. We wanted to stay there but only very expensive rooms were vacant. So instead we stayed at the jungle lodge (which was in the fields and not in the jungle at all). To get there from La Fortuna, you had to take the dirt road to Arenal NP and Observatory lodge, but instead of turning left to go to these two places, you keep going right for a few more kilometers until you see the place on your



left. It was a very nice place but we were the only guests. The flowering plants in the front yard were visited by black crested coquette and other hummingbirds. The two nights we were there we spotlighted along the dirt road all the way to the Observatory Lodge and NP but we only saw nightjars. During the day we visited the premises of the Observatory lodge (4\$ pp and you get a map of the trails). We spent all day walking the trails and looking at birds in the gardens. It was really nice



and we had a great time. We wanted to stay for dinner (to do some spotlighting along the trails afterwards) but it was absolutely not clear whether we could make reservations in the restaurant or not. Hence, we decided not to stay. The grounds of the lodge may however be interesting at night for armadillos, opossums or other creatures. The next day it was raining quite badly, so we decided to move on instead of visiting the NP. The volcano was in the clouds

all night, but apparently it hasn't erupted since months.

Our nice sightings included grey-headed chachalaca, many tanagers and many beautiful grasshoppers.

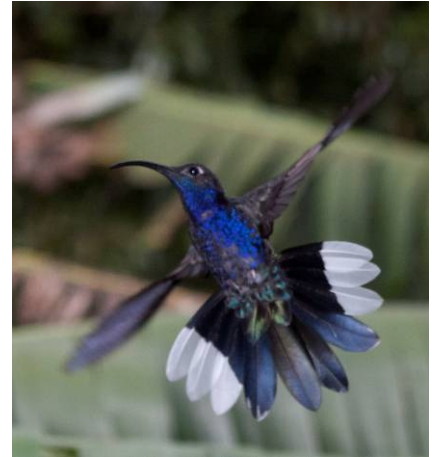
G. Monteverde area

We needed around 4-5 hours to drive to Monteverde from Arénal. Just before entering Santa Elena, we saw a nice looking café called Belcruz with hummingbird feeders outside. We decided to stop and have some (delicious!!!) cake and watch the hummingbirds. It was great. As we were leaving, the owner asked us whether we were interested in staying at his B&B up the hill behind the café. He showed us some pictures of a nice looking place and told us that we were welcome to



come back after checking out the hotels and hostels in town. So we went into town but quickly decided to go back to Belcruz and

we were very happy we did. Randall was extremely nice and he knew a lot about nature. On his premises he regularly sees squirrels, nine-banded armadillos, raccoons, sometimes tree porcupines and once even a jaguarundi (there is a coffee plantation behind the



house too, which we spotlighted, but we saw nothing). He's also into birds and he pointed out nice species to us. The first day in the area we visited the Monteverde Cloud Reserve. We didn't like it all that much. It was very wet, quite cold and rather busy (unfortunately not with animals). We did see a snake eating a frog. The next day we went to Santa Elena Reserve. Here we encountered much more birds, but again no mammals. In the afternoon we visited the bat jungle. The last day we went to the Hidden Valley, a small private reserve. They have a resident tree



porcupine here but it hadn't been seen for a few weeks, so we decided to skip the night walk. If not staying at the Monteverde Cloud Lodge, you can walk their trails for 5\$. We decided to skip the walk as it was already late afternoon and they told us we had to be certainly back before 5pm.

Every evening/night we went to the hummingbird feeders at the hummingbird gallery next to the Monteverde Cloud Reserve, to watch the bats and the olingo. We identified several bat species from



the pictures we made. We talked to a guy at the bat jungle who was a guide for the night walks. If we had done a night walk, we would probably have done it with him as he seemed knowledgeable (José Fabio Araya Rojas: jfsk8@hotmail.com).

Nice sightings in the area included blue crowned mot-mots (Hidden Valley and at the bat jungle), amazing caterpillars and beetles, spangle-cheeked tanager and many others.

(?) Pallas's long-tongued bat *Glossophaga soricina*

H. Carara National Park and area

We watched the big crocodiles at the Rio Tarcoles bridge just before the park headquarters. At the park we walked the trails around the headquarters. There were many birds. We also saw iguanas at the main visitor building. Along the river in the park we saw several beautiful brown basilisks.



Mammal-wise it was rather quiet. We stayed the night in Jaco, which was not such a good choice as it was rather far and we ended up in an uncomfortable hotel. The next day we wanted to do a mangroves bird tour but in the end we decided not to do it after all. We went birding along the road but that was rather disappointing.

I. Manuel Antonio National Park and area

We stayed at Babaloo Inn, which was a very ok place for us. We visited Manuel Antonio National Park on Saturday and Sunday. Luckily it was low season, so it was busy but not overly crowded. The official



guides at this park are utterly annoying. First they stop you about 1km before the park entrance, claiming that you have to park your car there. The first day we were foolish enough to believe this and we parked the car. It was of course a lie and the next day we parked just next to the entrance (where the price was almost the same and where –in contrast to the other place- the guard was still there to actually guard our car at 4pm when we left the park).

The second day the guides of the first spot were actually angry that we just drove on. They are very persuasive, so watch out there! We were stopped 3-4 times by guides on our way to the park, all annoying people but they all seemed official, licensed guides. Of course they also offer their guiding services, claiming that a) it is difficult to see the animals and they would be very sad if people are disappointed because they didn't see anything without a guide and b) it is very difficult to find your way and you will be hiking around for hours without finding the best beaches to relax. In reality it is very easy to see animals and the hiking couldn't be easier, you won't get lost. They recently switched the entrance and



the exit but that doesn't make a big difference. There is one dirt road that leads to the main beach: Manuel Antonio beach. There are a few smaller short tracks into the jungle. We had difficulties spotting the sloths by ourselves, but all the other people seemed really good at it so you just had to look where the others were pointing. Nice sightings included a green iguana, mating iguanas, the many hermit crabs, a gecko feasting on a moth and a laughing falcon (but otherwise few birds).

We went on the mangroves boat tour. This tour was HIGHLY disappointing. We had hoped to see the silky anteater. Apparently chances to see it are smaller in the rainy season and although it was seen

the day before, we were not lucky. The tour guides came to pick us up at the hotel. We then drove out of Quepos (direction Jaco) and a few miles out of town we turned left onto a dirt road between the palm plantations. Here we stopped to see if there were nice birds in the fields. We arrived at the dock and got onto a small boat. We were lucky to be the only ones on the tour. Unfortunately, the mangroves tour proved to be very boring. Of course we were disappointed for not seeing the silky anteater, but actually we saw almost nothing at all and nothing we hadn't seen before (a woodpecker, two capuchin monkeys, a crocodile and crabs). For 65\$ pp this was a very very big disappointment. Actually we felt that 65\$ would also be quite expensive for a tour for just 2 hours, even if we had seen the anteater. I can't imagine how any (non-mammal focused) tourist may be satisfied after such a tour. We don't think we would do it again, not even in the dry season if chances of seeing an anteater are better. It didn't seem easy/possible to do the tour on your own (by renting a canoe or a kayak and going out by yourself).

We then drove on to the Osa Peninsula. The road from Quepos to Dominical is tarred and there is quite a lot of traffic. However, we were sorry that we didn't try any spotlighting along this road (possibly it is less busy after dark). On the relatively short stretch between both towns, we saw a fresh road kill tamandua, a tayra (it was a huge animal!), a raccoon and an extremely fresh female jaguarondi. Hence it seems that many animals cross this road. We only had to move out of the way for a large iguana in the middle of the road.

J. Corcovado National Park area

The road to Puerto Jimenez was a strange experience. The first 30 or so kilometers are in a quite bad condition. We advanced slowly and we were sure that we would arrive well after dark. Then suddenly the road changed and for the last half of the stretch it was more or less the best road we drove on in Costa Rica. We stayed at the Las Islas Lodge just before entering town which was a very nice place with very nice staff/owners. In the garden of the lodge is a small pond where we saw a caiman and basilisks. In the palms opposite of our cabin we saw an iguana and underneath the palm we found an unfortunate



tamandua, which died a few hours later. We stayed here for two nights. We left our car here while we were in Corcovado (no charge and they dropped us off at the bus stop at 5.30 am for free too). The ranger station is next to the airstrip. If you drive around the airstrip, taking the right, you get to a place called Pirate Bay. Here you can park your car and you can walk a few meters to a small pool where there are caiman and where egrets come to sleep at night. Spotlighting in the area was moderately successful. We spotlighted a part of the dirt road to Carate (around 10km) but we only saw caiman and one unidentified mouse which crossed the road while it jumped funnily. The road in and out of the Peninsula was more successful and there is not necessarily more traffic here than on the dirt road. We saw a potoo, a road kill tamandua and a marten-like animal which moved away too fast (Maybe a tayra, but it could have been a raccoon though). While leaving the Osa we saw more on this road (see below). The first day we arranged all our park reservations. As it was low season we easily managed to do so on the spot. Unfortunately the road to Carate was in very bad condition, so we couldn't drive ourselves as we had planned to do. We had to take the collective the next day. This "bus" is actually an animal-truck in which they put some benches. It is supposed to leave twice a day at 6am and 1pm but the bus at



1pm mostly doesn't leave (at least in the rainy season). Hence we took the bus the next day. It was a very bad ride, especially as we got on the bus a little late and all the seats were already taken so we had to stand almost all the way. We arrived at Carate at around 9.30am and we started walking.



To get back we had to come from Drake Bay. We stayed at Cabinas Jade Mar, which was basic but ok. The nice owners were very helpful with arranging transportation

and the next morning we took a boat to Sierpe and then a bus to Puerto Jimenez. We decided to stay at a place along the road out of the Peninsula called El Mirador Osa. The setting was beautiful and the room was not super but still ok. They have a bird feeder outside which attracts tanagers and toucans. We had diner in Puerto Jimenez (there's a nice pizzeria in town) and then we drove to our

hotel, spotlighting along the way. Just after the village of La Palma, we saw a striped owl on a wire which was hunting and which was totally not impressed by us or our spotlight.

K. Corcovado National Park

We hiked into the Park from Carate/La Leona. I wouldn't recommend hiking for anyone who has little time because it takes quite some time. I also wouldn't recommend hiking in without a guide. We had a horrible hike (hard time finding the path, wrong information about the timing of the tides received at the ranger station, wrong information about the distances, having to cross the Rio Claro at dusk,



arriving at the ranger station in complete darkness) but we met many people who did the hike with a guide that had a great trip. If you do want to hike in by yourself, make sure you can leave early in the morning from La Leona. Leaving in the morning from Puerto Jimenez means that you won't make it before dark. We usually don't mind walking around in the dark (always hoping to see some cool stuff) but we do mind crossing creepy rivers in the dark. At first we hiked at ease, looking at any

nice things we saw on the way but about halfway, before dark. If you plan to camp, you can set up your tent under a roof/porch-like construction. Your tent has to be self supporting in order to do so. Our tent wasn't, so we only put up our mosquito-net (using some rope). The next day it was raining. When it's raining you don't see a lot of mammals. Most people stayed around the ranger station that morning. There was a great atmosphere and the guides of all groups were



sharing

information and pointing out animals and birds. Actually we got to see quite a lot of animals without leaving the ranger station (bats, red brocket deer, tapir, opossum, scarlet macaw, bare-throated tiger heron, turquoise cotinga, ...). At around 8pm we also saw a large mouse/small rat in the kitchen area but we couldn't identify it and we were not able to make a picture. It might have been a Talamancan rice rat. We especially talked a lot with two young guys, Nito and Roger, who offer guiding services for the national park and the rest of the Osa

reservations.surcostours@gmail.com / www.surcostours.com.

They were very nice and knew a lot. They were the guides of three young people. Although we didn't actually go into the forest with them, they seemed very knowledgeable. You could probably prearrange all your special interests with them directly. This seemed better to us than taking an organized tour from Drake Bay. The guides of these tours also knew where to find the mammals, but they always had quite large groups to accompany. At the ranger station in Puerto Jimenez they had told us that we didn't need rubber boots, so we were foolish enough to leave them behind. We wish we had taken them with us. The tracks were extremely muddy and you had to cross small rivers all the time. We ended up walking with our sandals, which is of course quite foolish in a forest with poisonous animals. Most animals seem to be concentrated around the Sirena, Naranjo and Claro trails. The second day the mammal watching was much better, probably because it wasn't raining. To leave the park we decided to take a boat to Drake Bay. Public taxi boats leave every day and are around 30\$ one way. As we were quite a few people who didn't want to hike out anymore, we just chartered a small boat for our group which was roughly the same price. Nice sightings in the park included: great currasows, toucans, crocodiles, ...

L. San Gerardo de Dota

The last place we visited was the small village of San Gerardo de Dota. Actually it's just a few houses and some hotels (there is nothing else). We stayed at Cabinas el Quetzal. The place was ok and it included a very nice dinner and a basic lunch box. The view was great. The only downside was that the rooms weren't cleaned every day. At the Savegre Mountain hotel there are a few kilometers of trails. We got a map of the trails at the reception and we walked the easiest trail – Sendero la quebrada (not too steep). We saw some nice insects and birds, including our only emerald toucanets. In the garden of the lodge we saw many colorful birds – tanagers and hummingbirds. Our main goal was of course the quetzal. At the small restaurant up the hill (on the left hand side while driving into the valley) there was a fruiting avocado tree



which attracted red-tailed squirrels and many bird species, including the quetzal. We saw a female and a young male. We only saw one adult male at the bend of the "trogon lodge 1km"-sign. We had never found this place alone, but other bird watchers were already standing here and we just joined the group. Probably it is easiest to get information on where to go to see the quetzals at the Savegre Mountain hotel, as most birders are staying there. We got our info by talking to birders in the lodge garden. Spotlighting in the area didn't pay off. We only saw one unidentified mouse crossing the road. Other nice sightings included: fiery-throated hummingbird, volcano hummingbird, flame-throated warbler and three species of robin.

Some general comments

Transport

We had a rental car (Toyota RAV4) which we rented from Europcar. We organized this in advance and took a full insurance. At the airport the staff picked us up and brought us to their office which is about 15min away. Everything was ok and we more or less quickly got the car. What we didn't like about the car was that it was a benzine with little power, so it used a lot of gasoline (around 12l/100km – I know someone with the same car back home who needs 7l/100km for a diesel, so our car was really a thirsty fellow). The fuel indicator would also indicate for a long time that there was more than half a tank left and then dropped at an amazing speed for the second half. We had two flat tires. The first time was more or less due to the rental company. One of the tires was not properly fixed previously and they had just put a rubber tube into the tire (as you see in a bicycle tire). Also the air pressure on the tires was completely wrong and different tires had very different air pressures. The second flat tire was because of a large nail that had pierced the tire. Luckily finding a place that fixes tires is easier than finding for example a supermarket and it is quite cheap too (something between 1-5US\$).

Driving was not so nice. First, they warn you that getting caught speeding will cost you at least 600 US\$ (for just a few kilometers/hour to fast). Hence, we were quite preoccupied with the speed limits. Speed limits are ridiculously low. In villages it's 40 or 25 km/h, in between villages you're allowed to go at 60km/h and on the large rounds a dazzling 80km/h is allowed. If you keep to the speed limit, you just don't advance. Cars and large trucks (which are madmen on the road!) will pass you by, creating quite dangerous situations. At first we kept to the speed limits, but after a while we sometimes didn't. We did see some speed controls here and there, so it's best to be extremely careful with speeding. Second, the condition of the roads is not always great. Most roads are quite ok. There are few dirt roads. However, the paved roads often have very large holes in them. Some are so large that you cannot avoid them and you just have to drive slowly through them. If you don't pay attention for just a few seconds, you will almost certainly drive into a big hole. If you do pay attention, it's not a big problem. The only road where we really didn't advance very well because of the road condition was the first 30km of the road to Puerto Jimenez.

Last, finding your way is very difficult. We didn't rent a gps because it was quite expensive (10US\$ a day, for 30 days is a lot... we quickly got a 1US\$/day discount when we said we didn't want one, but it was still too much for us). We had prepared the stretches we had to drive in advance by making our own directions. This was however not very helpful because everything turned out to be different than it looked from at home. The road map was not very useful either. There are very few signs. If there are signs, they are something after a turn (so you'll only know after taking the turn that you did the right thing), they are ridiculously small (so you'll certainly miss them) or they are just not there. It's not as bad everywhere, but it's hard to tell where it's bad and where it's not. Unfortunately there are also no name signs when you enter or leave a village. After driving wrong for about 15-20km twice, we just asked every time we weren't 100% sure we were going into the right direction. This worked very well and we didn't drive wrong anymore. Hence, if you don't speak Spanish or if you are in a hurry, it's better to take a gps.

Field guides

Mammals: Fiona Reid (2009) Mammals of Central America & Southeast Mexico. Oxford University Press (**ISBN-10:** 0195343239). It's nice to have such a complete and up to date field guide on mammals. It has detailed information on the species and range maps on the same page and drawings of the mammals in the centre of the book. On many species there is information on where to go to see them. The drawings are good and the information as well. The book also includes good info on rodents and bats but of course it remains difficult to ID these species. Of course not all species occur in Costa Rica, but that is not really a problem.

Birds: Richard Garrigues and Robert Dean (2007) The birds of Costa Rica: A field guide. Cornell University Press (**ISBN-10:** 080147373X). This was a really good book. It has very nice and useful pictures, range maps and some brief information on the species. Compared to the field guide by Stiles and Skutch, it has much (!) better pictures, it is less heavy, cheaper and it has all information on the species on the same page, instead of separate pages for pictures, info and range maps. It does not have as much information and not all marine species (for example gulls) are included. It was perfect for what we needed it and we managed to determine most species easily.

Amphibians/Reptiles: Craig Guyer and Maureen A. Donnelly (2005) Amphibians and reptiles of La Selva, Costa Rica and the Caribbean slope. University of California Press, Ltd (**ISBN-10:** 0520237595). This guide includes species recorded at La Selva (with range maps of entire Costa Rica). There are some small photographs of the species clustered on a few pages. We were not highly enthusiastic of this book, which is a bit outdated. There are just a few photographs per species, although there may be many morphs. The information on where to find the species is limited to La Selva (but seems to be correct). It may be useful for anyone visiting La Selva and region but it is expensive for what it offers.

Food

You don't go to Costa Rica for the food. If you do, you'll be disappointed. In tourist restaurants you pay tourist prices (16US\$ for a meal seemed average). The steaks are the worst we ever ate. They are very thin and even if you ask for them to be almost raw, they will be well done. Typical food is rice and beans with meat or fish and some vegetables and salad. If nicely prepared this tastes quite good, but rice and beans 3 times a day for 30 days in a row is just too much. Food in the stores was quite expensive. We always ate everything we got (including salads etc). Each of us got sick once (just stomach problems, nothing worse). Weird enough, both times, just one of us got sick although we both ate the same. So maybe it wasn't the food...

Paying

You can pay in colones or US dollars. If you pay in dollars and they don't have dollars to give you back, they'll give change in colones, usually at a quite fair exchange rate. At the ATM you can get quite high amounts of money at once (something like 150 000col at once is not a problem). In almost all restaurants, gas stations, ... you can pay with VISA.

Safety

Everybody warned us with crazy stories about people trying to steal your car by smashing into it, piercing your tires, ... We already got scared but we had no problems at all. Of course it's best to be careful at all times for thieves. However, with a bit of luck, you should be fine.

Entrance fees

Information on the internet is not clear at all. When we were there, we paid 10US\$ to enter national parks (parks operated by the government I think). There were no student's discounts and you had to pay each time you entered (no multiple-visit discounts). These parks included Poas, Tortuguero, Carara, Manuel Antonio and Corcovado.

Monteverde and Santa Elena are private parks. Entrance fees were 17US\$ and 15US\$ and there was a student's discount of a few \$. Private parks or lodges usually charged around 5US\$.

Other animals

Complete bird list of our trip:

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna autumnalis*
Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*
Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors*
Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*
Gray-headed Chachalaca *Ortalis cinereiceps*
Crested Guan *Penelope purpurascens*
Black Guan *Chamaepetes unicolor*
Great Curassow *Crax rubra*
Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster*
Red-footed Booby *Sula sula*
Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis*
Neotropic Cormorant *Phalacrocorax brasilianus*
Anhinga *Anhinga anhinga*
Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens*
Rufescent Tiger-Heron *Tigrisoma lineatum*
Bare-throated Tiger-Heron *Tigrisoma mexicanum*
Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*
Great Egret *Ardea alba*
Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*
Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea*
Tricolored Heron *Egretta tricolor*
Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*
Green Heron *Butorides virescens*
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron *Nyctanassa violacea*
Boat-billed Heron *Cochlearius cochlearius*
White Ibis *Eudocimus albus*
Green Ibis *Mesembrinibis cayennensis*
Wood Stork *Mycteria americana*
Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus*
Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*
King Vulture *Sarcoramphus papa*
Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*
Double-toothed Kite *Harpagus bidentatus*
Great Black-Hawk *Buteogallus urubitinga*
Roadside Hawk *Buteo magnirostris*
Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus*
Short-tailed Hawk *Buteo brachyurus*
Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis*
Crested Caracara *Caracara cheriway*
Yellow-headed Caracara *Milvago chimachima*
Laughing Falcon *Herpetotheres cachinnans*
Merlin *Falco columbarius*
Bat Falcon *Falco rufigularis*
Gray-necked Wood-Rail *Aramides cajanea*
Sunbittern *Eurypyga helias*
Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*
Northern Jacana *Jacana spinosa*
Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*
Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*
Willet *Tringa semipalmata*
Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*
Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*
Sanderling *Calidris alba*
Short-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus griseus*
Laughing Gull *Leucophaeus atricilla*
Royal Tern *Thalasseus maximus*

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*
Short-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas nigrirostris*
White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica*
Inca Dove *Columbina inca*
Ruddy Ground-Dove *Columbina talpacoti*
Gray-chested Dove *Leptotila cassini*
Sulphur-winged Parakeet *Pyrrhura hoffmanni*
Crimson-fronted Parakeet *Aratinga finschi*
Scarlet Macaw *Ara macao*
Orange-chinned Parakeet *Brotogeris jugularis*
Brown-hooded Parrot *Pyrilia haematotis*
White-crowned Parrot *Pionus senilis*
Red-lored Parrot *Amazona autumnalis*
Mealy Parrot *Amazona farinosa*
Squirrel Cuckoo *Piaya cayana*
Smooth-billed Ani *Crotophaga ani*
Groove-billed Ani *Crotophaga sulcirostris*
Vermiculated Screech-Owl *Megascops guatemalae*
Mottled Owl *Ciccaba virgata*
Striped Owl *Pseudoscops clamator*
Lesser Nighthawk *Chordeiles acutipennis*
Common Pauraque *Nyctidromus albicollis*
Common Potoo *Nyctibius griseus*
White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris*
Bronzy Hermit *Glaucis aeneus*
Band-tailed Barbthroat *Threnetes ruckeri*
Green Hermit *Phaethornis guy*
Long-billed Hermit *Phaethornis longirostris*
Stripe-throated Hermit *Phaethornis striigularis*
Scaly-breasted Hummingbird *Phaeochroa cuvierii*
Violet Sabrewing *Campylopterus hemileucurus*
Brown Violetear *Colibri delphinae*
Green Violetear *Colibri thalassinus*
Violet-headed Hummingbird *Klais guimeti*
Black-crested Coquette *Lophornis helenae*
Violet-crowned Woodnymph *Thalurania colombica*
Fiery-throated Hummingbird *Panterpe insignis*
Blue-throated Goldentail *Hylocharis eliciae*
Steely-vented Hummingbird *Amazilia saucerrottei*
Rufous-tailed Hummingbird *Amazilia tzacatl*
Stripe-tailed Hummingbird *Eupherusa eximia*
Coppery-headed Emerald *Elvira cupreiceps*
Snowcap *Microchera albocoronata*
Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer *Chalybura urochrysis*
Purple-throated Mountain-gem *Lampornis calolaemus*
White-throated Mountain-gem *Lampornis castaneiventris*
Green-crowned Brilliant *Heliodoxa jacula*
Magnificent Hummingbird *Eugenes fulgens*
Magenta-throated Woodstar *Calliphlox bryantae*
Volcano Hummingbird *Selasphorus flammula*
Scintillant Hummingbird *Selasphorus scintilla*
Resplendent Quetzal *Pharomachrus mocinno*
Slaty-tailed Trogon *Trogon massena*
Black-throated Trogon *Trogon rufus*
Collared Trogon *Trogon collaris*
Blue-crowned Motmot *Momotus momota*
Rufous Motmot *Baryphthengus martii*
Broad-billed Motmot *Electron platyrhynchum*

Ringed Kingfisher *Megaceryle torquata*
Amazon Kingfisher *Chloroceryle amazona*
Green Kingfisher *Chloroceryle americana*
Green-and-rufous Kingfisher *Chloroceryle inda*
American Pygmy Kingfisher *Chloroceryle aenea*
White-whiskered Puffbird *Malacoptila panamensis*
Rufous-tailed Jacamar *Galbula ruficauda*
Emerald Toucanet *Aulacorhynchus prasinus*
Collared Aracari *Pteroglossus torquatus*
Yellow-eared Toucanet *Selenidera spectabilis*
Chestnut-mandibled Toucan *Ramphastos swainsonii*
Keel-billed Toucan *Ramphastos sulfuratus*
Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus*
Black-cheeked Woodpecker *Melanerpes pucherani*
Red-crowned Woodpecker *Melanerpes rubricapillus*
Hairy Woodpecker *Picoides villosus*
Rufous-winged Woodpecker *Piculus simplex*
Pale-billed Woodpecker *Campephilus guatemalensis*
Spotted Barbtail *Premnoplex brunescens*
Ruddy Treerunner *Margarornis rubiginosus*
Plain Xenops *Xenops minutus*
Wedge-billed Woodcreeper *Glyphorhynchus spirurus*
Streak-headed Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*
Fasciated Antshrike *Cymbilaimus lineatus*
Barred Antshrike *Thamnophilus doliatus*
Western Slaty-Antshrike *Thamnophilus atrinucha*
Black-hooded Antshrike *Thamnophilus bridgesi*
Dot-winged Antwren *Microrhopias quixensis*
Chestnut-backed Antbird *Myrmeciza exsul*
Black-faced Antthrush *Formicarius analis*
Torrent Tyrannulet *Serpophaga cinerea*
Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant *Lophotriccus pileatus*
Common Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum cinereum*
Yellow-olive Flycatcher *Tolmomyias sulphureus*
White-throated Spadebill *Platyrinchus mystaceus*
Golden-crowned Spadebill *Platyrinchus coronatus*
Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher *Terenotriccus erythrurus*
Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher *Myiobius sulphureipygus*
Tufted Flycatcher *Mitrephanes phaeocercus*
Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus cooperi*
Black-capped Flycatcher *Empidonax atriceps*
Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans*
Rufous Mourner *Rhytipterna holerythra*
Dusky-capped Flycatcher *Myiarchus tuberculifer*
Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus*
Boat-billed Flycatcher *Megarynchus pitangua*
Social Flycatcher *Myiozetetes similis*
White-ringed Flycatcher *Conopias albobittatus*
Streaked Flycatcher *Myiodynastes maculatus*
Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus*
Turquoise Cotinga *Cotinga ridgwayi*
White-collared Manakin *Manacus candei*
Masked Tityra *Tityra semifasciata*
Yellow-winged Vireo *Vireo carmioli*
White-throated Magpie-Jay *Calocitta formosa*
Brown Jay *Cyanocorax morio*
Blue-and-white Swallow *Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*
Southern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*
Mangrove Swallow *Tachycineta albilinea*
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*
Band-backed Wren *Campylorhynchus zonatus*
Rufous-naped Wren *Campylorhynchus rufinucha*
Black-throated Wren *Thryothorus atrogularis*
Bay Wren *Thryothorus nigricapillus*
Riverside Wren *Thryothorus semibadius*
Stripe-breasted Wren *Thryothorus thoracicus*
House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*
Gray-breasted Wood-Wren *Henicorhina leucophrys*
Long-billed Gnatwren *Ramphocaenus melanurus*
Tropical Gnatcatcher *Polioptila plumbea*
Black-faced Solitaire *Myadestes melanops*
Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus gracilirostris*
Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus aurantiirostris*
Wood Thrush *Hylocichla mustelina*
Sooty Thrush *Turdus nigrescens*
Mountain Thrush *Turdus plebejus*
Clay-colored Thrush *Turdus grayi*
Black-and-yellow Silky-flycatcher *Phainoptila melanoxantha*
Golden-winged Warbler *Vermivora chrysoptera*
Flame-throated Warbler *Parula gutturalis*
Tropical Parula *Parula pitiayumi*
Yellow Warbler *Dendroica petechia*
Chestnut-sided Warbler *Dendroica pensylvanica*
Black-throated Green Warbler *Dendroica virens*
Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia*
Prothonotary Warbler *Protonotaria citrea*
Worm-eating Warbler *Helmitheros vermivorum*
Olive-crowned Yellowthroat *Geothlypis semiflava*
Wilson's Warbler *Wilsonia pusilla*
Slate-throated Redstart *Myioborus miniatus*
Collared Redstart *Myioborus torquatus*
Golden-crowned Warbler *Basileuterus culicivorus*
Rufous-capped Warbler *Basileuterus rufifrons*
Black-cheeked Warbler *Basileuterus melanogenys*
Three-striped Warbler *Basileuterus tristriatus*
Buff-rumped Warbler *Phaeothlypis fulvicauda*
Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola*
Common Bush-Tanager *Chlorospingus ophthalmicus*
Sooty-capped Bush-Tanager *Chlorospingus pileatus*
Black-and-yellow Tanager *Chrysothlypis chrysomelas*
White-throated Shrike-Tanager *Lanio leucothorax*
White-shouldered Tanager *Tachyphonus luctuosus*
Crimson-collared Tanager *Ramphocelus sanguinolentus*
Passerini's Tanager *Ramphocelus passerinii*
Cherrie's Tanager *Ramphocelus costaricensis*
Blue-gray Tanager *Thraupis episcopus*
Palm Tanager *Thraupis palmarum*
Blue-and-gold Tanager *Bangsia arcae*
Emerald Tanager *Tangara florida*
Silver-throated Tanager *Tangara icterocephala*
Speckled Tanager *Tangara guttata*
Rufous-winged Tanager *Tangara lavinia*
Golden-hooded Tanager *Tangara larvata*
Spangle-cheeked Tanager *Tangara dowii*
Blue Dacnis *Dacnis cayana*
Green Honeycreeper *Chlorophanes spiza*
Red-legged Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes cyaneus*
Buff-throated Saltator *Saltator maximus*
Blue-black Grassquit *Volatinia jacarina*
Variable Seedeater *Sporophila corvina*
Thick-billed Seed-Finch *Oryzoborus funereus*

Yellow-faced Grassquit *Tiaris olivaceus*
Peg-billed Finch *Acanthidops bairdii*
Slaty Flowerpiercer *Diglossa plumbea*
Yellow-thighed Finch *Pselliophorus tibialis*
Large-footed Finch *Pezopetes capitalis*
White-naped Brush-Finch *Atlapetes albinucha*
Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch *Arremon brunneinucha*
Orange-billed Sparrow *Arremon aurantiirostris*
Black-striped Sparrow *Arremonops conirostris*
White-eared Ground-Sparrow *Melospiza leucotis*
Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis*
Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra*
Flame-colored Tanager *Piranga bidentata*

Carmioli's Tanager *Chlorothraupis carmioli*
Black-faced Grosbeak *Caryothraustes poliogaster*
Blue-black Grosbeak *Cyanococcyz cyanoides*
Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus*
Black-cowled Oriole *Icterus prothemelas*
Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula*
Montezuma Oropendola *Psarocolius montezuma*
Yellow-throated Euphonia *Euphonia hirundinacea*
Olive-backed Euphonia *Euphonia gouldi*
White-vented Euphonia *Euphonia minuta*
Yellow-bellied Siskin *Spinus xanthogastrus*
House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Reptiles and amphibians **:

	Common name	latin name	location
Amphibians			
1	Ghost eyed glass frog	<i>Centrolene ilex</i>	Rara Avis
2	Dwarf glass frog	<i>Cochranella spinosa</i>	Rara Avis
3	Common rainfrog	<i>Craugastor fitzingeri</i>	Rara Avis
4	Broad-Headed rainfrog	<i>Craugastor megacephalus</i>	Rara Avis
5	Common tink frog	<i>Diasporus diastema</i>	Rara Avis
6	Fitzinger's rainfrog	<i>Eleutherodactylus fitzingeri</i>	La Selva
7	Green-and-black poison dart frog	<i>Dendrobates auratus</i>	La Selva
8	Strawberry poison-dart frog	<i>Oophaga pumilio</i>	Tirimbina, Rara Avis, La Selva
9	Red-eyed leaf-frog	<i>Agalychnis callidryas</i>	La Selva
10	Parachuting Red-eyed Leaf Frog	<i>Agalychnis saltator</i>	La Selva
11	Olive-snouted Treefrog	<i>Scinax elaeochroa</i>	La Selva
12	Common Mexican Treefrog	<i>Smilisca baudinii</i>	Arénal
13	Smokey Jungle Frog	<i>Leptodactylus pentadactylus</i>	La Selva
14	Brilliant forest frog	<i>Rana warszewitschii</i>	Rara Avis
15	Litter toad	<i>Bufo haematiticus</i>	Rara Avis, La Selva
16	Marine Toad	<i>Bufo marinus</i>	La Selva
Reptiles			
1	White-lipped Mud turtle	<i>Kinosternon leucostomum</i>	La Selva
2	Black Wood Turtle	<i>Rhinoclemmys funerea</i>	Tirimbina, La Selva, Tortuguero
3	Green sea turtle	<i>Chelonia mydas</i>	Tortuguero
4	Green Iguana	<i>Iguana iguana</i>	a.o. Tirimbina, La Selva
5	Black Spiny-tailed Iguana	<i>Ctenosaura similis</i>	Corcovado
6	Green basilisk	<i>Basiliscus plumifrons</i>	Tirimbina, Tortuguero
7	Brown basilisk	<i>Basiliscus vittatus</i>	Carara, Corcovado
8	Central American Whiptail	<i>Ameiva festiva</i>	La Selva
9	Slender Anole	<i>Anolis limifrons</i>	Tirimbina, Rara Avis
10	Stream Anole	<i>Anolis oxylophus</i>	Rara Avis
11	Pug-nosed Anole	<i>Norops capito</i>	La Selva
12	Yellow-headed Gecko	<i>Gonatodes albogularis</i>	Tirimbina
13	Turnip-tailed gecko	<i>Thecadactylus rapicauda</i>	Tirimbina
14	House gecko	<i>Hemidactylus frenatus</i>	a.o. Manuel Antonio
15	Eyelash Viper	<i>Bothriechis schlegelii</i>	Rara Avis
16	Brown Debris Snake	<i>Coniophanes fissidens</i>	La Selva
17	Brown Vine Snake	<i>Oxybelis aeneus</i>	La Selva
18	Spectacled caiman	<i>Caiman crocodilus</i>	Tortuguero, Puerto Jimenez
19	American crocodile	<i>Crocodylus acutus</i>	Carara, Corcovado

**We are no specialists. The species we identified ourselves were recognized based on photos.

For pictures of Amphibians and Reptiles see trip report on:

<http://mammaling.wordpress.com/trip-reports/>