



March 2023 Newsletter

Image of the Month



In late February, I had the exciting opportunity to go on a pelagic birding trip. Together with four other birders, we headed 25 miles off the Pacific Coast of Costa Rica in search of birds that spend almost their entire lives at sea (such as the Brown Booby skimming the water in this picture). One of the best ways to find these birds is to find dolphins. The dolphins herd fish towards the surface and the birds swoop in to catch them.

Costa Rica has ten species of dolphins in its waters, three that come near shore. In this case, we came upon a school of hundreds of Spinner Dolphins (*Stenella longirostris*). We were quite excited to see a Tahiti Petrel nearby this feeding frenzy. It's a bird that nests all the way across the Pacific and occasionally is seen offshore in Costa Rica.

Featured Artist

[Álvaro Cubero](#) is an award winning wildlife and conservation photographer from Costa Rica. He guides photographic expeditions in Costa Rica as well as in South America and Africa. He has taken photos in over 160 National Parks in 28 countries! Like last month's featured artist Mario Wong, Álvaro has also represented Costa Rica at the World Photographic Cup.

I loved this photo of a Margay that he captured in Costa Rica. In particular, you can see how its hind feet are rotated. It is the only cat that can do this, it can rotate its hind ankles 180 degrees to run down trees with the same agility it can run up them.



Álvaro's Instagram

Fascinating Fact

Isla del Coco is a place I really hope to visit one day. Getting there, though, is challenging and costly, requiring several days at sea. This remote island 500+ km off Costa Rica's Pacific Coast is a fascinating place. Historically it was used as everything from a pirate haven ([an over \\$1 billion treasure is buried somewhere on the island](#)) to a penal colony. For the last few decades, it has been a national park. In recent years, the marine portion of the park has expanded and in 2021 the Bicentennial Marine Reserve was created around the park. This makes for the largest protected marine area in Central America and brings Costa Rica up to having 30% of its marine area under protection.



A few amazing facts about Isla del Coco:

- The island is actually part of an undersea chain of mountains that extends all the way to Costa Rica's mainland. The influence of this mountain chain contributes to an amazing level of

biodiversity in its waters.

- It is the only non-desert island in the Eastern Pacific. In fact, it receives 200-300 inches of rain per year. This is because it lies right where the Intertropical Convergence Zone comes together and gets caught in its north-south movements.
- It hosts the lowest elevation cloud forest in the world. Cloud forest can be found starting at around 300 meters above sea level on the island (compared to normally being over 1,000 meters).
- It is the youngest volcanic island in the Eastern Pacific. It emerged from the ocean about one million years after Central America fused together.
- It is home to three endemic bird species, found nowhere else in the world.

Learn More

News

As mentioned in the February newsletter, the winners of the 2023 World Photographic Cup were going to be announced in Singapore on March 17th. Costa Rica took 8th place worldwide in the competition and had three photos in the Top 10. Last month's featured photo by Mario Wong (below) finished 5th in the nature category. Another Costa Rican photographer (Sebastián Alba Vives) took 4th place in digital illustration/AI and 5th in commercial photography. See all the winners [here](#).



AI Art

Is AI the next technological revolution? I can't predict the future but I can say that tools like Midjourney and Stable Diffusion are really fun to use as an artist! I can't emphasize how terrible I am at traditional art skills like painting and drawing. My high school art teacher told me she only passed me because I would fix her computer during class.

These tools are great for satisfying an artistic itch that otherwise can't be scratched. This month's header image was generated by AI and inspired by a photograph I took in the cloud forest near Los Quetzales National Park. I've created a gallery on my website of some of my

favorite images I've created so far.

Gallery

Tyler Wenzel Photography

300 m este de la escuela de Tres Esquinas, 21007, La Fortuna

<https://tylerwenzel.com>

This email was sent to {{contact.EMAIL}}
You've received it because you've subscribed to our newsletter.

[Unsubscribe](#)

