



COSTA RICA

BIRDING AND MORE BY CAMERA with KS Nature Photography

December 9 – 18, 2021

For birders and photographers alike, the incredible avifauna of Costa Rica is certain to inspire. Accompanied by nature photography expert Krisztina Scheeff, you'll have the opportunity to receive personal instruction during classroom sessions and field exploration, customized to all levels of experience and interest. Your journey spans a diverse range of ecosystems and elevations to spot some of the hundreds of bird species that call Costa Rica home: the Caribbean lowlands of the Sarapiquí Valley, the confluence of tropical dry forest and humid rainforest near the Pacific coast, and the cloud forests of the Talamanca Mountain Range. Experience all that Costa Rica birding has to offer, with a chance to bring your photography to the next level!

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Sharpen your photography skills in both the classroom and the field with guidance from photography expert Krisztina Scheeff.
- Explore the trails of Selva Verde Lodge's private rainforest reserve and take a boat ride down the Rio Sarapiquí to look for riverine species.
- Journey through the world-renowned La Selva Biological Station to photograph some of the 400-plus bird species found here.
- Visit the birding hotspot of Carara National Park in Costa Rica's Central Pacific region, which is one of the most ecologically diverse areas of the country.
- Seek out the highly coveted Resplendent Quetzal, plus other species like the Red-fronted Parrotlet and Costa Rican Pygmy-Owl that inhabit the temperate forest and páramo habitats of Cerro de la Muerte.

ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

DECEMBER 9 - DEPART US

Depart the US on an overnight flight.

DECEMBER 10 - SAN JOSÉ

Upon arrival in San José, transfer to Hotel Bougainvillea and check in. Check-in available at 3 pm. This evening, enjoy dinner and a welcome orientation. Afterwards, receive an introductory presentation on tropical birding from a local expert. Starting tomorrow, each evening the leader will host a photography classroom session. The sessions are optional for participants to attend. *Overnight at Hotel Bougainvillea. (D)*

DECEMBER 11 - SARAPIQUÍ

After breakfast, check out of the hotel and start your journey to Selva Verde Lodge & Rainforest Reserve in the Caribbean lowlands, at elevations ranging from 180 to 220 feet. Founded by the Holbrook family in 1985, the lodge is renowned for its commitment to ecological preservation and sustainability. En route, stop at La Paz Waterfall Gardens for birding, photography and lunch. After arriving at Selva Verde, receive a brief orientation to the facilities and spend time exploring the property before dinner. The reserve is home to a large assortment of avian life, including several types of herons, egrets, hawks, falcons, macaws, hummingbirds, flycatchers, warblers, sparrows and tanagers. Specific species often spotted at Selva Verde include the Keel-billed Toucan, Sunbittern, Crimson Tanager, Wood



YELLOW-THROATED TOUCAN
KS NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

Thrush, Violet-crowned Woodnymph, and Grey-necked Wood-Rail. Selva Verde is also home to the endangered Great Green Macaw, which can occasionally be found feeding on the giant fruiting almond trees in the rainforest. This evening, attend a photography presentation by your leader in the conference room. *Overnight at Selva Verde Lodge. (BLD)*

DECEMBER 12 - SARAPIQUÍ

Depart at dawn for the world-famous Organization for Tropical Studies La Selva Biological Station for early morning birding in the tropical wet forests. La Selva consists of approximately 2,500 acres of land, over 90 percent of which is virgin forest. The area averages over 13 feet of rainfall each year, making it a prime spot to observe water birds. Over half of Costa Rica's recorded bird species have been spotted at La Selva, including the Bare-necked Umbrellabird, Red-capped Manakin, Great Antshrike,



ANOLE LIZARD
KS NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

Chestnut-backed Antbird, Slaty-tailed Trogon, Striped Cuckoo, Slaty Spinetail, Yellow-tailed Oriole, and Rufous-tailed Jacamar. Return to the lodge for lunch and an afternoon photography talk. This evening, after dinner, take a walk in search of nocturnal species. *Overnight at Selva Verde Lodge. (BLD)*

DECEMBER 13 - SARAPIQUÍ

Begin the day with birding around the Selva Verde grounds and reserve. Later this afternoon, take a boat ride on the Rio Sarapiquí. While winding down the river bordered with forests and cultivated fields, look for aquatic animals, birds, and reptiles in their natural habitat. You may also see residents going about their daily lives and witness the impact local banana plantations have on this watershed. Late this afternoon, take a hike on the lodge grounds with your leader to practice photography techniques. *Overnight at Selva Verde Lodge. (BLD)*

DECEMBER 14 - CARARA

Travel to Villa Lapas today, arriving in time for lunch at the lodge. Later this afternoon, when it cools off a bit, go for a boat ride along the Tárcoles River to watch for both water and shore birds, like Double-striped Thick-knee, Roseate Spoonbill, jacanas, and ducks. The Tárcoles River basin is one of the most important in the Pacific coastal region; it drains virtually the entire western side of the Central Valley. Tárcoles hosts an amazing diversity of wildlife along its banks. The river is a perfect place to catch a glimpse of mangrove specialties such as the rare Rufous-necked Wood Rail, Mangrove Hummingbird, Pygmy Kingfisher, Panama Flycatcher, Mangrove Vireo, Mangrove (Yellow) Warbler, and Scrub Greenlet. Perhaps the most famous of all its inhabitants are the enormous crocodiles that live on its banks. Later take a guided night walk to observe owls. *Overnight at Villa Lapas. (BLD)*

DECEMBER 15 - CARARA

Take an early morning bird walk before breakfast. Then set out for a full day at Carara National Park, one of the birding hotspots of Costa Rica. The park is located in Costa Rica's Central Pacific region, one of the most ecologically diverse areas of the country. The intersection of northwestern tropical dry forest with the humid rainforest of the South Pacific region, concentrated in a relatively small area, produces an interesting combination of species from both ecosystems. Keep your eyes open for Golden-naped Woodpecker, Baird's Trogon, Orange-collared Manakin, Riverside Wren, Black-hooded Antshrike,

Dot-winged Antwren, Long-billed Gnatwren, and Chestnut-backed Antbird. If time permits, photographers get some time together. Before dinner at the lodge, watch for macaws from a nearby bridge. *Overnight at Villa Lapas. (BLD)*

DECEMBER 16 - SAN GERARDO DE DOTA

After breakfast, check out and head to Cerro de la Muerte, an area at the top of Cordillera de Talamanca that's famous for its diversity of endemic wildlife. Consisting of temperate forest and páramo habitats, the natural vegetation attracts species such as the rare Red-fronted Parrotlet, Costa Rican Pygmy-Owl, Dusky Nightjar, Fiery-throated, Volcano, and Scintillant Hummingbirds, Gray-tailed Mountain-gem, Ruddy Treerunner, Buffy Tuftedcheek, Silvery-fronted Tapaculo, Ochraceous Pewee, Silvery-throated Jay, Black-and-yellow Silky-flycatcher, Volcano Junco, Timberline Wren, Zeledonia, and Resplendent Quetzal. Look for these species and others at Cerro de la Muerte and La Georgina en route to Savegre. After check-in, enjoy afternoon birding at the lodge before dinner. Take some time to visit the hummingbird feeders in front of reception and off the balcony at the lounge. The feeders are often active with resident Magnificent Hummingbird, Green Violetear, Gray-tailed Mountain-gem, Volcano Hummingbird, and tiny Scintillant Hummingbird. *Overnight at Savegre Hotel Natural Reserve & Spa. (BLD)*



SUMMER TANAGER
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DECEMBER 17 - SAN GERARDO DE DOTA

Savegre Hotel is located in a small community in the Talamanca Mountains and houses its own private biological reserve. This high-elevation habitat of mostly oak and highland cloud forest is rich with insects, mammals, amphibians, and a huge variety of avifauna—170-plus bird species. The large centennial oaks that cover the forest are laden with lichens and mosses that contrast with the colorful bromeliads. Spend the morning birding for Spotted Wood-Quail, Costa Rican Pygmy-Owl, Collared Trogon, Buffy Tuftedcheek, Ruddy Treerunner, Ochraceous Pewee, Barred Becard, Zeledonia, and Golden-browed Chlorophonia. Head to Los Lagos in the afternoon in search of the Resplendent Quetzal. Dinner is followed by a guided night walk. *Overnight at Savegre Hotel Natural Reserve & Spa. (BLD)*

DECEMBER 18 - DEPARTURE

After breakfast, depart for San José and the airport. Flights should be scheduled to depart after 1 pm.

ABOUT YOUR LEADER



KRISZTINA SCHEEFF

Photographer / Guide / Owner
KS Nature Photography

Krisztina has been photographing the natural world, with an emphasis on wildlife, birds and landscapes, since the age of 18. She has been published in Wild Planet Photo Magazine, Audubon papers, and won awards from National Audubon Society and local organizations. She has had numerous art exhibits and is a

workshop leader every year at the San Diego Bird Festival run by San Diego Audubon Society. Her enthusiasm and passion for wildlife photography rubs off on everyone who meets her.

Photography is an adventure, just like life itself. Come join me on this journey exploring the beautiful world of wildlife and landscapes!

ksnaturephotography.com

LAND PRICING

\$2,695 (based on 10 participants)

Cost includes meals, accommodations, and activities as indicated in the itinerary, in-country transportation, full-time guide for duration of program, most tips/gratuities, bottled water on the bus, and non-alcoholic beverages with meals.

Does not include international airfare, tips and gratuities for main guide(s) and driver, or items of a personal nature.

Single supplement: \$275 per person

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 \$275 per person. A \$250 per person non-refundable deposit and enrollment form are required to reserve your space on the trip. Final non-refundable payment is due September 5, 2021.



YELLOW-HEADED CARACARA
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SQUIRREL MONKEY
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WHITE-FACED CAPUCHIN MONKEY
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SUMMER TANAGER
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ROADSIDE HAWK
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SCARLET MACAW
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FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL

Visit holbrook.travel/ksphoto-cr1221 or contact Debbie Jordan at **866-748-6146** or email debbie@holbrooktravel.com