With its abundance of forests, concern for conservation and truly incredible birdlife and amphibians, Costa Rica is hugely popular for travelers interested in tropical ecology and birdlife. For such a small country, there is a wonderful variety of places to explore. This trip has a moderate pace with very good accommodations and selected sites for finding some very special birds, outstanding scenery, and wildlife. In addition to the high elevation tropical forests, the tour will also explore the southern Osa Peninsula, Corcovado National Park and Cano Island Biological and Marine Reserve.
Travel with the Massachusetts Audubon Society ~ 800-289-9504 ~ www.massaudubon.org

COSTA RICA ITINERARY

DAY 1~FRIDAY~MARCH 8 ~ TRAVEL FROM HOME TO SAN JOSE
Arrive in San Jose Costa Rica by 4 PM. You will be met at the airport and escorted to your hotel. Set among ten acres of lush gardens, the unique and comfortable Hotel Bougainvillea provides a quiet hideaway where guests can begin to experience the natural beauty of Costa Rica. The grounds of the hotel are spectacular – being surrounded by coffee plantations, citrus orchards and lush gardens – great for birding. Group will gather for a welcome dinner at the hotel. Overnight at HOTEL BOUGAINVILLEA. (D)

DAY 2~SATURDAY ~MARCH 9 ~ TAPANTI NATIONAL PARK TO SAVEGRE
Following breakfast, the group will be driven (approximately 1 ½ hours) on a gravel road to Tapanti National Park, located in the wild and wet country on the rain forested northern slopes of the Talamanca Mountain Range. Although not a large refuge there are reported over 150 rivers within it, which gives an indication of the area's wetness. It has two “life zones”: lower mountain rain forest (lower mountain slopes) and pre-montane rain forest (lowlands skirting the lower slopes).

The forests are home to forty-five species of mammals, including tapir, paca, red brocket deer, eastern cottontail, kinkajou, raccoon, white-nosed coati, white-faced monkey, mountain hare (conejo de monte), agouti and such cats as ocelot, jaguarundi and tiger cat (an endangered species). We will make a stop here for some birding, looking for sparrow hawks, doves, hummingbirds, parrots, falcons, and other resident species.

The drive continues to Savegre Mountain Lodge, located in San Gerardo de Dota, near the Cerro de la Muerte Mountains, where more than 170 species of birds, including the Resplendent Quetzal and other exotic wildlife reside. Accommodation is offered in twenty cabins, surrounded by one of the finest examples of highland cloud forest on the planet. Enjoy a delicious home-made meal in the lodge’s dining room, while watching the Fiery-throated, Gray-tailed Mountain Gem, Scintillant and Volcano hummingbirds, frequenting the numerous feeders at the balcony of your dining room. Overnight at the SAVEGRE MOUNTAIN LODGE. (B,L,D)

DAY 3~SUNDAY ~MARCH 10 ~ SAVEGRE LODGE
Savegre is a rich forest and birding paradise. We will explore and hike the trails here to look for local resident and various migratory species moving through including the orioles, warblers and raptors. A few of the natives include the Yellow-winged Vireo, the Flame-throated Warbler, Tufted Flycatcher, Volcano Junco and various others.

The target bird of course will be the Resplendent Quetzal. In the early 1500’s, the Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés arrived in Mexico. There, as a gift from the Aztecs, he received a headdress of Quetzal feathers. Only Aztec royalty had the privilege of wearing such highly esteemed adornments. The jade-green plumes of the Quetzal may have been considered more valuable than gold. Today this extraordinarily beautiful bird claims as its habitat a vast territory from Mexico to Panama. The Quetzal can be found in cloud forests at altitudes of between 4,000 and 10,000 feet. The clouds in the forests are the product of rising warm air cooling quickly. The results are year-round lush vegetation in verdant tones and massive trees that reach one hundred feet or more into the fog. In this way the bird can live up to its name. "Quetzal" is taken from the Aztec word "quetzalli," meaning
"precious" or "beautiful." The bird's body measures about 14 inches in length, about the size of a pigeon. However, it has tail feathers which can extend as long as three feet. Both the male and the female are an iridescent emerald and golden green with tail feathers in iridescent blues and greens with white under tails. The green camouflages them in the rain forest. The male has a head crest and red breast feathers with a white under tail. The females are duller and have fewer red breast feathers and short tail plumes. The Quetzal is truly a splendid bird.

The lodge has 22 miles of forest trails, mostly through virgin woods. The altitude varies form 7,220 feet to 11,384 feet. Overnight at the SAVEGRE MOUNTAIN LODGE. (B,L,D)

**DAY 4-MONDAY-MARCH 11 ~ LAS CRUCES BIOLOGICAL STATION & WILSON BOTANICAL GARDENS**

The day begins early as we are driven south to Las Cruces, located near the Panamanian border on Costa Rica’s southern Pacific coastal range. A mid-elevation site, the station's borders extend through a range of 3,600 to 4,500 feet and encompass 580 acres of pre-montane rain forest. The Station serves as the principal center in the region for teaching, research, and on-site public education. In addition, it is home to the Wilson Botanical Garden which features beautifully diverse plantings of tropical and subtropical ornamentals, representatives of unusual plant families and rare and endangered plants from Costa Rica and elsewhere.

While here, the group will bird on well-maintained, gently sloping trails as our guides point out the palm and bromeliad collections along with heliconias, gingers, bananas, bamboos, and many others. The landscaped gardens adjoin 633 acres of forest, which together contain 7,000 species of plants, habitat for 330 species of birds and numerous mammal species, such as sloths, peccaries, and olingos, plus 38 species of bats. Here at Las Cruces we have opportunities to find Scarlet-thighed Dacnis, Silver-throated Tanagers, Violaceous Trogons, Blue-headed Parrots, Violet Sabrewing Hummingbirds, and Turquoise Cotingas.

The biological station is operated by the Organization for Tropical Studies, which also operates La Selva and Palo Verde Biological Stations further north. As such, visiting researchers and students are generally present and conducting studies on the site. You will be able to meet and converse with them at meal times, which are served family style in the dining room. The accommodations are very comfortable and well maintained. Each room has two single beds, a desk, and chairs. A semi-private porch in back gives a good vantage point where to see Fiery-billed Aracaris, Turquoise Cotingas, and many other birds. All rooms have private baths with hot-water showers.

Hotel Cuenca de Oro property is located in the beautiful town of San Vito de Coto Brus. An exuberant natural paradise with rustic, but comfortable cabins, you will be surrounded by lush vegetation with nearby rivers, waterfalls, springs, wildlife, caverns and nature’s splendor everywhere around you. Relax and enjoy the best “ceviche” to be found in the area at the restaurant “El Rancho” where you will also be able to savor other wonderful cuisine.
Overnights at CUENCA DE ORO HOTEL. (B,L,D)

**DAYS 5/6/7 ~ TUESDAY/WEDNESDAY/THURSDAY ~MARCH 12/13/14 ~ CORCOVADO NATIONAL PARK**

We rise early and head to Corcovado. Arriving at Sierpe and the River, we will board the local boat for your transfer to your accommodations for the next three nights. Along the river, enjoy all the diverse flora and fauna including; crocodiles, caimans, monkeys and hundreds of birds, including tanagers, herons, trogons and kingfishers. Mangrove trees line its banks and tributaries as it meanders its way out to the Pacific Ocean, where it empties into the sea just a few miles north of Drake Bay. Once you pass the river mouth you’ll behold the picturesque sight of Drake Bay and Marenco Biological Reserve. Although Costa Rica is best known for its incredible biologically-rich rainforests, its waters are equally rich due to the Costa Rican Thermal Convection Dome. Shallow, warm waters lie on top of low oxygen cold water, creating the perfect environment for a vast variety of marine life.

Corcovado National Park is a jewel in Costa Rica’s rainforests. The vegetation is one of the richest and most varied in the country. There are eight main habitats within the park; the montane forest, the cloud forest, the alluvial plains forest, a swamp forest, a holillo forest, a freshwater herbaceous swamp, a mangrove swamp and lastly there is rocky and sandy vegetation along the coast. There are 500 species of trees throughout the park, which constitutes one-fourth of all the tree species in all of Costa Rica. The true giants of the forest grow between 130 and 165 feet high and probably the tallest tree in the entire country is a massive silk cotton that grows up to an astonishing 230 feet high.

The wildlife at Corcovado is as varied and rich as its plant life. The park protects several endangered species and is home to 140 species of mammals, over 360 species of birds, over 100 species of reptiles and amphibians and all sorts of insects. Monkeys, toucans and, although rarely seen, tapirs, jaguars and boa constrictors are all residents of this forest reserve. In addition, this region has one of the most vibrant Scarlet Macaw populations in all of the Americas.

On one of your days here, enjoy an excursion by Cano Island Biological Reserve – a rainforest, archeological and marine sanctuary. Believed to be the burial ground of the Diquis Indian’s ruling elite, Cano Island features pre-Columbian stone spheres whose purpose is still shrouded in mystery. To peak one’s curiosity further, the island inexplicably receives more lightning strikes than nearly any other place on earth. Its greatest appeal however, is found beneath its turquoise waters.

Cano Island’s marine reserve is nothing short of spectacular with such a diverse ecosystem, including parrotfish, puffers, damsels, even Olive Ridley turtles. The tour is run by the dedicated people of "Dolphin Amor", whose marine biologists and staff members have over 30 years combined experience in cetacean encounters and research. During the trip; data, photos, and video will be collected and you will be helping support this goal. The most common sighting on the excursion is the Pan Tropical Spotted Dolphin. There are smaller groups close to shore and an incredible pod offshore which sometimes number over 1000. Bottlenose Dolphins are also commonly seen and will certainly make you smile as they love to ride the bow of the boat and jump into the air. The Rough Tooth Dolphins are a favorite as they look different that other dolphins, almost reptilian. You can also encounter the incredible Costa Rican Spinner Dolphin and Common Dolphins.

*Travel with the Massachusetts Audubon Society ~ 800-289-9504 ~ www.massaudubon.org*
At any time you can encounter whales. Orcas have been encountered both right by the shore and many miles offshore. The same goes with the Sei Whales, Pilot whales, Bryde’s Whales and Pseudorca. The Beaked Whales are usually seen at least 20 miles offshore. Often you can encounter Humpback Whales, almost year around. This area boasts the longest season of Humpbacks Whales in the world, as there are migrations from both North and South America. The Humpbacks are most abundant from late July to November when the southern Humpbacks arrive and are also plentiful from December through March when the northern Humpbacks are here to breed and give birth. Of course there is no way to guarantee encounters with dolphins and whales but over 95% of the time there are good sightings. Often the Dolphins engage in play with the boat and when they show interest you can get into the water using snorkeling gear for an incredible up close encounter.

Your lodging will be at the Drake Bay Resort on a point of land at sea level. There are over 20 charming, tropical cabins available with a view of the bay and surrounding rain forest. There is excellent swimming and kayaking just steps from your cabin, as well as many hiking trails ranging from easy to challenging, and miles of beaches for jogging. The cabins have comfortable rooms including private tile bath rooms, hot showers, ceiling fans, reading lamps, and 24 hour electricity, and a front porch for relaxing after a busy day. A 15-minute walk reveals a beach that is perfect for swimming, though there is also an all-natural, saltwater swimming pool on the resort’s grounds. Overnight at DRAKE BAY RESORT. (B,L,D. Daily)

**DAY 8~FRIDAY~MARCH 15 ~ SAN JOSE/BOSTON**

Wake up early and enjoy breakfast before returning to the airstrip to board your flight from Palmar Sur to San Jose. Upon arrival in San Jose, you will check in at the Bougainvillea hotel where you can rest and relax then enjoy a farewell dinner. Overnight at the BOUGAINVILLEA HOTEL. (B,D)

**DAY 9~SATURDAY~MARCH 16 DEPART SAN JOSE/BOSTON**

After breakfast, you will be escorted to the airport for your flight back home. (B)

**MASS AUDUBON LEADER / NATURALIST ~**

Christine Turnbull , Director of the Mass Audubon’s Moose Hill Wildlife Sanctuary in Sharon, has traveled extensively throughout her career. She has an avid interest in the outdoors and in the cultural context with which people develop a relationship to the environment. In the past she was part of the US Peace Corps and lived and worked within parks in northern Honduras and El Salvador. She has traveled extensively throughout the region and cultivated a strong background and deep enjoyment of the culture and nature in Central America.

**YOUR COSTA RICAN BIRDER / NATURALIST ~ RUDY ZAMORA**

Rudy is considered to be one of the premier naturalist birder guides in Costa Rica, winning the award for best guide in 1994 by ICT-CANATUR (Costa Rica Tourist Board-Costa Rican National Chamber of Commerce). A member of the American Birding Association, he has participated in ABA sponsored conventions. Rudy was also a participant at the seminar on management of wildlife areas hosted at the Charles Darwin Institute in the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador. A true Renaissance man, Rudy is a farmer, has studied chemistry, has worked as a professional musician and has led numerous Zoo, Audubon and nature groups through his
beloved homeland of Costa Rica since 1987. Rudy has also traveled the world, visiting the USA (where he attended the University of Arizona), Mexico, Guatemala, Ecuador, and throughout Europe.

**TOUR PRICING & TERMS**

**Price:** $3750 per person, double occupancy. Single supplement is $450

*A $500 per person deposit is required along with the reservation form.*


**PRICE INCLUDES:**

- Flight between Drake airstrip and San Jose.
- All ground transfers in air-conditioned motorcoach.
- Superior accommodations throughout as indicated or similar.
- Meals as specified in the itinerary.
- All park entry fees.
- Medical Evacuation coverage
- All tips and gratuities.

**PRICE EXCLUDES**

- Roundtrip air transportation from Boston to San Jose via American Airlines, including fuel surcharges and airline taxes. (quoted separately)
- Passport. No visa is required in Costa Rica.
- Excess baggage charges levied by airlines.
- Meals and beverages, other than specified.
- Laundry and other items of a personal nature.
- Personal and baggage insurance.
- Cost for anything not specifically mentioned in the listing above.
- Optional insurance coverage is available for Baggage, Accident and Trip Cancellation/Interruption at special low cost group rates.

Please Note That The Itinerary Sequence Is Correct At The Time Of Writing, But Is Subject To Change.

**THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT COSTA RICA**

Participants must be able to climb in and out of minibuses, small aircraft and boats unassisted. You should also be able to tolerate nature walks at an easy pace on uneven terrain, sometimes uphill, for three or four hours at a time in heat and humidity. You should be in good physical health to enjoy this destination to its fullest. In order to optimize opportunities to see birds, our days will start early, and birding will be the focus on our walks. There will be some long drives on rough and twisting roads. 

*Strawberry Poison Dart frog by D. Weaver*
**General**
- True adventure in travel can sometimes be accompanied by unexpected changes in conditions, itineraries and occasionally your accommodations. Participants should travel with a spirit of adventure and flexibility.
- Remember to pack your patience and sense of humor! Be willing to look past self-imposed ideals of Western amenities and do not compare these new experiences with your life back home. Travel often includes visiting destinations with modest infrastructures and a bending definition of comfort. That being said some locations are nestled in absolute luxury where pampering is the norm.
- Participants should generally be in good health and prepared to travel in locations without medical facilities.

**FLIGHTS:** You, the traveler, are responsible for booking and paying for your own international flights. Once you reserve your space, we will provide you with suggested flights and tell you which flights our leaders will be on. You may book flights directly with the airline, online, or with a travel agent. Once your deposit and reservation form have been sent to us, we will send you flight and contact information. Please be aware that most tickets are non-refundable, therefore you should not book your flight arrangements until you have checked with us to be sure the tour has the minimum number of participants for the trip to go. The start and the end city for this program is San Jose, Costa Rica.

Upon registration, you must provide your full legal name as it appears on your passport. In the event an airline ticket is issued with incorrect information you have provided, you will be responsible for charges associated with reissuing the ticket.

**CONDITIONS OF TRAVEL:**

**HOW TO BOOK:** Fill out the reservation form below and send it to Massachusetts Audubon Society, S. Great Road, Lincoln, MA 01773, together with a deposit of $500 per person. Final invoicing of your trip will be done approximately four months prior to departure. Final payment is due December 23, 2012. Final payment is payable by check or money order only. Final documents will be sent to you approximately 3 weeks prior to departure.

**CANCELLATIONS:** Cancellations are only effective on receipt of written notification. The following per person fees are applicable on this trip:
- Up to 75 days prior to departure, $250 handling fee.
- 75-60 days prior to departure, deposit is forfeited.
- Less than 60 days prior to departure, 100% penalty, unless any refund is recoverable from overseas suppliers. These cancellation fees are also in addition to any imposed by airlines. **WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT YOU OBTAIN THE OPTIONAL INSURANCE POLICY. INFORMATION WILL BE SENT TO YOU UPON RECEIPT OF RESERVATION FORM. INSURANCE PREMIUMS ARE NOT REFUNDABLE.**

**SINGLE SUPPLEMENT:** Rate quoted is valid for first two single rooms booked. If more than two single rooms, additional supplement will apply. Singles are assigned on a first come/first serve basis. Single accommodations are not guaranteed, but will be provided at additional cost if available (see reservation form for cost.) The single room supplement pays for privacy, not better accommodations. For passengers who are traveling alone and wish to share a room with another tour member, we will do our best to provide a roommate. However, if this is not possible, you will be required to pay the single room supplement prior to your departure from the USA.

**RATES:** All rates quoted are based on tariffs and value of foreign currencies in relation to the U.S. dollar in effect as of February 7, 2012 and are subject to change. Rates are based on a minimum of 10 passengers traveling together (with a maximum of 20 passengers, including MAS escort). The right is reserved to levy a surcharge if minimum is not met, but that is rarely done. We will do our utmost to keep to the prices as published. Should increases be forced on us by airlines, exchange rates, etc., we reserve the right to surcharge.
RESPONSIBILITY: Neither Mass Audubon, nor Classic Escapes (the Company) nor any person or agent acting for, through or on behalf of the Company shall be liable for any loss or damage whatsoever arising from any cause whatsoever and without restricting the generality of the foregoing shall particularly not be responsible for loss or damage arising from any errors or omissions contained in its brochure or other literature, loss or damage caused by delays, sickness, theft, injury or death. In addition the Company shall have the right at any time at its discretion to cancel any trip or the remainder thereof or make any alteration in route, accommodation, price or other details and, in the event of any trip being rendered impossible, illegal or inadvisable by weather, strike, war, government or interference or any other cause whatsoever, the extra expenses incurred as a result thereof shall be the responsibility of the passenger. The Company may at its discretion and without liability or cost to itself at any time cancel or terminate the guest’s booking and in particular without limiting the generality of the foregoing it shall be entitled to do so in the event of the illness or the illegal or incompatible behavior of the guest, who shall in such circumstances not be entitled to any refund. The person making any booking will, by the making of such booking, warrant that he or she has authority to enter into a contract on behalf of the other person included in such a booking and in the event of the failure of any or all of the other persons so included to make payment, the person making the booking shall by his/her signature thereof assume personal liability for the total price of all bookings made by him/her.

PHOTOGRAPHY: The Company reserves the right without further notice to make use of any photograph or film taken on the trip by our photographers without payment or permission. We guarantee that no photographs of a compromising nature will be used.

CHANGES TO SCHEDULES: Although every effort is made to adhere to schedules it should be borne in mind that the Company reserves the right and in fact is obliged to occasionally change routes and camps on trips as dictated by changing conditions. Such conditions may be brought about by seasonal rainfall on bush tracks, airfields and in game areas, by game migrations from one region to another, or airline or other booking problems, etc.

REFUNDS: While the company uses its best endeavors to ensure that all anticipated accommodation is available as planned, there shall be no claim of any nature whatsoever against the Company for a refund either in the whole or part, if any accommodation or excursion is unavailable and a reasonable alternative is not found. If the guest is unable to use any service provided in the itinerary, then there are no refunds due.

INSURANCE: It is a condition of booking, that the sole responsibility lies with the guest to ensure that they carry the correct comprehensive travel and medical insurance to cover themselves, as well as any dependants/traveling companions for the duration of their trip to Costa Rica. This insurance should include cover in respect of, but not limited to, the following eventualities: cancellation or curtailment of the trip, emergency evacuation expenses, medical expenses, repatriation expenses, damage/theft/loss of personal baggage, money and goods. Classic Escapes, including their representatives, employees and agents will take no responsibility for any costs, losses incurred or suffered by the guest, or guest’s dependants or traveling companions, with regards to, but not limited to, any of the above mentioned eventualities. Guests will be charged directly by the relevant service providers for any emergency services they may require, and may find themselves in a position unable to access such services should they not be carrying the relevant insurance cover.
Reservation Application for Mass Audubon Costa Rica ~ March 18 – 16, 2013

Mr./Mrs./Ms.

Passenger Name (1) – as shown as passport  Date of Birth

Mr./Mrs./Ms.

Passenger Name (2) – as shown as passport  Date of Birth

Address

City  State  Zip

Phone: Day  Evening

Email address

Accommodations:
I/We are non-smoker(s) ___ smoker(s) ___ (smoking is limited to outdoors in non-group spaces)

___ I request single accommodations where available and will pay the single supplement.

___ I would like to be assigned a roommate. If one is not available, I will pay the single supplement.

Deposit: Please find my enclosed deposit of ($500 per person) check ________ or please charge ________ my credit card:

VISA  MC  Card #  Exp.

Checks should be made payable to “Massachusetts Audubon Society”

______________________________
Signature

Travel with the Massachusetts Audubon Society ~ 800-289-9504 ~ www.massaudubon.org