i located near the highest point in the southwest of Costa Rica. About 10m. from the inn is a cloud forest, where you can spot Quetzales. While walking through the magnificent, mysterious forest trails, you will see waterfalls, birds and no other tourists (this place is not really touristy; you will feel like you are the only one in this impressive forest)

The Resplendent Quetzal, Pharomachrus mocinno, is a spectacular bird of the trogon family. It is found from southern Mexico to western Panama (unlike the other quetzals of the genus Pharomachrus, which are found in South America and eastern Panama). There are two subspecies, P. m. mocinno and P. m. costaricensis, the Costa Rican Resplendent Quetzal. This quetzal plays an important role in Mesoamerican mythologies.

Description

This species is 36 cm (14 in) long, plus up to 64 cm (25 in) of tail streamer for the male, and weighs about 210 g (7 oz). This is the largest representative of the trogon order.[3]

Resplendent Quetzals have a green body (showing iridescence from green-gold to blue-violet) and red breast. Their green upper tail coverts hide their tails and in breeding males are particularly splendid, being longer than the rest of the body. The primary wing coverts are also unusually long and give a fringed appearance. The male has a helmet-like crest. The mature male's beak is yellow and the female's is black.

The skin of the quetzal is very thin and easily torn, so it has evolved thick plumage to protect its skin.[citation needed] Like other members of the trogon family, it has large eyes that adapt easily to the dim light of its forest home.[citation needed]

The "song" is a treble syllable described as kyow or like "a whimpering pup", often in pairs, which may be repeated monotonously. Resplendent Quetzals have other unmusical calls as well.

Behavior

Resplendent Quetzals are considered specialized fruit-eaters, although they mix their diet with insects (notably wasps, ants, and larvae) and frogs. Particularly important are wild avocados and other fruit of the laurel family, which the birds swallow whole before regurgitating the pits, which helps to disperse these trees.

Their habitat is montane cloud forests of Central America (from Southern Mexico to Panama). Resplendent Quetzals usually live alone when not breeding. When breeding, females lay two pale blue eggs in a nest placed in a hole which they carve in a rotten tree. A tree in the required stage of decomposition is susceptible to weather damage, and the availability of suitable trees may limit the Resplendent Quetzal population.

Both parents take turns at incubating, with their long tail-covert feathers folded forwards over the back and out of the hole, where they tend to look like a bunch of fern growing out of the hole. The incubation period lasts about 18 days, during which the male generally incubates the eggs during the day while the female incubates them at night. When the eggs hatch, both parents take care of the young, feeding them fruit, berries, insects, lizards, and small frogs. However, the female often neglects and even abandons the young near the end of the rearing period, leaving it up to the male to continue caring for the offspring until they are ready to

survive on their own.

Resplendent Quetzals are weak fliers. Their known predators include the Ornate Hawk-eagle and owls as adults, Emerald Toucanets, Brown Jays, Long-tailed Weasels, squirrels, and the Kinkajou as nestlings or eggs (Pribor 1999).[4][5]

Myth and legend

The Resplendent Quetzal was considered divine, associated with the "snake god", Quetzalcoatl by Pre-Columbian Mesoamerican civilizations. Its iridescent green tail feathers, symbols for spring plant growth, were venerated by the ancient Aztecs and Maya, who viewed the quetzal as the "god of the air" and as a symbol of goodness and light. Mesoamerican rulers and some nobility of other ranks wore headdresses made from quetzal feathers, symbolically connecting them to Quetzalcoatl. Since it was a crime to kill a quetzal, the bird was simply captured, its long tail feathers plucked, and was set free. Quetzalcoatl was the creator god and god of wind, often depicted with grey hair. In several