

Bringing Costa Rican Endemics, Education, and MD Birders Full Circle



By Patrick Newcombe

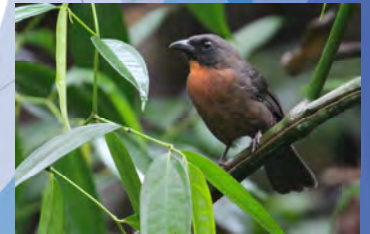


Black-cheeked Ant-Tanager Research



Bino-Edu Project

MD Birders



**Black-cheeked Ant-Tanager
Endangered (IUCN Red List)**

(BCAT)



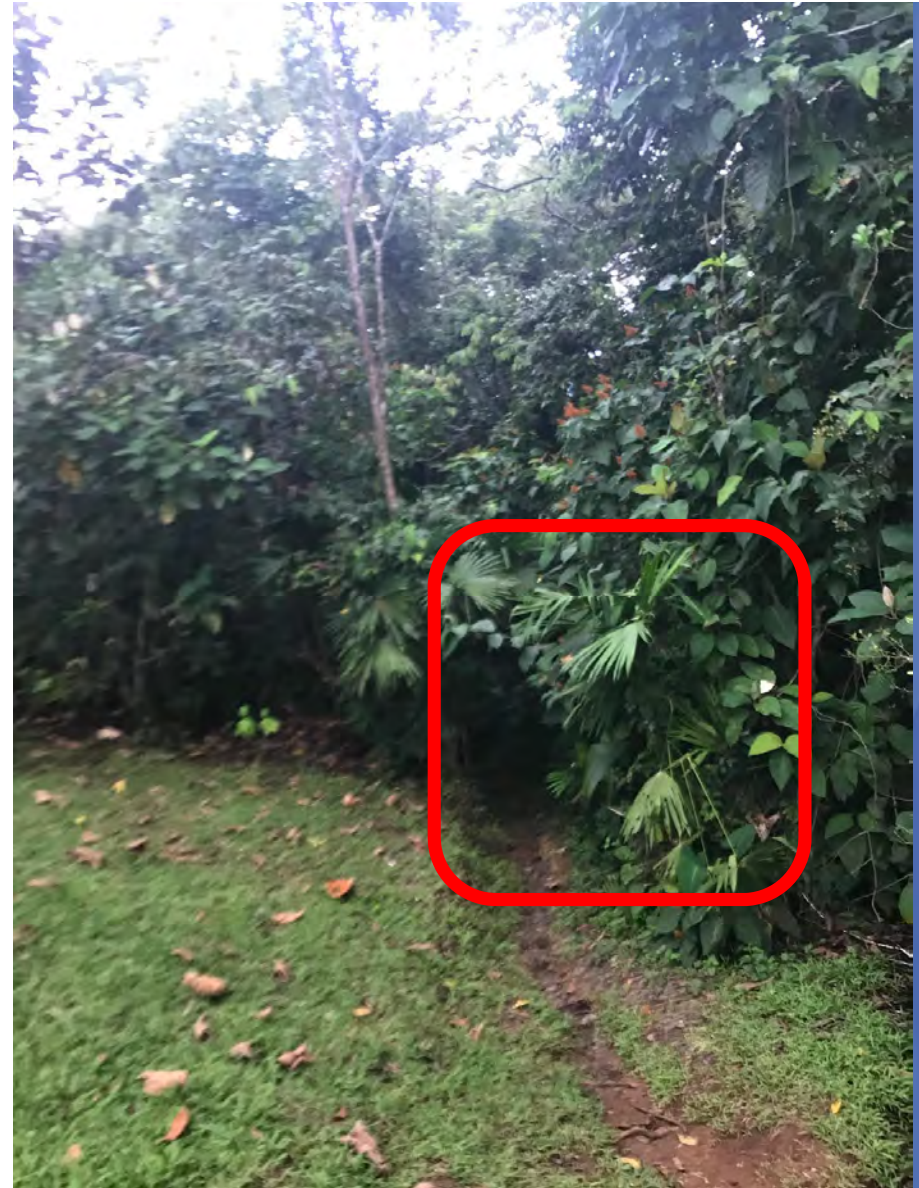
Piro Biological Station

- ▶ Two weeks each year
- ▶ Summer 2017, 2018
- ▶ Primary and secondary



What are its habitat requirements?

- ▶ “undisturbed forest” (Cornils, 2015)
- ▶ Avoids edge habitat
- ▶ Fragmentation is a major threat



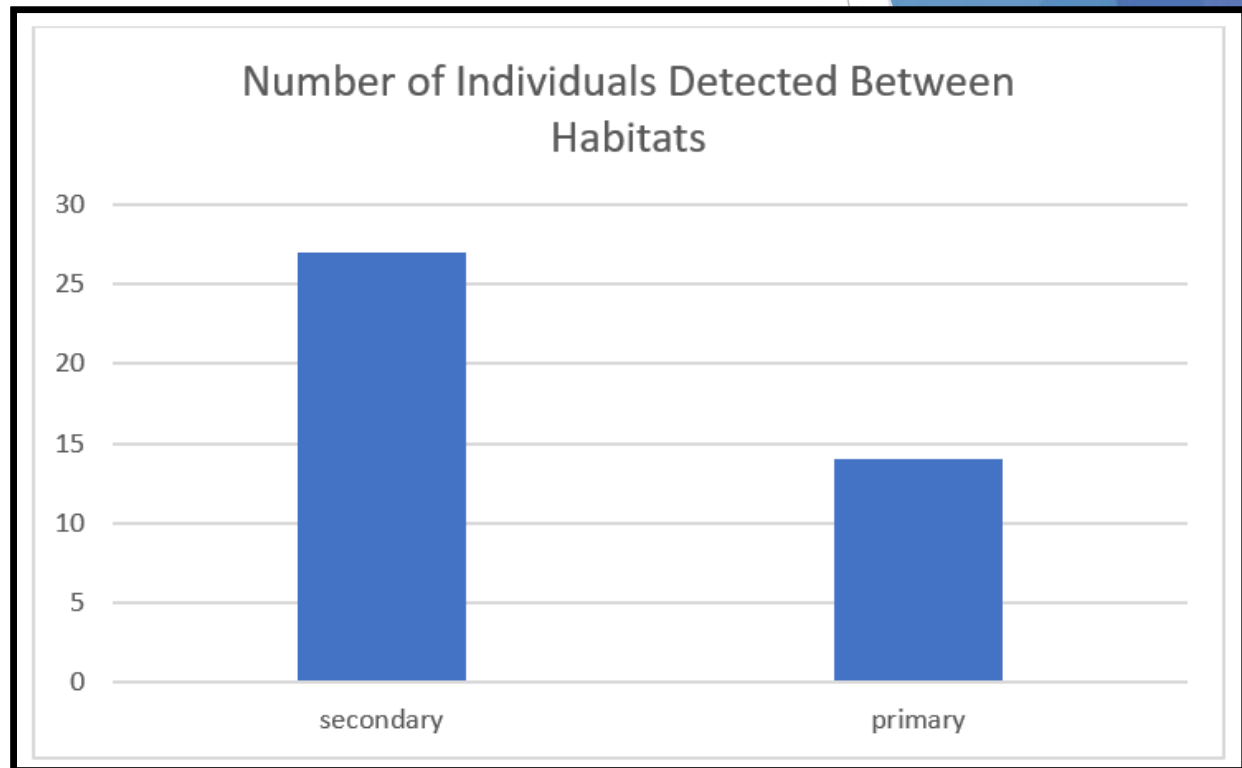
Carludovica palmata: Panama Hat Plant

- ▶ Degraded habitat
- ▶ Added to reforestation arboretum
- ▶ BCAT not a specialist



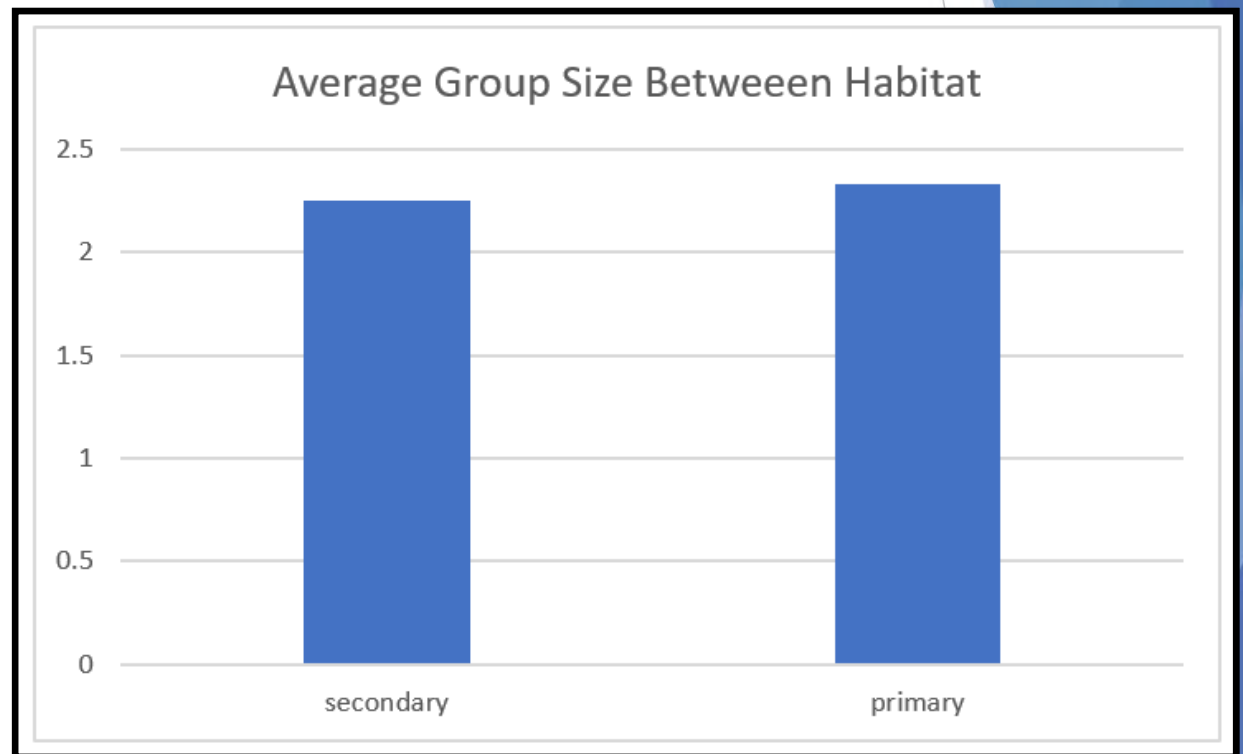
Primary vs. Secondary Forest

- ▶ BCATs definitely use secondary habitat (regenerated, degraded, and edge)



Group Size Does Not Vary Between Habitat

- ▶ BCATs are believed to travel in family groups
- ▶ Probably similar breeding success.

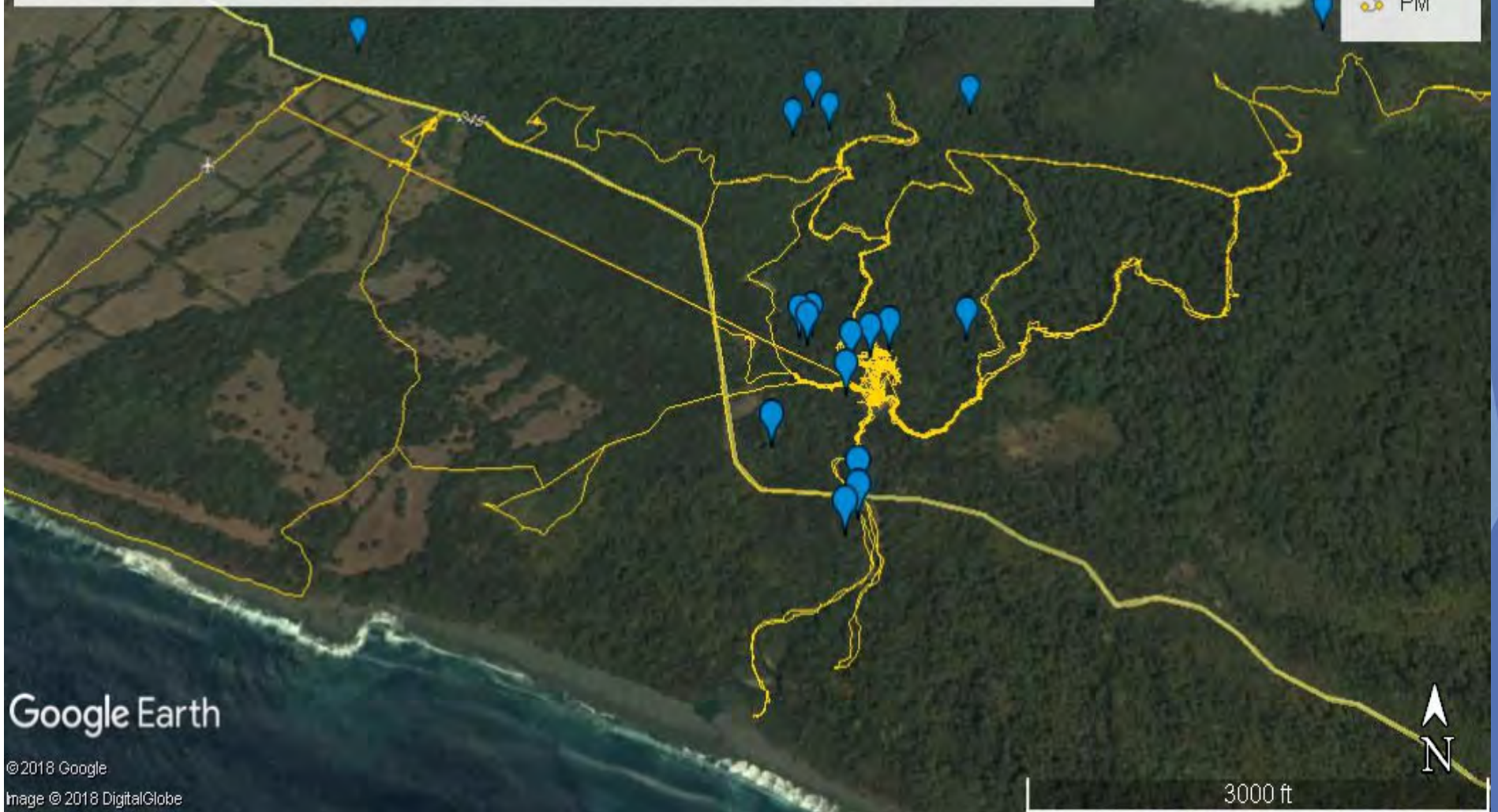


Black-cheeked Ant-Tanagers: Osa Conservation June 2017&2018

Patrick Newcombe, Sightings by Patrick Newcombe and Thomas Meinzen

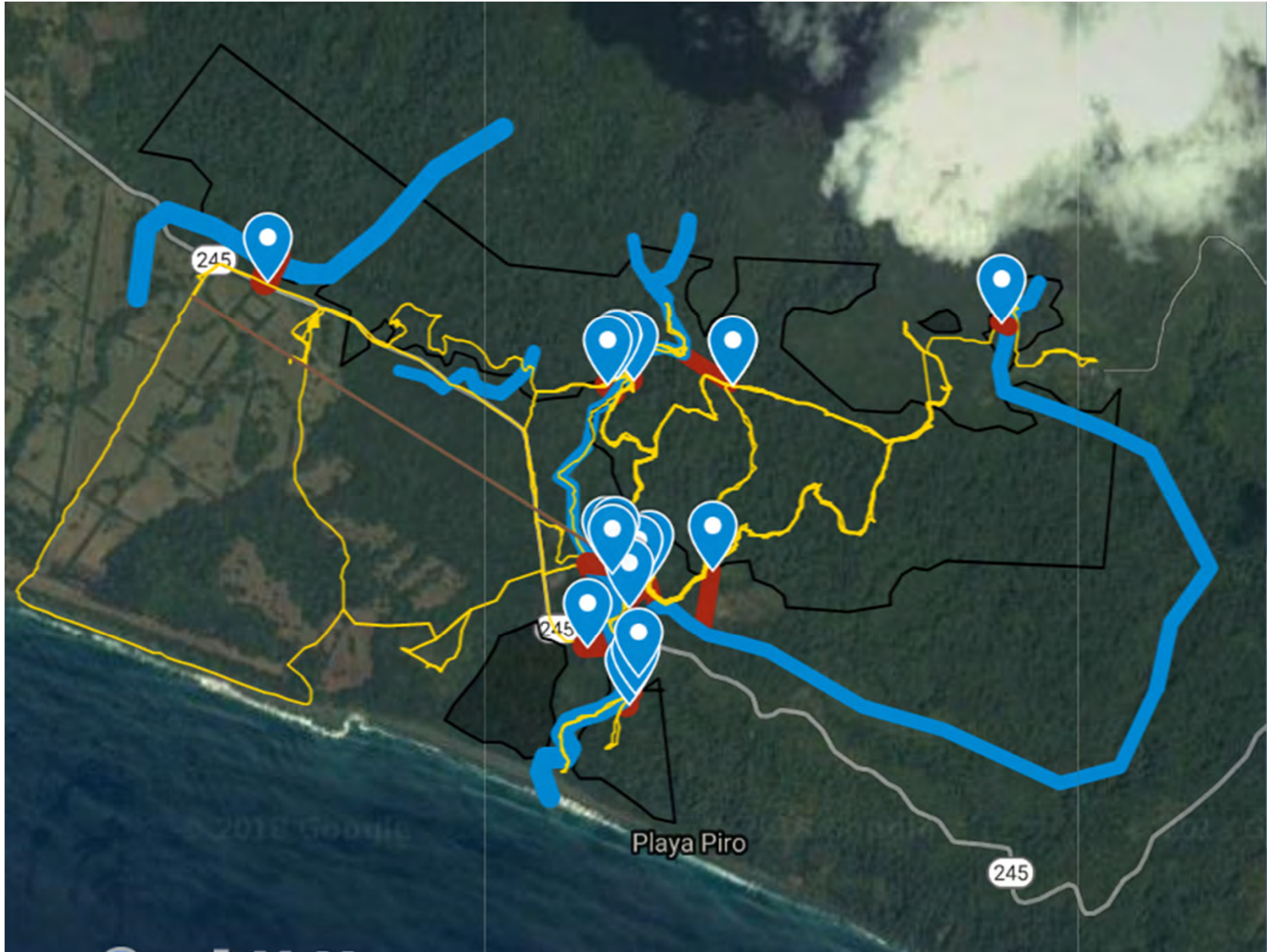
Legend

- Line 3
- PM



Google Earth

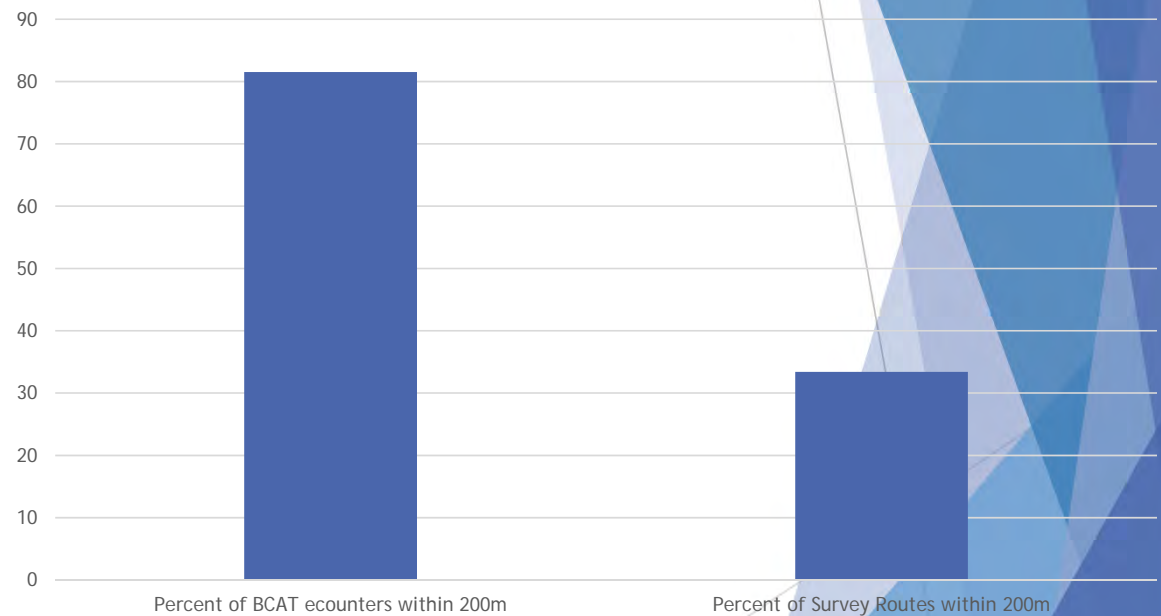
©2018 Google
Image © 2018 DigitalGlobe



Rivers

- ▶ BCATs strongly favor habitat near rivers
 - 81% within 200 m
 - Only 33% of trail system within 200 m
- ▶ Important habitat variable; should be focus of future assessments

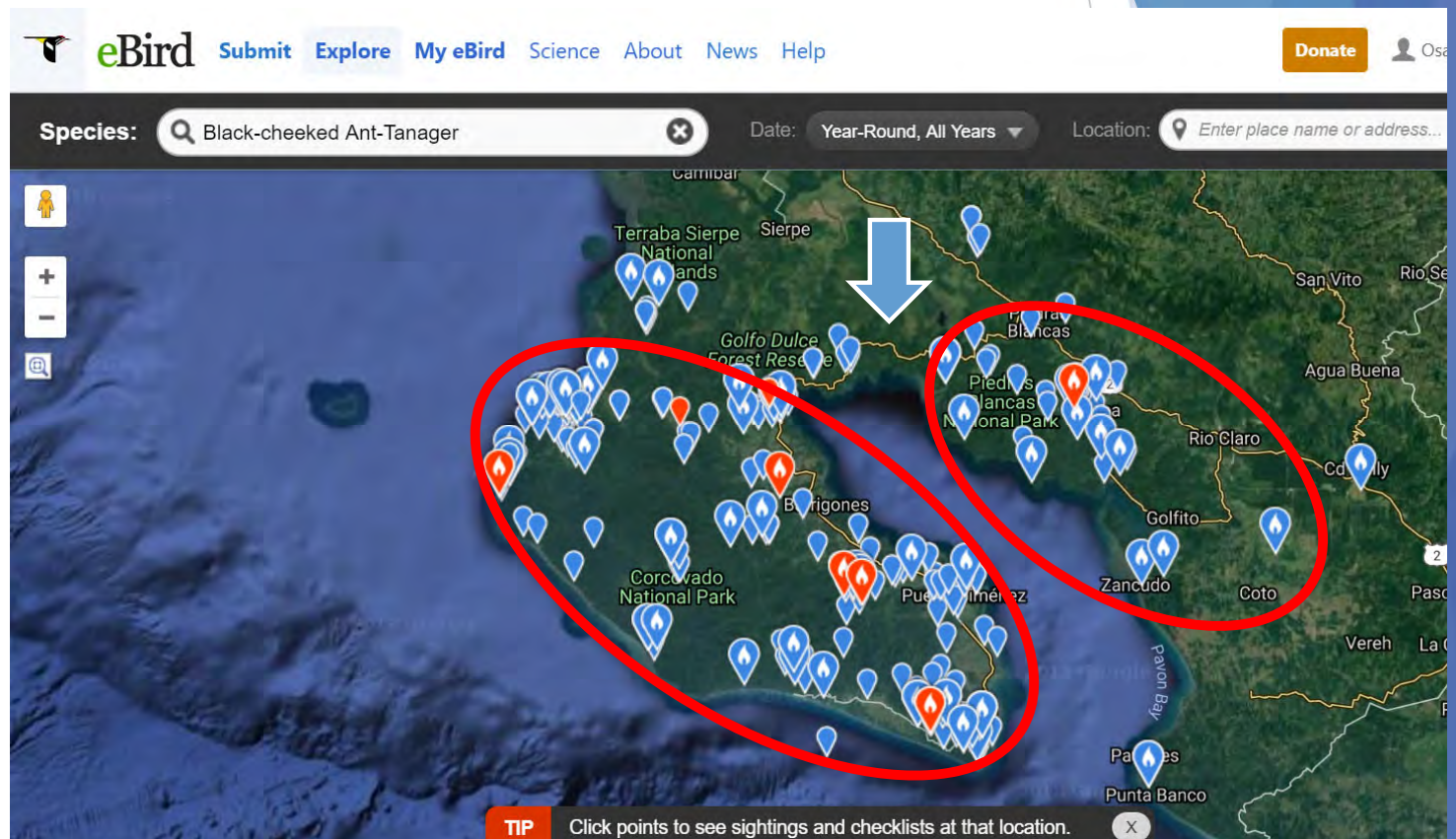
Likelihood of BCAT Encounter Near River vs. Route Near River



- ▶ Report: North end of Golfo Dulce drier (Jones, Lebbin, Gallo, 2009)

- ▶ BCAT

connectivity?



BCATs experience interspecific aggression

- ▶ Never a key “sentinel” or “leader” in flocks
- ▶ Often brief visit
- ▶ In one instance, displaced by Tawny-crowned Greenlet into the lower understory.
- ▶ Ceased calling when foraging on a fruiting plant.
- ▶ Ranges of birds can be shaped by interspecific competition. Is there less flock diversity in degraded habitat?

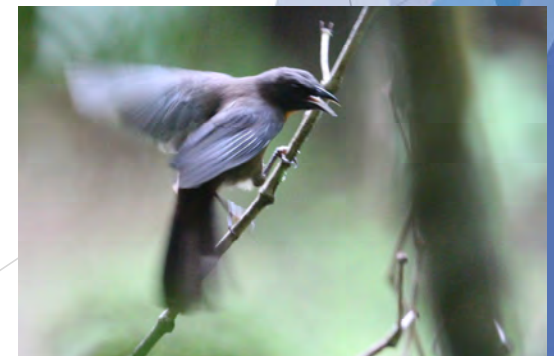
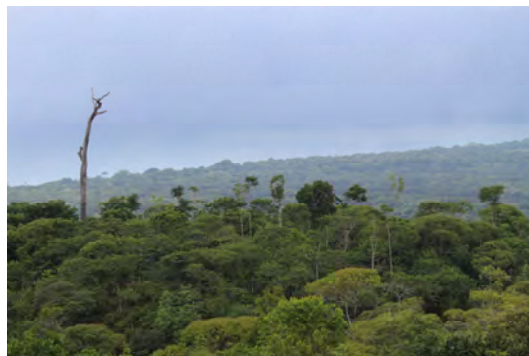


Community Development for Conservation: Guanacaste, CR



Local connection

- ▶ Alers family near Tamarindo
- ▶ Monteverde and Sidwell Friends
- ▶ Goal: to **build support** for conservation by **inspiring kids** about nature with a project other volunteers could sustain.



Daily routine

- 45-minute commute
- Get up at 6:15 for a full day



About CEPIA

- ▶ Community, Education, and Psychology for Infants and Adolescents
- ▶ 3 weeks at community center in Guanacaste in low-income area
- ▶ Free summer camp for families: ~120 kids aged 5-12
- ▶ Internationally awarded



CEPIA
asociación



An opportunity to make a difference

- Ecotourism is a major employer in Guanacaste
- Knowing about birds is an asset -> builds support for conservation
- Kids to parents



Other benefits of birding

In addition to job opportunities, birding is:

- Relaxing
- Inspiring and liberating
- Teaches teamwork



Activities

In order to connect with the students about birds, I prepared fun activities that include:

- A bird BINGO game
- Nature scavenger hunt with binoculars
- What makes a bird a bird?
- Thanks to Cornell Lab of Ornithology Bird Sleuth for providing activities!



Bingo



Scavenger hunt

- On elevated balcony so must use binoculars
- Teams of 3-4, each gets 1 binocular





Birding kits

- Lasting impact: activities and instruction



Monteverde Friends School

- I set up a birding kit here, too
- School has very flexible curriculum, so my instructions should make it easy to study birds!
- Quakerism embraces nature



MD Birders

**Endangered
Bird**

**Local
Education**

How to collect binoculars

I decided to ask
members of the
Montgomery Bird Club
and over 15
companies.



Members of Montgomery Bird Club

- ▶ Donated numerous binoculars
- ▶ Addition of conservation to the *Chat*
- ▶ Need active base to support conservation



Montgomery Bird Club

Spring Calendar



May 17 (Wednesday), 7:30 p.m. Kurt Schwartz on Cape May. Kurt will share his latest photos from his frequent trips to Cape May especially during the migration season.

June 3 (Saturday), 5-8 p.m. Montgomery Bird Club Picnic. Please join us for the Montgomery Bird Club picnic at Black Hills Regional Park. Bring a dish to share—we will eat and then go birding in the early evening. Please remember no alcoholic drinks are allowed in the park—we please bring sodas, water, and iced tea. Families are most welcome!

Meetings take place at the Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Road, Potomac. From the Beltway, take Exit 39 (River Road/Rte 190) toward Potomac. After crossing Falls Road (Rte 189), continue a quarter-mile to Gary Road on the right. Turn right on Gary Road, then take an immediate left into the church parking area. (OK to park in the adjacent elementary school lot as well.) Meetings are in the Fellowship Hall, ground level. Doors open at 7 p.m.

Cancellation policy: Club meetings are canceled if Montgomery County schools have been closed. If you have questions, contact Clive Harris at 301-320-9769 or clivegharris@yahoo.com

The Chat is published in February, May, August, and November by the Montgomery Bird Club, a chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society.

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Deadline for submissions is the 5th of the preceding month. Send items to Patrick Newcombe, 12005 Snoketree Road, Potomac, MD 20854. Phone: 301-424-3259, e-mail: stonerof5@verizon.net.



Used Binoculars for Kids

This summer, I am volunteering at an organization called CEPIA, with 6 other students, which provides daycare and camp services to 6 to 12 year old children in a low-income community in one of the poorest parts of rural Costa Rica. I will be working there for three weeks.



In the area that CEPIA is based, tourism is quite a significant source of employment, and I believe that the skills learned from birding are incredibly valuable, especially in this area, because of the potential for future employment in ecotourism. Even if the students don't end up becoming birders, I would hopefully raise their awareness of nature and conservation.

I have been fortunate to learn from many opportunities for young birders, including from the generosity of the Montgomery Bird Club, and I want to make a similar impact on kids in Costa Rica.

The same birds we see here, in many cases, migrate south to Costa Rica, so I would love to make a connection to the future young birders of Costa Rica. I am trying to put together birding kits which I can leave at CEPIA. The kits would include binoculars, Costa Rican bird books, and bird-related activities.

Any donations of used binoculars or Costa Rican bird books to support this endeavor would be very much appreciated. Please contact me at stonerof5@verizon.net by June 1st if you would like to donate to this project. Thank you! ☺

— Patrick Newcombe



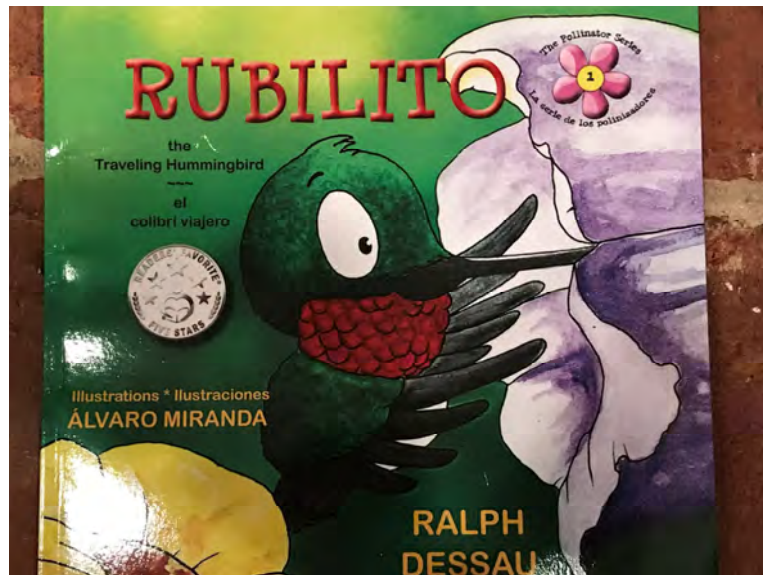
May 2017

Vortex Optics donated
a new pair of Crossfire
binoculars



Also received bird book donations

That include field guides and children's books





Thank you

- ▶ Osa: Dr. Adrian Forsyth, Dr. Andy Whitworth, Eleanor Flatt, Thomas Meinzen
- ▶ Guanacaste: Jackie Morillas, Ayusha Muhayya, Laetitia Deweer
- ▶ MD: Vortex Optics, MBC members, Blue Ridge Young Birders Club

Funding: GoFundMe, ABA Young Birders Scholarship

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