



2026

EcoTravel

Overnight Natural History Tours and Day Trips

Costa Rica: Agami Herons and Tapirs June 28 – July 2, 2026



Costa Rica June/July 2026 5 Days!

Overview

While Costa Rica is approximately the same size as West Virginia, its proximity to the Equator, along with vast towering mountains, results in 5 percent of the world's total biodiversity. A majority of the different organisms that inhabit Costa Rica can be found within national parks and other protected areas. Amazingly, 25 percent of Costa Rica's land is protected, by far the largest percentage of protected land throughout the world! Costa Rica once had one of the highest deforestation rates in the world, but attention to the environment has brought its rate to a nearly complete stop.

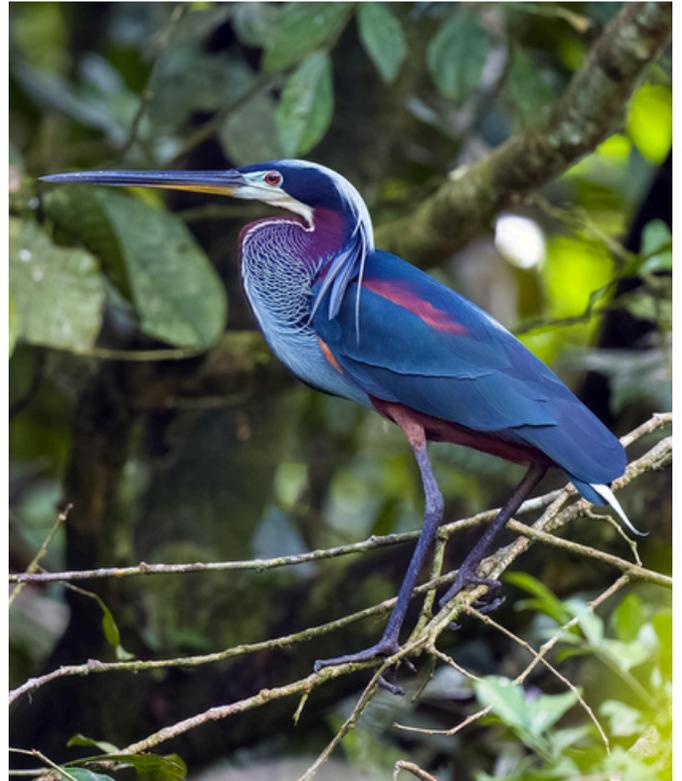
A common destination for birdwatchers from across the globe, Costa Rica continues to draw visitors with a multitude of locations that never cease to amaze. This unique opportunity gives us the chance to visit a newly discovered birding location, with arguably the most stunningly beautiful heron species on the planet!

Historically, Costa Rica has been home to only a small population of approximately 150 Agami Herons, breeding in the Caribbean lowlands of the country. However, in the summer of 2025 two new colonies were found, including one easily accessible locale. Now, Agami Heron numbers during breeding season are well over 1,000! Local communities are welcoming birders with open arms, excited to share these stunning birds with people far and wide.

We'll also spend some time searching for tapirs, a unique species related to horses and rhinoceroses. These mammals, the largest in Central America, are usually nocturnal but can be found quietly foraging in the daytime in certain regions of Costa Rica.

Whether you're a first-time traveler to Costa Rica, or a well-traveled return visitor, the chance to visit a peaceful, nature-loving country should never be turned down. Join us as we explore from high to low, from rivers to forests to mountaintops and everything in between. Witness the breathtaking beauty and jaw-dropping species, and take home dozens of memories as we explore wild Costa Rica.

Agami Heron photos were taken by Diego Quesada, one of our local guides, at the rookery we'll be visiting. All other photos in the itinerary were taken by Matthew Bell, EcoTravel Travel Assistant, on past trips.



Itinerary

Day 1 – Arrival

D

After arriving in Liberia, we'll head to our hotel for some birding around the gardens and some well-deserved rest after a long day of flying.

Night: Hotel Hacienda La Pacifica.

Day 2 – Bijagua and Agamis

BLD

After breakfast, we'll head towards the **Agami Heron** rookery, which is an easy accessible location in a nearby town. Difficult to see outside breeding season, when these colorful herons are tucked away in dense vegetation, this recently discovered locations was reported to hold over 500 nests in 2025! Little is known about this species, including where the adults go in the dry season when they aren't breeding.

Night: Celeste Mountain Lodge.

Day 3 – Tapir Valley

BLD

Today we'll spend the day exploring Tapir Valley, a private nature reserve located in Bijagua. This nature reserve limits the amount of visitors that can explore each day, and has focused on protecting the habitat not only for the tapirs, which are seen almost daily on the property, but also for the wide variety of wildlife that call Costa Rica home. One of the most sought-after hummingbird species, **Snowcap**, is regular on the property and can be seen with some patience and luck! Up to three species of toucans visit the fruit feeders, and the trails hold other cryptic species including **Tody Motmot**.

Night: Celeste Mountain Lodge.

Day 4 – Bird Songs Garden

BLD

Today we'll explore the trails around the hotel before breakfast, while also visiting Bird Songs Garden, another local preserve, before heading back to Liberia in the evening. With a mix of primary and secondary forests, a national park that's home to a volcano, and a famous river, the habitat around Bijagua is home to over 300 species of birds! From stunning hummingbirds to cryptic mixed flocks moving through the canopy, we're sure to find birds of all kinds in just a couple hours.

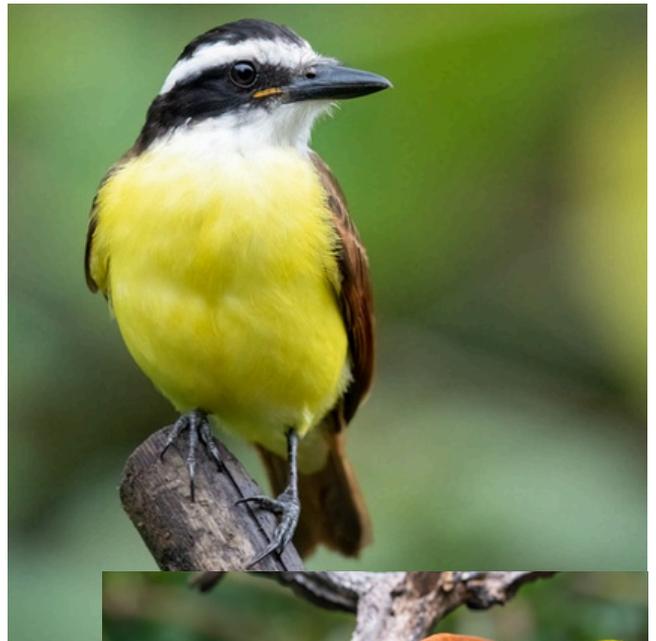
Depending on how the birding goes, we'll make our way back to Liberia in the afternoon in time for dinner and some final relaxing before the flights home the next day.

Night: Hotel Hacienda La Pacifica.

Day 5 – Departures

B

After breakfast, we'll transfer to the airport to begin our journey home, with memories of the many species seen, stunning views, delicious food, and great camaraderie!



General Information

Tour Cost: \$3,698.

Members: \$2,698.

The above cost is based upon a minimum number of eight paying participants traveling together. If there are fewer participants, there will be a small group supplement. Per person Tour Cost is based on two people sharing a room.

Single Room Supplement: \$285.

All rates are calculated at the time of publication and are subject to change due to conditions out of our control (i.e. hotel rates). All passengers will be notified if changes in pricing occur.

Tour Includes:

Accommodations are based on double occupancy, one or two beds. Meals are included as outlined in the itinerary section (B=Breakfast/L=Lunch/D=Dinner). Additional charges for meals may apply if needs are out of the standard offerings. Entrance fees to national parks and sightseeing as specified in the itinerary.

Not Included:

Taxes; costs of obtaining passports and visas; airfare; baggage fees; personal expenses such as room service, beverages, laundry, gratuities for the local guide and housekeeping; personal communications; airport taxes; tax increases or new taxes charged for services that were not taxed at the time the booking was made; excess mileage carried out at the request of the passenger; sightseeing or meals not specified in the itinerary; personal insurance coverage (strongly recommended); and transfers to and from your home airport.



Matt Bell is a graduate of the Ohio State University with BS degrees in both earth sciences and evolution/ ecology. He started birding in May 2013 and became more seriously involved after a trip to Costa Rica. Since then, he helped revive The Ornithology Club at Ohio State and assisted as a volunteer guide for The Biggest Week in American Birding and the Yellow Rails and Rice Festival. He absolutely loves participating in citizen science, tour guiding, chasing rare birds in his free time, and meeting fellow birders from around the globe. Most of all, Matt enjoys sharing his passion for birds and conservation with others and never shies away at taking the time to help beginners start their explorations of the avian world. Matt is the EcoTravel travel specialist and leads day trips and overnight tours.



General Terms & Conditions

Reservations

Early reservations with deposit are essential to guarantee your booking. A **\$1,000 deposit**, per person, applicable to final payment, is required to reserve space on this trip. Reservations made within 120 days of departure require full payment along with the formal Registration Forms. Final payment for programs is due 120 days prior to departure. Payments can be made by personal check, money order, certified check, or a cashier's check.

Rates and Fares

Prices are accurate as available at the time of publication. Prices do not include airfare unless otherwise stated. The Connecticut Audubon Society (CAS) reserves the right to alter quoted prices to reflect changes in airline fares, land service, or currency exchange rates. In the event that the number of participants is below the minimum required for the quoted price, a small group surcharge may be added.

Cancellation and Insurance

At the time the EcoTravel Office receives written notice that you must cancel your trip, the following cancellation fees will apply: Prior to 120 days from departure, your payments will be refunded minus **\$350 per person**. At 120 days and less, no refund is granted. NOTE: In addition to cancellation fees, airline tickets and deposits required to guarantee hotel rooms may be nonrefundable. The purchase of a general travel insurance plan covering baggage, accident/life, and trip cancellation is highly recommended. Give us a call and we can put you in touch with those providers. CAS reserve the right, if registration is insufficient or other reasons out of our control, to cancel, postpone, or offer the trip with a small group supplement. In the event that CAS cancels or postpones, those with reservations will be notified as soon as possible and a credit of payments will be held on file. The Connecticut Audubon Society is not responsible for the refund or credit of additional expenses incurred in preparation for a trip. Any "delay" or "postponing" of departure by tour participants is considered a cancellation and cancellation parameters will be apply relative to the 120-day window. There are no exceptions.

Responsibility

Payment of deposit represents and acceptance of the following terms and conditions by the purchaser: The Connecticut Audubon Society, its affiliates, and all cooperating airlines and agencies act only in the capacity of agents in all matters of transportation and tour operations, and their liability is limited to the terms of the airline tickets and land accommodation contracts. They are not responsible for any delays, inconveniences, accidents, expense, or mishap of any kind whatsoever resulting entirely or in part from the negligence of others or from causes beyond their control. They can accept no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, riot, war, pandemic, quarantine, or other causes. All such losses or expenses must be borne by the passengers, as the tour rate provides for arrangements only as describe in the tour brochure. The right is reserved to change tour leaders, substitute hotels, of similar category, and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by unforeseen circumstances. Baggage is at the owner's risk entirely. No refund can be made for unused hotel rooms, meals, and sightseeing tours unless arrangements are made at time of booking. The right is reserved to decline any person as a tour member for any reason which affects the operation of the tour or the rights, welfare, or enjoyment of the other tour members. Any refund of the recoverable land tour services in the limit of The Connecticut Audubon Society and its affiliates' liability.

To make a Reservation:

Send the above stated deposit to hold your reservation. Nonmembers, please add \$45 (single) or \$58 (family) for your annual membership and to take advantage of the member discount.

Send your name(s), address, phone number, email address, name of the trip, your deposit, and membership fee (if applicable) to:

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