



Green Violetear (*Colibri thalassinus*)
Photo by Pelin Karaca



HIGH INTENSITY!

This program is for serious birders. Expect at least 5-6 hours of birding each day.

COSTA RICA

BIRDER'S PARADISE: SAVEGRE, SARAPIQUÍ & ARENAL

with Madison Audubon

February 24 - March 6, 2018

This 11-day program with Madison Audubon gives you a taste of prime birding locations throughout Costa Rica. Despite its small size, more than 900 types of birds have been recorded in the country. Combine that with its accessibility and its friendly people, and you will be met with the perfect birding opportunity to learn and enjoy areas such as Savegre, Sarapiquí, and Arenal. Discover target species such as the Keel-billed Toucan, Great Green Macaw, Yellow-tailed Oriole, and Red-lored Parrot. Your group will be accompanied by a local, bilingual birding guide who is an expert at identification by both sight and sound and who will help ensure you spot as many species as possible.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit the Arenal Observatory, where over 400 bird species have been recorded, for the chance to spot Three-wattled Bellbirds, Fasciated Tiger-Herons, Northern Jacanas, and Steely-vented Hummingbirds.
- Go birding in the upper canopy of the mature forest trail system at Arenal Hanging Bridges.
- Spend a day in Carara National Park, one of the birding hotspots of Costa Rica, located in one of the most ecologically diverse areas of the country.
- Travel to Cerro de la Muerte, an area located at the top of the Cordillera de Talamanca that is famous for its diversity of endemic wildlife.

ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

FEBRUARY 24 - SAN JOSÉ

Arrive in San José and transfer to the Country Inn & Suites. This evening at leisure to rest. Dinner not included. *Overnight at Country Inn & Suites.*

FEBRUARY 25 - SARAPIQUÍ

This morning meet for an early breakfast and orientation in the hotel restaurant. Then depart for this morning visit La Paz Waterfall Gardens located in the cloud forest near Poás Volcano. More than two dozen hummingbird species have been recorded at the feeders here, then you will stop at Cinchona for close up views of birds at the feeders. After lunch at La Paz, stop by Cinchona and continue to Selva Verde Lodge and Reserve, situated in the Caribbean lowlands at elevations of between 180-220 feet. Founded by the Holbrook family in 1985, Selva Verde Lodge is renowned for its commitment to ecological preservation and sustainability. The reserve is home to a large assortment of avian life including several types of heron, egret, hawk, falcon, macaw, hummingbird, flycatcher, warbler, sparrow, and tanager. Specific species that are often spotted at Selva Verde include the Keel billed Toucan, Sunbittern, Crimson Tanager, Wood Thrush, Violet Crowned Woodnymph, and Grey necked Wood Rails. Selva Verde is also home to the endangered Great Green Macaw. The Great Green Macaws can occasionally be found here, feeding on the giant fruiting almond trees in the rainforest. Upon arrival you will have a brief orientation to the facilities and birding on the lodge trails. This evening after dinner take a walk on the lodge grounds to look for walking in search on nocturnal species. *Overnight at Selva Verde Lodge & Rainforest Reserve. (BLD)*

FEBRUARY 26 - SARAPIQUÍ

Depart at dawn to journey to the world-famous 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 895 recorded bird species have been spotted at La Selva, including the Bare-necked Umbrellabird, Red-capped Manakin, Great Antshrike, Chestnut-backed Antbird, Slaty-tailed Trogon, Striped Cuckoo, Slaty Spinetail, Yellow-tailed Oriole, and Rufous-tailed Jacamar. Visit Tirimbina this afternoon to visit a cacao plantation and learn traditional methods of chocolate-making. *Overnight at Selva Verde Lodge & Rainforest Reserve. (BLD)*

FEBRUARY 27 - SARAPIQUÍ

This morning depart at 5 am for morning birding at Colonia del Socorro. Have lunch back at the lodge. Late afternoon boat ride on the Rio Puerto Viejo. Expect to

see aquatic birds in their natural habitat. *Overnight at Selva Verde Lodge & Rainforest Reserve. (BLD)*

FEBRUARY 28 - ARENAL

This morning after breakfast depart for Arenal Observatory Lodge, with a stop at La Fortuna's Eco-Center Danaus, a private ecological reserve where programs for conservation, training, environmental education, and sustainable production are developed. Here there will be birding along the grassland areas, the bridge over the Burío River, in the secondary forest and the natural spring in search of some of the 150 species recorded here. Also visit the butterfly habitat and have lunch in La Fortuna before continuing to the hotel. Arenal Observatory is not only the only ecolodge situated between Lake Arenal and the massive Arenal stratovolcano, it is also the only hotel situated within Arenal National Park. Set on a ridge amid towering pine trees and beautiful rainforest on the south side of volcano, the lodge boasts seven miles of well-maintained trails on over 800 acres. A birder's paradise, more than 400 species of birds have been recorded here. Some of the more spectacular local residents include the Three-wattled Bellbird, Fasciated Tiger-Heron, Sunbittern, Laughing Falcon, Red-lored Parrot, Great Curassow, Northern Jacana, Steely-vented Hummingbird, and Keel-billed Toucan. There is also plenty of other wildlife in the area, including three species of monkeys. Elevations range from 1,650 to 2,950 feet. *Overnight at Arenal Observatory Lodge. (BLD)*

MARCH 1 - ARENAL

Start the day with birding on the lodge trails. After breakfast, transfer to Arenal Hanging Bridges for birding along the 15 bridges, of which six are suspended in the upper canopy of this mature forest trail system. The elevation is approximately 1,900 feet. The trail system straddles types of ecosystems forming a transitional vegetation strip with high biodiversity where both highland and lowland species occur. There is an excellent chance to see motmots and jacamars. Return to the lodge for lunch and this afternoon continue birding on the lodge's trails. *Overnight at Arenal Observatory Lodge. (BLD)*

MARCH 2 - CARARA

Travel to Villa Lapas today, arriving in time for lunch at the lodge. When it cools off a bit, later this afternoon experience 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, virtually draining the entire western side of the Central Valley. Tárcoles hosts an amazing diversity of wildlife along its banks, and the river is a perfect spot 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)*

MARCH 3 - CARARA

Take an early morning bird walk before breakfast. Later visit Carara National Park for the day, one of the birding hotspots of Costa Rica. The park is located in Costa Rica's Central Pacific region, which is one of the most ecologically diverse areas of the country. The intersection of the northwestern tropical dry forest habitats with the humid rainforests of the South Pacific region in a relatively small area produces a very interesting combination of species from both ecosystems. Keep your eyes peeled 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. Before dinner at the lodge, watch for macaws from a nearby bridge. *Overnight at Villa Lapas. (BLD)*

MARCH 4 - SAN GERARDO DE DOTA

After breakfast continue to Cerro de la Muerte, an area located at the top of the Cordillera de Talamanca (10,400 feet elevation) that is 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. Afternoon birding at the lodge before dinner. Take some time to visit the hummingbird feeders in front of reception and off the balcony of 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 Mountain Hotel. (BLD)*

MARCH 5 - SAN GERARDO DE DOTA

Savegre is located in a small community in the Talamanca Mountains (approx. 7,200 feet elevation) and houses its own private biological reserve. The high elevation habitat of mostly oak forest and highland cloud forest attracts a huge variety of avifauna. The large centennial oaks that cover the forest are laden with lichens and mosses that contrast with the colorful bromeliads. The forest is rich with insects, mammals, and amphibians, and more than 170 bird species. Spend the morning birding in search of 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 Mountain Hotel. (BLD)*

MARCH 6 - DEPARTURE

Early morning departure for San José and the airport. Flights should be scheduled to depart after 1 pm this afternoon. (B)

MEET YOUR LEADER

LEVI WOOD

Levi was born and raised in Madison, Wisconsin where he studied ornithology as part of his M.S. degree in Zoology. He spent summers as a bird life instructor at the National Audubon adult camp and as a naturalist for the National Park Service in Yellowstone National Park. He has been active in the Madison Audubon Society for more than 30 years, serving as a board member and Field Trip Chair for over 20 years, organizing and leading bird trips. Currently, he is a board member for the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology (WSO) and manages their Honey Creek Nature Preserve in the Baraboo Hills. He is also a Naturalist at the UW Arboretum and conducts public tours on weekends. "I first visited Costa Rica in 1993 and have returned many times on my own, or as a participant on trips with WSO and Madison Audubon, and twice as a volunteer on hummingbird research trips. Over the years, I have really enjoyed birding in Costa Rica and look forward to sharing its amazing birds with you."

LAND PRICING

\$2,625 (10 participants)

Cost includes meals, accommodations, and activities as indicated in the itinerary, in-country transportation, full-time guide, donation to Madison Audubon, and carbon offset.

Does not include international airfare, estimated at \$925 from Madison, gratuities for guide or driver, or items of a personal nature. Other departure cities available.

THE FINE PRINT

Cost is based on double occupancy; for a single room throughout the trip add \$175 per person. A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form are required to reserve your space on the trip. This deposit is refundable excluding a \$100 cancellation fee until November 21, 2017, at which time non-refundable final payment is due. Travel/trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. For more information call Travel Insured at 800-243-3174 or visit www.travelinsured.com. Holbrook Travel's agency number is 15849.



This program includes optional carbon offsetting with ClimateSafe. Learn more at holbrooktravel.com/climatesafe



FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL

Visit holbrook.travel/madison-cr18 or contact Debbie Sturdivant Jordan at 866-748-6146 or debbie@holbrooktravel.com

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