

Georgia Audubon Travel - 2022

Location: Costa Rica

Duration: 11 days

Dates: March 17 (Thu) to March 27 (Sun)

Group Size Limit: 12 + guides

Guides:

- Adam Betuel - Georgia Audubon
- Carlos "Charlie" Gomez - Costa Rica Expeditions

Tour Price:

- Georgia Audubon Members- **\$4,100**
- Non Members (Includes a one-year Georgia Audubon membership) - **\$4,150**
- Single supplement for non-shared hotel room: **\$555/person**

Cost Includes: One expert birding tour leader from Costa Rica Expeditions (Charlie Gomez) and a co-leader from Georgia Audubon (Conservation Director Adam Betuel), accommodations in all destinations (double room with private bathroom and hot shower), all ground transportation during the trip (including pick-up and drop-off at the airport), all meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 11 (additionally, a cooler with water and juices will be available on the bus at all times), all entrance fees to parks, a shade-grown coffee farm visit and local bird banding activity, as well as all taxes.

Cost Does NOT Include: Costs of obtaining passports, airfare and any accompanying baggage fees, alcohol or specialty coffee (non-alcoholic beverages included with each meal), snacks, additional beverages, room service, sightseeing not specified in itinerary, souvenirs, laundry, travel insurance, medical costs, gratuities, personal communications, and any other incidentals that participants may wish to purchase

Payments:

1. Down-payment of \$500.00 per person due to reserve spot on trip (\$550 for non-members)
2. Installment payment of \$1,550 per person due by September 15, 2021
3. Final payment of \$2,050 per person due by December 15, 2021

Cancellation: If notice of cancellation by the participant is received by September 15, 2021, a refund of all payments made will be given (less a \$50 administrative fee). If notice of cancellation is received between September 16, 2021, and October 15, 2021, a 50% refund of the tour fee will be given unless the space(s) can be filled, in which case a full refund will be given (less a \$50 administrative fee). Thereafter, all deposits and payments are non-refundable unless the space(s) can be filled, in which case a full refund will be given (less a \$50 administrative fee). In the event of tour cancellation due to weather, strike, war, quarantine, or other unforeseen emergency situation, a 100% refund will be given, less any expenses incurred by the tour operator.

Number of bird species expected: 350 to 400

Target Species: Resplendent Quetzal, Scarlet Macaw, White-eared Ground-Sparrow, Cabanis's Ground-Sparrow, Talamanca specialties (Volcano Hummingbird, Yellow-thighed Brushfinch, Black Guan, Collared Redstart, Fiery-throated Hummingbird, and more), Fiery-billed Aracari, Turquoise Cotinga, Mangrove Hummingbird, Speckled Tanager, Golden-hooded Tanager, Timberline Wren, Volcano Junco, and so, so many more. Additionally, we will look for many northern migrants including Golden-winged



Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Summer Tanager, Baltimore Oriole, American Redstart, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Northern Waterthrush, and many more.

Pace/Walking Effort: Moderate pace. Very few long walks. Most walking will be on shorter loop trails. Some flat terrain but most spots will have at least some incline. Some areas can be steep and wet. You will spend a lot of time on your feet. Days will often be long with substantial time on your feet or on the vehicle though not overly strenuous. General schedule:

- Early start with coffee and nearby birding (feeders, grounds of lodge)
- Breakfast
- More birdwatching
- Lunch followed by optional break or more birdwatching
- More birding!
- Dinner
- Daily checklist rundown
- Bed
- ****Some nights will have optional owling****
- ****If it is not a travel day, participants can of course skip any outing and stay at the hotel****

Money: Costa Rica uses the Colón (roughly 615 to 1 USD). Dollars are widely accepted though it is best to avoid large denominations and bills should be in good shape - worn/torn currency may not be taken. If you want local currency, it is best to exchange at a hotel rather than the airport (our local guides can assist with this). Credit cards are often accepted at larger establishment (especially MC and Visa) and ATMs are widespread. You may want to notify your credit cards or bank prior to departure.

Tipping: Tipping is completely up to each participant and is not obligatory. Additionally, your trip cost does include many tips (servers, local site guides). However, there are still some people you may want to tip such as porters, housekeeping, and of course our guide and driver. In general, dollars are preferred over Colones. Here are some recommendations and things to consider when budgeting. \$1-\$2 USD is a fair amount for housekeeping and porters. Local guides will be tipped by our guide but you may feel inclined to give them a few extra dollars. Upon arrival, a representative from Costa Rica Expeditions will transport us to our hotel. This person will help with bags and give information about the country. You may want to have a few dollars for this person upon arrival in Costa Rica. Finally, you may want to tip our guide Charlie and driver Nino who will be with us the entire duration of the trip. Below is what you may want to tip:

- You can find information on tipping guides and drivers online but the general recommendations are:
 - Guide - \$10 to \$20 USD per day
 - Driver - \$5 to \$10 USD per day
 - These costs are per person in case you are travelling as a couple/group

Photography: Opportunities should be plentiful for birds and landscapes. Many habitats will be lush and forested which may make photography a bit more difficult. Additionally, we will be in some damp areas and on steep trails that could pose a risk to your equipment. However, we will visit multiple feeders that can provide spectacular opportunities for pictures. It is important to remember this is a bird and nature watching trip and not a photography trip. We will slow for photos when appropriate but in general, the pace will be a bit quick

Climate: We will be visiting a range of altitudes and thus a variety of temperatures. We can expect temperatures as low as the 40's in the mountains and as hot as the 80's to 90's on the coast. Most places should be pleasant to slightly warm. Coastal areas should be dry though rain/drizzle is likely in

the mountains. We will be at some higher altitudes (10,000+ ft for short periods of time, highest lodging at ~6,500ft).

Bugs: Typically not too buggy, but it is always smart to have bug spray on hand

Accommodations: Fair to excellent. At most locations, we will be using one of if not the best lodging options available. However, at some destinations we will prioritize proximity to birding locations. Hotels should have typical amenities including WIFI though it may not meet US standards or may be confined to common areas. The expected hotels are:

- Hotel Bougainvillea (www.hb.co.cr)
- Toucanet Lodge (www.toucanetlodge.com)
- Talari Mountain Lodge (www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g12885879-d302695-Reviews-Talari_Mountain_Lodge-Rivas_Perez_Zeledon_Province_of_San_Jose)
- Las Cruces - Organization for Tropical Studies (<https://tropicalstudies.org/portfolio/las-cruces-research-station/>)
- La Cusinga Lodge (www.lacusingalodge.com)
- Hotel Villa Lapas (www.villalapas.com)

Transportation within country: The group will be in a 2017 Toyota Coaster. It is a 20-person vehicle, but we will have our luggage on the back few seats. The vehicle has A/C and WiFi.

Water and snacks: We encourage you to bring a reusable water bottle. All hotels will have a refill station and there will always be drinking water and juice on the bus. Tap water is generally safe to drink, but bottled water or filtered water are typically available. Additional snacks or drinks desired away from meal times will be the responsibility of the trip participant.

Field Guides: The leaders will have guides so you do not need to purchase a book unless you would like your own. Here are some things to consider.

- *The Birds of Costa Rica: A Field Guide* by Richard Garrigues and Robert Dean. 2014. Probably the best country guide
- *Birds of Central America: Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama* by Andrew Vallely and Dale Dyer. 2018. Fantastic book for the region. A bit large and you may not want to bring it with you. However, it is a great reference if you like to study beforehand or want to learn more about the region
- Merlin - The Merlin app by Cornell has a downloadable pack to the birds of Costa Rica. It is a great resource and is like a localized field guide on your phone.

Itinerary Outline:

Day 1: Arrive in San Jose

Day 2: San Jose to Copey Valley

Day 3: Paraiso de Quetzal

Day 4: Costa Rica Bird Observatory and Talari

Day 5: Los Cusingos

Day 6: Las Cruces day 1

Day 7: Las Cruces day 2

Day 8: Uvita

Day 9: Oro Verde

Day 10: Carara and Rio Tarcoles

Day 11: Departure

Tips for packing

- Layers
- Thin long pants and long sleeved shirts
- Fleece or jacket
- Rain gear
- Hiking boots or very sturdy hiking shoes. Rubber boots not necessary. Waterproof is always preferable
- Comfortable shoes for around hotels
- Sun protection (hat, sunglasses, sunscreen)
- Bug spray
- Gloves and hat - It may be cold on a morning or two
- Binoculars
- Camera (if you want)
- Scope - Both guides (Adam & Charlie) will have a scope. You only need to bring one if you want your own
- Medication
- Cell phone - Make sure to check with your provider on an international package
- Chargers & batteries
- Flashlight
- Water bottle
- Travel insurance documentation should you get some
- Passport (may want a photo in case you lose it)
- Field guides (optional)
- Some people like a small, collapsible umbrella
- Foldable waking sticks if needed

If you have any further questions, please contact Adam Betuel

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