Have you been to Costa Rica? Yes – then you know the natural beauty that awaits your next visit. No – what are you waiting for? This past April we had the good fortune to travel to Costa Rica with several friends and fellow nature lovers on a trip led by Carlos Hernandez. Our speaker for January, Farrar Stockton, was on the trip and will share his photos and knowledge of Costa Rica at the meeting on January 8.

Costa Rica has many “don’t miss” destinations for birders and photographers. Two of our favorites, where we spent all of our time on this trip, are Savegre de Montaña in the central highlands and Rancho Naturalista on the Caribbean slope. Each of these locales has endemic species as well as species found throughout the country.

The highlight of our visit to Savegre, as always, was the Resplendent Quetzal. In the spring months, one can almost always find a nest and spend hours watching and photographing the male and female flying back and forth to the nest hole. We also found a nest hole of the Emerald Toucanet where we watched male and female building their nest. Another of my favorites was the Black-faced Solitaire (photo at left). Although not a very colorful bird, it’s beautiful flute-like song could be heard every morning and evening floating through the forest.

The photographers on our trip were captivated by numerous hummingbirds at the hotel’s feeders, including Magnificent, Violet Sabrewing, White-throated Mountain-gem, Green-crowned Brilliant, and Green Violet-ear.

En route to Rancho Naturalista we took a side trip to Cerro de la Muerte, one of the highest points in Costa Rica at 11,500 feet. Here we were able to find Volcano Juncos and Volcano Hummingbirds. Upon arrival at Rancho Naturalista, we experienced the true “rain” forest where it rained three of the four days of our stay. But that didn’t dampen our spirits and every day we hiked the mountain trails or enjoyed resting on the patio where

Continued on page 3
### January 2009

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**ONC Contact Information**

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**Maps**

Bayland Community Center
6400 Bissonnet (at Hillcroft)

Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary
2001 FM 945, Cleveland, TX

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### Botany/Entomology

**JANUARY 3, 12:30 pm**
Twelfth Night Party, at home of the Blakleys. Join us for our annual potluck party; bring your favorite covered dish.

**FEBRUARY 10, 7:30 pm**
Bringing Nature Home, by Flo Hannah

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### ONC Regular Bi-Monthly Meeting

**JANUARY 8**
Natural History of Costa Rica by Farrar Stockton
7:00 pm - Refreshments
7:30 pm - Program

Farrar has made numerous trips to Costa Rica, most recently this past April. His beautiful photos of local flora and fauna will leave you planning a trip to this beautiful country. See cover story about Costa Rica on page 1.

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### Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary

**January 17, 9:00 am**
Open House & Highway Pickup
Join us for our winter trash pickup along our adopted highway adjacent to the sanctuary. Bring gloves, hat, water, etc. Highway pickup only takes about an hour, so be sure to also bring a lunch and plan to stay for a walk along the trails after highway pickup is completed.

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### ORN REGULAR BI-MONTHLY MEETING

**JANUARY 8**
Natural History of Costa Rica by Farrar Stockton
7:00 pm - Refreshments
7:30 pm - Program
Farrar has made numerous trips to Costa Rica, most recently this past April. His beautiful photos of local flora and fauna will leave you planning a trip to this beautiful country. See cover story about Costa Rica on page 1.
Trail Maintenance at LTNS
We had a good turnout in November for our trail maintenance weekend. We spent all day Saturday clearing and painting trails so that our members can enjoy hiking the trails without having to fight through tangles of limbs and vines.

Thanks to Aaron Stoley, Charlie Smith, Calvin Blakley, and Leland Day for clearing the trails of debris from Hurricane Ike. These guys wore themselves out, once again, and deserve a big thank-you from all of us. Other volunteers who helped trim and paint the trails were Mary Jane McCartney, Kellene Jarratt, Bob Martin, Connie Blakley, Sergio & Wanda Henao, Karen Stoley, and Wanda Smith.

Seismic Work Ongoing at LTNS
When you visit the sanctuary, you will still notice tape and wooden stick markers used by the seismic crew that is surveying our property. Work was delayed for a short time, but crews are on the job again and the survey should be completed by the end of December.

Membership Renewal
If you haven’t already done so, it’s time once again to renew your membership in ONC. Even if you cannot join us at meetings or field trips, your support and membership are important to help maintain our educational libraries and our beloved Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary.

Please complete the form at the right (or on line) and mail your check today.

ONC Appreciates Your Donations
Donations to ONC are always appreciated and gratefully acknowledged. Memorials and Honor Gifts are used to support Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary or to fund special projects as designated by the donor. Thanks, everyone, for your generosity.

In memory of Avis Brister
Calvin & Connie Blakley
Ron & Sharon Grimes

In honor of Aaron Stoley
Gwen Kunz

Costa Rica ... continued from page 1
there were plenty of birds. This venue is known for its beautiful hummingbirds, especially the Snowcap, a rare and endemic species. Another rare find was a pair of Rufous-tailed Jacamars perched on a branch over our hiking trail. First the male, then the female, would fly off the perch and back, neither seeming to be bothered by our presence. It was a rare Kodak moment!

I could write a book about my love of Costa Rica, but you will have an opportunity to experience its natural beauty at our January 8 meeting. Farrar Stockton is an outstanding nature photographer and lecturer, and he will share his Costa Rica experiences with us. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us. See page 2 for details.

Member Renewal Information
(Renewal form also available at www.outdoornatureclub.org)

Name: ________________________________
Address: ______________________________
City/St/Zip: ____________________________
Phone: _______ E-mail: _____________

Regular ($8) ____________________________
Family ($15) ____________________________
Supporting ($40) ______________________
Life ($250) _____________________________

Ornithology Group (you must be member of ONC to join OG Study Group)
Add $14-individual, $19-family __________

DONATION ____________________________
TOTAL DUES/DONATIONS = __________

Mail to: Outdoor Nature Club
PO Box 270894, Houston, TX 77277-0894
Please renew your membership
see form inside
thank you!