

Trip Report: Costa Rica – Bosque de Paz

July 24th – 26th 2014



During a long weekend visit to Costa Rica to attend Clari and Fred's wedding, we squeezed in a two-night stay and one full day of birding at the lovely Bosque de Paz lodge some 60km from San Jose - less than two hours drive on the narrow, winding country roads! Located on the continental divide at an altitude of 1500m, the lodge's private reserve protects around a thousand hectares of cloud forest. This primary and secondary forest forms a biological corridor that connects the Parque Nacional Volcán Poás with the Parque Nacional Juan Castro Blanco National Park, and is home to many regional endemic species.

For this short trip we went 'old school', i.e. without playback (not by design, but because I forgot to bring my i-Pod that was loaded with Costa Rican playlists) and unguided (except for one rather wet pre-breakfast walk on some of the lodge's trails with local guide Kenneth).



Black Guan [Bosque de Paz lodge]

Despite experiencing the somewhat rainy conditions that are typical of this time of year, we still managed to identify 60 bird species (including 24 lifers) and put my camera to occasional good use. Fifteen of the species seen were regional endemics that are found only in Costa Rica and the western highlands of Panama, including: Black Guans that were seen both in the forest and near to the lodge where they were habitual visitors to the grain feeders; several hummingbird species that visited the flowering bushes (Black-bellied and Scintillant Hummingbirds) and very active feeders (Purple-throated Mountain-gem) in the lodge gardens; Mixed flock species such as Prong-billed Barbet, Flame-throated Warbler, Black-cheeked Warbler, Golden-browed Chlorophonia and Yellow-thighed Finch that we encountered along the roadside and in the cloud forest; and several thrush species such as Black-faced Solitaire and Sooty Thrush (plus three species of Nightingale-Thrush!) that we heard frequently and saw occasionally along the forest trails. Several interesting mammals were also encountered, with the juvenile White-Faced Coatis that we found on the edge of the cloud forest stealing the show.



Purple-throated Mountain-gem [Bosque de Paz lodge]



Purple-throated Mountain-gem (f) [Bosque de Paz lodge]



Prong-billed Barbet [near to Bosque de Paz lodge]



Common Bush-Tanager [Bosque de Paz lodge]



White-faced Coati (juvenile and adult) [near to Bosque de Paz lodge]



White-faced Coati (juvenile) [near to Bosque de Paz lodge]



White-faced Coati [near to Bosque de Paz lodge]

1. Bird Trip List¹

Confirmed personal sightings only for DJS – excludes birds heard only unless otherwise indicated. As field guide I used [‘The Birds of Costa Rica, A Field Guide’ by Richard Garrigues and Robert Dean \(Cornell University Press, 2007\)](#). Where names have been updated since this guide was published, birds in my trip list are identified as per ‘The Clements Checklist of Birds of the World’, Cornell, 2007 with updates through December 2010 (online version 6.5).

Locations where species seen in sequence of travel:

R = Roadside between San Jose and Bosque de Paz (afternoons of July 24th and 26th).

BdP = Bosque de Paz at ~1500 to 1650m ASL, including the lodge grounds and forest trails (late-afternoon of July 24th and early-mornings of July 25th and 26th), the ~1km stretch of forest-bordered road up the hill from the lodge (late-afternoon of July 24th and morning and afternoon of July 25th) and the river just down the road from the lodge entrance (late-morning of July 26th).

The weather was generally cloudy and rainy, with intermittent dry spells. July 24th was dry until dusk when heavy rains set in, July 25th brought on-and-off rain showers that still left plenty of opportunities for birding, whilst on July 26th the weather at Bosque de Paz deteriorated significantly and after a largely dry pre-breakfast guided walk with local guide Kenneth, much of the remainder of the morning before our departure back to San Jose was spent sheltering from heavy rain.

GUANS, CHACHALACAS, AND CURASSOWS: CRACIDAE

Black Guan *Chamaepetes unicolor* **E*** [BdP]: Habitual visitors to the grain feeders on the island in front of the lodge. Also regularly encountered moving clumsily amongst the branches of trees in the cloud forest.

NEW WORLD VULTURES: CATHARTIDAE

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus* [R]: Several in open country between San Jose and the lodge.

PIGEONS AND DOVES: COLUMBIDAE

Ruddy Pigeon *Patagioenas subvinacea* * [BdP]: A pair on the roadside above the lodge.

HUMMINGBIRDS: TROCHILIDAE

Green Hermit *Phaethornis guy* [BdP]: Males and females were frequent visitors to the lodge’s feeders.

Green Violetear *Colibri thalassinus* [BdP]: Aggressively patrolling the flowering bushes in the lodge’s grounds.

Green-crowned Brilliant *Heliodoxa jacula* [BdP]: Males and females at the lodge’s feeders.

Magnificent Hummingbird *Eugenes fulgens* * [BdP]: Infrequent visitors to the lodge’s feeders.

Purple-throated Mountain-gem *Lampornis calolaemus* **E*** [BdP]: Males (and some females) were frequent visitors to the lodge’s feeders and to flowering bushes in the gardens.

Scintillant Hummingbird *Selasphorus scintilla* **E** [BdP]: Females only occasionally floated around the flowering bushes in the lodge’s grounds before being discovered and chased off by the territorial Violetears and Mountain-gems.

Violet Sabrewing *Campylopterus hemileucurus* * [BdP]: Spectacular males and females were frequent visitors to the lodge’s feeders.

Rufous-tailed Hummingbird *Amazilia tzacatl* [BdP]: One was seen at a feeder in front of the dining room.

Canivet’s Emerald *Chlorostilbon canivetii* [BdP]: One was seen at a feeder in front of the dining room.

Black-bellied Hummingbird *Eupherusa nigriventris* **E*** [BdP]: Occasional seen as they sneaked in to the flowering bushes in the lodge’s grounds before being discovered and chased off by the territorial Violetears and Mountain-gems.

TOUCANS-BARBETS: SEMNORNITHIDAE

Prong-billed Barbet *Semnornis frantzii* **E*** [BdP]: Noisy and confiding family groups were seen at mid-storey fruiting trees and in mixed flocks along the forest edge above the lodge.

Red-headed Barbet *Eubucco bourcierii* [BdP]: A male was seen in a mixed flock along the forest edge above the lodge.

TOUCANS: RAMPHASTIDAE

Emerald Toucanet *Aulacorhynchus prasinus maxillaris* [BdP]: A pair was seen sitting quietly in a fruiting tree along the forest edge above the lodge.

¹ **First sighting ever for DJS**; **E** = regional endemic species (Costa Rica and western Panama highlands); * = photo available

WOODPECKERS: PICIDAE

Hairy Woodpecker *Picoides villosus* * [BdP]: Individuals were seen on a couple of occasions in mixed flocks along the forest edge above the lodge.

TAPACULOS: RHINOCRYPTIDAE

Silvery-fronted Tapaculo *Scytalopus argentifrons* **E** [BdP]: One was seen in the roadside bank along the forest edge above the lodge.

OVENBIRDS AND WOODCREEPERS: FURNARIIDAE

Brown-billed Scythebill *Campylorhamphus pusillus* [BdP]: One was seen in the company of several other furnarids in a mixed flock along the forest edge above the lodge.

Streak-headed Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes souleyetii* [BdP]: Several were seen in mixed flocks along the forest edge above the lodge.

Spot-crowned Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes affinis* [BdP]: One was seen in a mixed flock along the forest edge above the lodge.

Spotted Barbtail *Premnoplex brunnescens* [BdP]: Several were seen in mixed flocks along the forest edge above the lodge and on the lodge's trails.

Red-faced Spinetail *Cranioleuca erythropis* [BdP]: Several pairs were seen in mixed flocks along the forest edge above the lodge and on the lodge's trails.

Lineated Foliage-Gleaner *Syndactyla subalaris* [BdP]: Several pairs and individuals were seen in mixed flocks along the forest edge above the lodge and on the lodge's trails.

Streak-breasted Treehunter *Thripadectes rufobrunneus* * [BdP]: One was seen in a mixed flock along the forest edge above the lodge and an ID-quality only photograph taken.

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS: TYRANNIDAE

Olive-striped Flycatcher *Mionectes olivaceus* [BdP]: A couple of individuals were seen in mixed flocks along the forest edge above the lodge.

Tufted Flycatcher *Mitrephanes phaeocercus* [BdP]: A couple of individuals were seen along the forest edge above the lodge and on the lodge's trails.

Yellowish Flycatcher *Empidonax flavescens* * [BdP]: One was seen in a mixed flock along the forest edge above the lodge.

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans* [BdP]: Resident in the lodge gardens alongside the small stream and therefore regularly seen throughout the day.

Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus* [R]: One seen in open country between San Jose and the lodge.

TITYRAS AND ALLIES: TITYRIDAE

Barred Becard *Pachyramphus versicolor* [BdP]: A male seen once in a mixed flock along the forest edge above the lodge and a female seen collecting nesting materials along the lodge's trails.

VIREOS: VIREONIDAE

Yellow-winged Vireo *Vireo carmioli* **E** [BdP]: One seen in a canopy mixed flock on the lodge's trails.

CROWS, JAYS, AND MAGPIES: CORVIDAE

Brown Jay *Psilorhinus morio* [R]: At least two flew into a roadside tree between San Jose and the lodge.

Azure-hooded Jay *Cyanolyca cucullata* **heard only** [BdP]: Heard in the early morning on the lodge's trails, but did not respond to Kenneth's playback.

SWALLOWS: HIRUNDINIDAE

Blue-and-white Swallow *Pygochelidon cyanoleuca* [BdP]: About 50 spent the night under the eaves of the lodge building outside the second floor bedrooms, huddled up side-by-side safely out of the rain.

WRENS: TROGLODYTIDAE

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon* [BdP]: Several were seen in open areas.

Ochraceous Wren *Troglodytes ochraceus* **E** * [BdP]: A pair was seen once in a mixed flock along the forest edge above the lodge and another was seen on the lodge's trails.

Gray-breasted Wood-Wren *Henicorhina leucophrys* [BdP]: Pairs and small family groups were heard and seen regularly low-down along the forest edge above the lodge and again on the lodge's trails.

Dippers: CINCLIDAE

American Dipper *Cinclus mexicanus* [BdP]: At least three were seen together along the boulder strewn river a few hundred meters down the road past the lodge entrance.

THRUSHES AND ALLIES: TURDIDAE

Black-faced Solitaire *Myadestes melanops* **E** [BdP]: Several were seen and heard in the mid-storey along the lodge's trails in the early morning.

Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus aurantiirostris* [BdP]: One was seen on the ground along the lodge's trails in the early morning.

Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus fuscater* [BdP]: Several were seen and heard on the ground along the lodge's trails in the early morning.

Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus frantzii* * [BdP]: Several were seen on the ground along the lodge's trails and also along the roadside above the lodge.

Sooty Thrush *Turdus nigrescens* **E** [BdP]: One was seen at dawn in the lodge grounds.

Mountain Thrush *Turdus plebejus* [BdP]: One was seen in the early-morning in a fruiting tree along the lodge's trails.

Clay-colored Thrush (Robin) *Turdus grayi* * [BdP]: Several were seen at various times of day around the lodge's grounds. This was the only bird species that visited the fruit feeder in the lodge's grounds where I had placed some papaya and watermelon in the hope of attracting silver-throated and spangle-cheeked Tanagers!

NEW WORLD WARBLERS: PARULIDAE

Flame-throated Warbler *Oreothlypis gutturalis* **E** [BdP]: A lovely bird seen on a couple of occasions in mixed flocks along the forest edge.

Black-checked Warbler *Basileuterus melanogenys* **E** [BdP]: Seen on a couple of occasions in mixed flocks along the forest edge.

Three-striped Warbler *Basileuterus tristriatus* [BdP]: A common member of lower, mid and upper-storey mixed flocks along the forest edge and along the lodges' trails.

Slate-throated Redstart *Myioborus miniatus* [BdP]: A common member of mixed flocks along the forest edge and along the lodges' trails.

Collared Redstart *Myioborus torquatus* **E** [BdP]: A common member of mixed flocks along the forest edge and along the lodges' trails. Sometimes both redstart species were seen in the same mixed flock.

TANAGERS AND ALLIES: THRAUPIDAE

Blue-gray Tanager *Thraupis episcopus* [BdP]: One seen in the lodge's grounds.

Scarlet-thighed Dacnis *Dacnis venusta* [BdP]: A female was seen in a mixed flock along the forest edge.

Silver-throated Tanager *Tangara icterocephala* [BdP]: A common member of mixed flocks along the forest edge and along the lodges' trails.

BUNTINGS AND SPARROWS: EMBERIZIDAE

Yellow-thighed Finch *Pselliophorus tibialis* **E** * [BdP]: Small and noisy family groups, including juveniles with dark-thighs, were seen along the forest edge, along the lodges' trails and in the lodge's grounds.

Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch *Arremon brunneinucha* [BdP]: Individuals were seen at various times of day hopping around the lodge's grounds and along the lodge's trails.

Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis* [R; BdP]: Small numbers were seen in open country between San Jose and the lodge.

Common Bush-Tanager *Chlorospingus ophthalmicus* * [BdP]: A common and vocal member of mixed flocks along the forest edge, along the lodges' trails and in the lodge's grounds.

TROUPIALS AND ALLIES: ICTERIDAE

Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus* [R]: Several seen around San Jose and open country on the way to the lodge.

SISKINS, CROSSBILLS, AND ALLIES: FRINGILLIDAE

Golden-browed Chlorophonia *Chlorophonia callophrys* **E** [BdP]: Family groups including stunning males were seen on several occasions in mixed flocks along the forest edge.

Total 60 confirmed species for the trip (including 1 heard only), of which 24 were 'lifers' for DJS. Despite the large number of species present in Costa Rica, the geographical continuity with neighbouring countries means that there are only some four Costa Rican political endemics. None of the species encountered on this trip are considered endemic to Costa Rica, although 15 of the species encountered are regional endemic species common only to the highlands of Costa Rica and Western Panama.

2. Mammals Trip List²

Red-tailed Squirrel *Sciurus granatensis* [BdP]: One seen eating fruit in large tree along the Sendero Valle trail.

Central American Agouti *Dasyprocta punctata* [BdP]: Regular, albeit timid, visitor to the grain feeders on the island in front of the lodge.

Lowland Paca *Cuniculus paca* [BdP]: One seen after dark eating at the grain feeders on the island in front of the lodge.

White-nosed Coati *Nasua narica* * [BdP]: Family groups seen regularly at the lodge feeders. Family groups with babies were also seen each day along the edge of the forest on the steep road descending to the lodge.

Collared Peccary *Pecari tajacu* [BdP]: A group of four smelt and then seen crossing the Sendero Valle trail.

Nine-banded Armadillo *Dasyus novemcinctus* * [BdP]: One seen foraging in grass along the edge of the forest on the steep road descending to the lodge.

² First sighting ever for DJS; * = photo available