

## The Wildlife of Costa Rica

At our February meeting, the Blyth Valley and Southwold Suffolk Wildlife group were treated to a visit to the tropical country of Costa Rica. Ian Barthorpe, from RSPB Minsmere, gave an account of the wildlife that he and his family enjoyed on their trip there. Wildlife tourism is key to the country's economy, and the natural abundance is carefully nurtured. Ian's wide knowledge and excellent photography skills took us around the country from east to west. The mountainous central spine divides species of birds, although there are strong similarities between them. The Monteverde cloud forests are hung in mists, with high aerial bridges for those with a good head for heights. Knowledgeable guides, skilled at finding hidden creatures, adding enormously to the pleasure, and the family were delighted to end their stay seeing several "must-see" birds, sloths on the move, and a group of Squirrel monkeys.

The beautiful images showing the wide range of animals, and the colour and variety in the tropical landscape, gave us all a restorative boost on a cold winter evening.

"Harvest Mice and Other Small Mammals" is the subject of our next talk on Thursday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 7.30pm at Southwold Arts Centre, IP18 6JP. Entrance costs £3, to include refreshments. Under 25's free. All are welcome.

Penny Mansfield.

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