

Wetlands & Rainforest Birding Tour

June 15 - 23 2027



Hundreds of **Agami Herons** are nesting—right here in **Costa Rica**! Join us on a special trip to the wetlands and rainforests of Northern Costa Rica...See it for yourself—and help protect it.



Join **FLYWAY BIRDING TOURS** for a unique birding trip to the wetlands and forests of Sarapiquí, Caño Negro, and Bijagua—right where the action is.

This short-format tour offers expert-guided birding, access to remote habitats, and directly supports efforts to protect these newly discovered nesting sites.

**Witness a once-hidden spectacle—
and help conserve it**



info@flywaybt.com

 +506 8785 0111



Wetlands & Rainforest Tour June 15 - 23, 2027

Group size: 8 participants

FLYWAY BIRDING TOURS is committed to responsible nature travel that actively supports local conservation and community-based ecotourism initiatives in Costa Rica. This small-group tour focuses on key wetland and rainforest ecosystems, including a visit to a newly documented nesting colony of the elusive Agami Heron (*Agamia agami*) in the northern Caribbean lowlands.

Each day explores important conservation areas, many of which are managed in partnership with local landowners or community organizations working to protect habitat through sustainable tourism and research access.



Agami Heron

Day 1 – Arrival in Costa Rica / Transfer to Santo Domingo

Upon arrival at Juan Santamaría International Airport, participants will be met and transferred by group shuttle to Hotel Bougainvillea, located just outside San José in the town of Santo Domingo. The hotel's extensive native gardens offer an excellent introduction to Costa Rica's urban-adjacent birdlife, where species such as Lesson's Motmot and Rufous-backed Wren are commonly observed. With early June temperatures here ranging between 20–27°C and generally stable weather, this is a comfortable place to begin the journey. After check-in, the group will gather for a brief orientation to review the itinerary and conservation themes before enjoying a welcome dinner onsite.

Overnight Hotel Bougainvillea

Day 2 – To Sarapiquí via Cinchona and Virgen del Socorro

After breakfast, we head northeast toward the Caribbean slope, gradually descending into the humid foothills of Sarapiquí. En route, we'll stop at the Mirador Cinchona café, where forest-edge feeders regularly attract birds such as Prong-billed Barbet and Crimson-collared Tanager. The elevation here transitions rapidly, and temperatures shift from the cooler highlands to a warm, humid 22–31°C as we descend. Continuing along the Virgen del Socorro road, we bird through deep forested ravines and river crossings that may yield sightings of American Dipper, Tawny-capped Euphonia, and other mid-elevation specialists. The full drive, including birding stops, takes approximately four hours. We arrive at Selva Verde Lodge in the late afternoon, where we'll explore the lodge grounds, often productive for Collared Aracari and Red-throated Ant-Tanager moving through the secondary forest and riverside vegetation.

Overnight Selva Verde Lodge

Day 3 – Full Day at La Selva Biological Station

Today is devoted to exploring La Selva Biological Station, one of the most significant rainforest research sites in the Neotropics. With well-maintained trails, canopy bridges, and long-term conservation protections, the site provides access to mature lowland forest habitat where we have excellent chances to encounter species such as Great Green Macaw and Great Curassow in varied layers of the forest. The warm, humid conditions typical of this time of the year (22–32°C) are ideal for morning activity, though brief afternoon showers are likely. In addition to birding, the visit offers insights into ongoing forest monitoring, biological corridor management, and scientific research related to climate change and habitat fragmentation. We return to Selva Verde Lodge by late afternoon for a relaxed evening and checklist review.

Overnight Selva Verde Lodge

Day 4 – Medio Queso Wetlands and Arrival in Caño Negro

We depart early for the northern wetlands, traveling through agricultural lowlands to reach the small town of Los Chiles, where we board boats for a mid-morning tour of the Medio Queso Wetlands. This expansive marsh system supports large concentrations of aquatic and edge species, and from the boat we may observe Pinnated Bittern, Yellow-breasted Crake, and other specialists of floating vegetation and gallery forest. With hot, often still conditions (24–34°C), bird activity is typically strong before midday. After lunch at a local restaurant, we continue toward Caño Negro, stopping along the Los Llanos entrance road to bird dry pastures and wooded patches where species such as Nicaraguan Seed-Finch and sometimes Jabiru are recorded. Total driving today is about 4 hours, not including the boat tour. We arrive at Natural Lodge Caño Negro in the late afternoon and settle in before dinner.

Overnight Caño Negro Natural Lodge

Day 5 – Caño Negro National Wildlife Refuge and Community Reserve

We begin with an early boat trip through the Caño Negro Wildlife Refuge, a Ramsar-listed wetland of international importance. Navigating the Río Frío and surrounding lagoons, we explore flooded forest, open marsh, and narrow channels where we're likely to see Nicaraguan Grackle and Black-collared Hawk, and possibly rarities like Sungrebe moving through quiet oxbows. The early morning humidity is high but temperatures remain pleasant until mid-morning (typically 24–30°C), with a chance of short midday rainstorms. After returning to the lodge for breakfast, we'll visit the Manakin Trail, a small community-run reserve supporting local conservation through tourism. Understory specialists like White-collared Manakin and Rufous-winged Woodpecker may be active along the shaded trails. In the late afternoon, we embark on a second boat tour, targeting new wetland zones and offering another opportunity for aquatic and marsh birds in a different area of the wildlife refuge.

Overnight Caño Negro Natural Lodge



Nicaraguan Grackle

Day 6 – Visit to Agami Heron Rookery / Bird Songs Gardens

After breakfast, we depart north toward the Katira area and board small paddle boats to access Agami Island, a secluded wetland lagoon managed by local landowners. Here, a newly confirmed nesting colony of Agami Herons has become the focus of ongoing monitoring and protection efforts. Our visit helps fund local stewardship of this important site. Depending on water levels and seasonality, we may also encounter species such as Olive-crowned Yellowthroat and Yellow-tailed Oriole along the channels and surrounding forest. Temperatures remain in the 25–31°C range, with mist and fog common in the late morning. After lunch at a nearby restaurant, we continue to Birdsong Gardens, a privately managed mid-elevation property with fruiting trees and edge habitat frequented by Snowcap and Green Hermit. We arrive at Celeste Mountain Lodge in the late afternoon. Located in reforested pastures near Tenorio Volcano, the lodge supports native regeneration and offers panoramic views of transitional forest habitats.

Overnight Celeste Mountain Lodge

Day 7 – Tapir Valley Nature Reserve and Celeste Trails

This morning we visit Tapir Valley Nature Reserve, a 220-acre private reserve adjacent to Tenorio Volcano National Park. Once a degraded cattle pasture, this property now protects critical transitional forest and wetland microhabitats. We explore the lower trails and open glades where sightings of Tody Motmot and Black-crested Coquette are possible, as well as endemic amphibians and butterflies. Weather in early June is generally cloudy with scattered showers and cooler air (20–29°C), especially in the early morning hours. After returning to the lodge for lunch, the afternoon is free for birding on the lodge's forest trails, where we often encounter Carmiol's Tanager and Stripe-breasted Wren moving between forest edge and canopy gaps. This is also a good time to reflect on habitat restoration discussed throughout the tour.

Overnight Celeste Mountain Lodge



Day 8 – Wetlands of Cañas and Return to Central Valley

We depart early for the return journey to the Central Valley, traveling south through the dry Pacific lowlands. Along the way, we stop at a series of fish farms and seasonal wetlands near the town of Cañas, where open water, grassy fields, and rice paddies attract large concentrations of Woodstork and Bare-throated Tiger-Heron, with possibilities for Limpkin depending on water levels. These lowland zones are typically hot and breezy in June (28–34°C), but mornings remain active for birdlife. After lunch en route, we continue into the higher elevations of the Central Valley where temperatures cool and conditions become more stable. We arrive at Hotel Bougainvillea in the mid-afternoon, followed by a wrap-up meeting and farewell dinner to close the program.

Overnight Hotel Robledal

Day 9 – Departure / Transfer from Hotel Robledal to International Airport

Following breakfast at Hotel Robledal, participants will be transferred to Juan Santamaría International Airport (SJO) for international departures. The hotel is located approximately 15–20 minutes from the airport, allowing for a smooth and efficient transfer based on individual flight times.



The Agami Heron (*Agamia agami*) is a secretive and rarely seen rainforest heron, found near slow-moving rivers and swampy forests in Central and South America. Known for its plumage, it nests colonially in lowland wetlands. Its elusive habits and fragmented habitat make it a species of conservation concern.

Included:

- All lodging from day 1 to day 8
- All meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 9
- Private van transportation
- Professional local birding guide
- All entrance fees
- Purified water in the van
- Printed Check-list
- All gratuities

Not included:

- Airfare - Travel insurance - Alcoholic beverages

American Pygmy Kingfisher



Activity Considerations: This itinerary is classified as moderate in physical demand. Participants should be prepared for a range of field conditions, including humid lowland wetlands, forest trails with uneven or muddy footing, and exposure to sun and rain during extended periods outdoors. Some activities involve boarding small boats, walking on slippery surfaces, or walking on narrow trails through secondary forest or marsh edge habitat. While there are no high-elevation sites on this itinerary, heat and humidity can be physically demanding.

This program is designed for birders with some prior field experience who are seeking to deepen their understanding of Neotropical birdlife while actively engaging with conservation themes and responsible travel practices. The itinerary combines focused birding with educational visits to research stations, community-run reserves, and private conservation areas. While the tour is open to all interested participants, space is strictly limited to 8 people to ensure a low-impact, high-quality experience for both travelers and the host communities and habitats visited.



Dates:

June 15 - 23, 2027

Price per person

Double \$3300 / Single \$650

info@~ywaybt.com

+506 8785 0111 (WhatsApp only)



~ywaybirdingtours.com