

**Trip Report:
Costa Rica Part II
13-17 November 2010**



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Part I of this report described my adventure in Costa Rica through Nov 12, 2010. That was our first half day and night at Rancho Naturalista. This report starts with our second day at Rancho Naturalista.

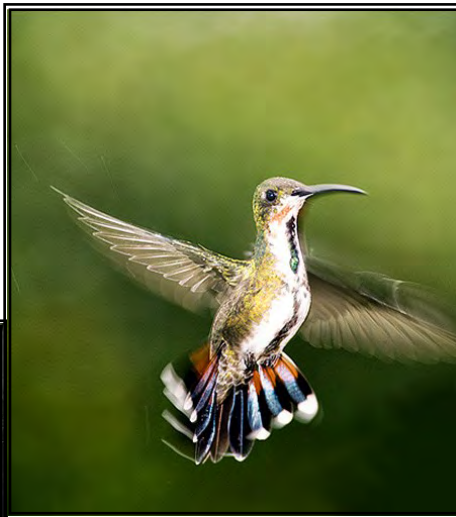
Saturday, November 13, 2010:

The morning was cool and damp, but bright. I was feeling much better. I ate a big breakfast and was anxious to make up my photo deficit from the day before. This is what the jungle looked like down the mountain from the yard behind the lodge.

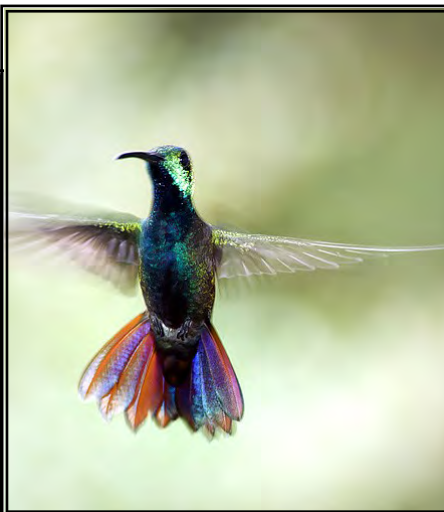


I found a hummingbird feeder and took lots of photos. Here are some of the better ones with my comments. This bird is a male White-necked Jacobin. The White-necked

bird” from the names for brevity.) I was using a flash on my camera and I later discovered that the flash distorted the color of parts of the hummingbird. I should have

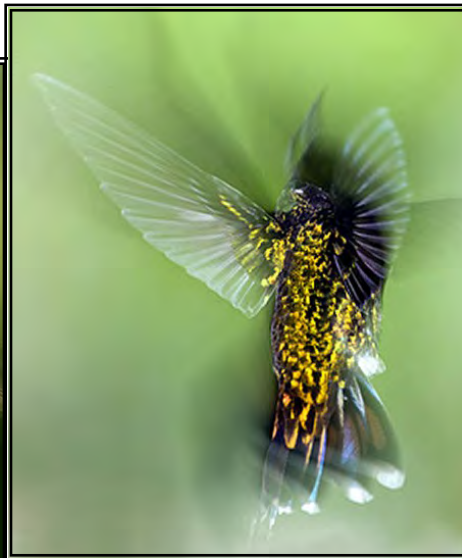


checked some of my photos before continuing to shoot. They would have been more natural looking without the flash. The tail of the bird below was one where the distortion was greatest. He’s a Rufous-tailed. His tail is a rusty red color in



natural light. You can see what it looks like with a flash. The photo below is not a faithful representation of the bird. I was warned by Gordon, but not until I had already taken the photo. This next photo was one of those accidents that turns

out OK. The photo contains images created both by the flash and natural light mixed. I liked its abstract appearance.



This next bird was Brown Violet-ear. There was also a Green Violet-



ear that I photographed later in the trip. Those were the best photos I got on Saturday.

Sunday, November 14, 2010:

We had about three hours after breakfast to take photos before we left for our next location. There were two feeding stations behind the lodge that were attracting lots of birds. I set up on the balcony of the lodge so I had a good view of both of the feeding stations. This bird is



Jacobin Hummingbirds were by far the most prevalent species at Rancho Naturalista while we were there. This next bird is a Green-breasted Mango. (I am dropping “humming-

is a Montezuma Oropendola. These



large birds are almost a foot and a half long. Their call is one of those spooky sounds that you hear in the classic jungle scene in movies. They made short work of a banana. Gordon Illg came walking up with a bird in his hand. It was a Silver-throated Tanager that had flown into a window. He was stunned and confused. He made no attempt to



fly, so after we all took photos, Gordon put him on a limb of a nearby bush. We kept checking on him and



in a little while he was gone. We

loaded up and left about mid morning and headed west through the mountains to our next destination. As I was leaving my room, I noticed a little cone-shaped flower on a low plant just outside my door. Willy Alfaro, our guide, helped me identify it as Maraca Ginger. It is also called Beehive Ginger. Here's a photo.



We stopped in Cartago for lunch. Next to the restaurant there was a coffee store that sold coffee named Café Quetzal Dota (www.coopedota.com). According to Willy this region grows some of the best Costa Rican coffee. It was slow going through the mountains. There was rarely a straight stretch of road. We arrived at The Savegre Mountain Lodge late in the afternoon. Here's a rather poor photo of their sign.



It was misting rain when I got to my room, which was in a small cottage. When I opened the door this is the

scene that greeted me. I thought it was a nice touch. This was the view



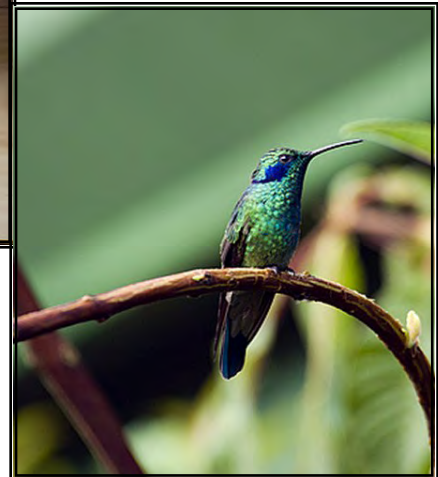
from the front porch of the room. The lodge was at about 7500 feet. It



was about 50°F outside. There was small electric heater in the room so I set it as high as it would go. The warmest it ever got in my room that night was 63°F. Fortunately, there were lots of blankets on the bed.

Monday, November 15, 2010:

Monday was warmer. It was over-cast, but bright. After breakfast, we went out into the garden to take photos. Here are some of them. Here is a Green Violet-ear Hummingbird. I thought he was pretty.



There were Calla Lilies everywhere. The unusual plant below was called



This was a Lilac of some kind.



Repolito. It was not a small succu-



lent, but a large mound. This arch was made of a plant called , "Ojo de Poeta" or Poet's



It was a great place to take garden photos. All the flowers were covered with droplets of water. This is Papyrus. I had never seen Papyrus this large before.



Eye. Here's a closer view of the flower.



There were birds in the garden too. This is a Green Violet-ear , similar to the Brown Violet-ear.



The bird below is a Yellow Siskin. These Rufous-collared Sparrows



were everywhere at Savegre. By the way, the lodge was named



for the Savegre River that flows through the grounds. After lunch we loaded up to go up higher to

look for Resplendent Quetzals. The Quetzal only lives in the higher Cloud Forests of Central America. They are threatened, but under protection of all the governments of Central America. These birds were once considered sacred by the early Mesoamericans that inhabited the region. As we were driving, we came to a large group of people arrayed around a male Resplendent Quetzal sitting in a small tree by the road. We all bailed out of the bus and started taking photos. Here is one of mine. Periodically, he would fly to a nearby berry tree and grab a berry. We all tried to take photos of him in-

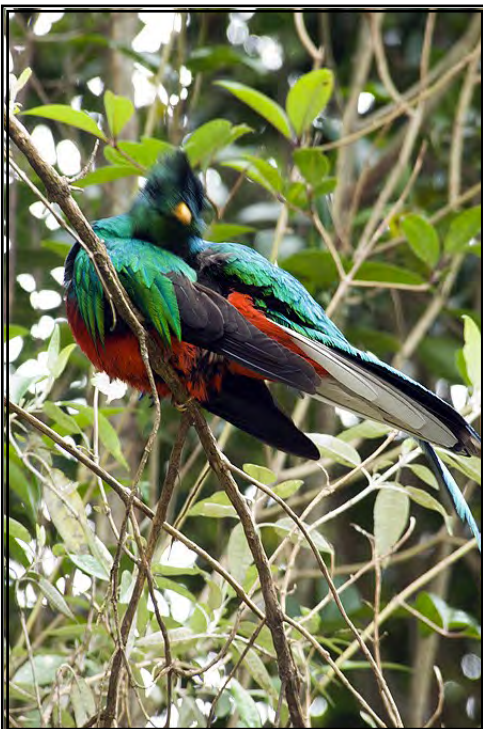
The sky was milky white and bright. This photo has been edited to clarify the bird. A fully fledged Quetzal has two long tail feathers. This one had one long one and one that was only partially grown. Their breeding season was not until March, so his breeding plumage was not fully developed. Nevertheless, he was a beautiful bird. No one in our group had ever been that close to a Quetzal.



Here is a different Sparrow, a Black-striped Sparrow. And another Tan-



ager, a Flame-colored Tanager was there too. Back at the garden at the



Finally, he tired of us and flew off into the forest. On the way back down to the lodge, we stopped at a little place that Willy said was good for birds. It was. Here are some of the photos that I took while we were there. This bird is a Sooty Robin.



lodge, I found another Hummingbird. This one is a Firey-throated Hummingbird. I never saw the fire, but he had a blue iridescence that was nice.

flight. Here is my attempt.



And, the bird at the top right is a Yellow-thighed Finch.



On the way back to my room, I saw a hummingbird feeding on some flowers.



At the time, I thought he was another Firey-throated.

Tuesday, November 16, 2010:

Tuesday was our last day “in the woods.” We were heading back to San José after lunch, so we wanted to make good use of our time. I took one more photo in the garden before we loaded up to look for Quetzals. This is a Firey-throated Hummingbird in a flowering bush.



We drove back up the road where we found the Quetzal on Monday and there he was sitting on a power line in the same place we found him on Monday. His photo is at the top center with another in-flight shot. He was flying to the same berry tree, so I moved to a location where he would be against the bush rather than the sky. He was flying from the bush when I took the in-

flight photo. He had a berry in his beak. Then he flew to a tree and



perched on a large limb that hid his tail. But, I liked the way his colors



showed up in the sunlight. Then he flew to another tree and perched on a smaller limb. This next photo is probably the best perching pose that I got. I have put it on the cover because I liked it.



After lunch we drove back to San José with one stop in Cartago to buy coffee at the coffee coop.

Wednesday, November 17,

2010: Achilles picked me up at 6:00 AM to take me to the airport. This was my last view of Costa Rica from the airplane.



It was a great trip. I recommend Adventure Photo to you. Note that I got their website address wrong in the first part the correct address is www.advenphoto.com.

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