

Nature steals spotlight on trip to Costa Rica

Guests get up close with species at Corcovado National Park

It's difficult to question whether Costa Rica takes advantage of every morsel. The Central American country covers only .03% of the Earth's surface, but it's home to nearly 6% of the world's biodiversity.

Located north of Panama, Costa Rica has nearly 900 species of birds. Eastern North America has fewer than 200 species.

Haven't seen a toucan other than cereal box? Costa Rica can transform your morning breakfast into a unique wildlife experience. Seekers of exotic flora and fauna would have a difficult time finding a better environment in which to encounter.

Costa Rica has a commitment to conservation that dates to the late 1940s. The government abolished its military and redirected funds to education, healthcare and the environment. Locals mutter "There goes the Costa Rican army!" upon sighting a flock of birds. It's all in jest, of course, but impact has been noticeable. A system of national parks and reserves protects 25% of land from human exploitation.

Corcovado National Park, located on Costa Rica's Pacific coast, is one of the most biologically diverse parts of the country – if not the world – and worth an extended visit. It's a 50-min-



BIRD FEATHERS – A toucan bird rests on a tree limb in Corcovado National Park in Costa Rica. *Image: Andre LABETAA. Adobe Stock.*

ute flight on a small plane from the country's capital of San Jose to Puerto Jimenez, primary area of the national park.

Corcovado boasts acres of primary rainforest and a growing network of private reserves dedicated to ecotourism. The location is sparsely populated and comprised of lush ridges full of

monkeys and scarlet macaws that slope down miles of deserted, wide beaches.

The park's hiking trails follow coastal and inland routes, and guides are required. They're excellent navigators, whose trained eyes can spot small birds or sloths high in the canopy or stealthy anteaters at ground level. Many lug lightweight scopes for close-up viewing

of amazing creatures some adventurers only have seen in books.

Night hikes also are popular. Headlamps and flashlights are used to spot nocturnal mammals and other critters. Shine a special UV flashlight on a scorpion and it turns electric blue.

Lodging ranges from screened-in tents on platforms to more luxurious lodges, but air conditioning is rare. The setting is a challenge, but it comes with an opportunity to arise to the sight of a troop of capuchin monkeys swinging through the branches outside a window. It's a memory that will last a lifetime.

Outdoors enthusiasts should plan a trip to Costa Rica – or any natural area where wildlife steals the spotlight – soon, while Toucan Sam and friends remain abundant. A 2019 report by the United Nations concluded that as many as 1 million species of plants and animals risk extinction in the coming decades, thanks to a growing population and activities like logging, farming and mining.

So, here's to keeping Costa Rica a vibrant ecological kingdom. There's too much to appreciate to see it all go to waste.

As Joni Mitchell famously sang, "You don't know what you've got, 'til it's gone."

Honda e-scooter redefines urban mobility

New Motocompacto is sleek, simple and foldable bike

Urban travel is scooting in the right direction. A variety of options are available to city-dwellers, whether it's a traditional bicycle or motorized scooter.

Honda is working to improve an evolving situation by introducing a new e-scooter. Inspired by Honda Motocompo of the early 1980s, the new Honda Motocompacto redefines affordable, all-electric personal transportation. It has sleek and simple styling and an innovative, compact foldable design. The cost is \$995.

The zero-emissions Motocompacto is designed for the modern realities of urban mobility, providing riders with an easy and enjoyable alternative transport that reduces their carbon footprint while offering convenience.

The scooter reaches a maximum speed of 15 mph and has a zero-emissions range of 12 miles. Motocompacto can be fully charged in fewer than four hours in both the folded and ready-to-ride configuration by using a common 110v outlet.

"Motocompacto is uniquely Honda – a fun, innovative and unexpected facet of our larger electrification strategy," said Jane Nakagawa, vice president of the R&D business unit at American Honda Motor Co., Inc. "Sold in conjunction with our new all-electric SUVs, Motocompacto supports our



SCOOT – Honda Motocompacto scooter is a zero-emissions mode of transportation for short distances. *Image: NewsPress USA.*

goal of carbon neutrality by helping customers with end-to-end zero-emissions transport."

Honda engineers in Ohio and California designed Motocompacto as an innovative approach to personal electric transportation. Uniquely foldable, it quickly transforms into its own compact, light and stackable carrying case that is easy to haul in a vehicle, on public transportation or store in tight places.

Motocompacto is ideal for traveling around cityscapes and college campuses. It was designed with rider comfort and convenience in mind with a cushiony seat, secure grip foot pegs, on-board storage, a digital speedometer, a charge gauge and a comfortable carry handle. A clever phone app enables riders to adjust their personal settings, including lighting and ride modes via Bluetooth®.

"Motocompacto is easy to use and

"Motocompacto is easy to use and fun to ride, but was also designed with safety, durability, and security in mind."

Nick Ziraldo

Project lead and design engineering unit leader at Honda Development and Manufacturing of America

fun to ride, but was also designed with safety, durability, and security in mind," said Nick Ziraldo, project lead and design engineering unit leader at Honda Development and Manufacturing of America. "It uses a robust heat-treated aluminum frame and wheels, bright LED headlight and taillight, side reflectors, and a welded steel lock loop on the kickstand that is compatible with most bike locks."

Charging is quick and convenient with a standard-compact charger that can be stowed onboard. Motocompacto is designed to be personalized with sleek and simple styling that's perfect for decals, stickers, skins and more.

To enhance the joy of ownership, a functional line of branded Motocompacto accessories will be available, including helmet, backpack, apparel and more.