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Guayabo National Monument – Wildlife and Resources

Guayabo is believed to be the remains of a bustling city that was at its peak between 800 and 1400 AD (Quilter and Hoopes). However, ceramic artifacts found at the site indicate that Guayabo was inhabited as early as 500 BC (Zamora). Two factors contributing to Guayabo's potential significance is that it might have been both a central city for trade and for religion (Franke). One of the lasting legacies of the Guayabo de Turrialba site is the network of aqueducts. The aqueducts carried water from local streams and springs to the city. Water was also stored underground in "laja" (volcanic rock) channels that would feed into the aqueducts as well. The network of underground aqueducts is impressive; there is an aqueduct underneath every known paved path. Circular pools of water were common as well, and they grew more numerous in the areas where elite members of the city lived. Communal water basins were supplied by the springs, and then the water from the basin was subsequently channeled to a riverbed. Consequently, the water basins in Guayabo always had a fresh supply of water (Quilter and Hoopes). An archeologist named Hurtado de Mendoza noticed that the main road of Guayabo shows that the main roofed mound, the shaman's hill, and the Turrialba volcano are all in one direct line of sight. People have proposed that the mount is an observatory, as the three volcanic eruptions within only six centuries may have influenced the local religious views (Alvarado).

Costa Rica's interesting geographic position of being in Mesoamerica, but being close in proximity to South America, leads archeologists to consider what other cultures influenced the architecture of Guayabo. For example, archaeologist Oscar Fonseca Zamora postulates that the locals of Guayabo were in contact with people from the Tairona culture in Colombia. There is a site called Pueblito that has similar systems of aqueducts, cobble-paved paths, and other architectural features (Zamora). As a note, none of the sources I have read have mentioned the name of the community who lived in Guayabo. One source said that it is unknown who had lived in Guayabo, but it was from a blog post, rather than a publication by an archaeologist.

Costa Rica is considered one of the countries with the most biodiversity. In fact, the Instituto Nacional de Biodiversidad shares that the species in Costa Rica constitute about 4% of the total species in the world (Biodiversity in Costa Rica). When searching for information about wildlife in Costa Rica, I came across a very comprehensive list on the site "[Living National Treasures](#)". I've inserted a hyperlink because I thought it would make more sense to direct you all towards the original list instead of rewriting it, as the list is quite long.

The surrounding environment of Guayabo can pose challenges to preservation of the site. The rocks at the Guayabo site are basaltic-andesite rocks that are vulnerable to erosion. There is a chronic problem with excess water running over the rock paths, but the water is acidic. Additionally, lichens grow easily at the site, and there is concern that the lichens could damage the rocks and glyphs of archeological interest (Obando and Peraldo).

A bird that's found on the trails of Guayabo National Monument is the Montezuma oropendolas. These birds will nest in trees near predatory wasps in order to protect their eggs from botflies. The wasps will attack the botflies because the botflies sound similar to the types of flies that kill the wasps' offspring (Franke).

This is a photo of a *Montezuma oropendola*.



The forests surrounding Guayabo National Monument have large populations of palm trees, ferns, and shrubs. For example, some common trees are Burío and Burío blanco. Another common plant is a guava tree (Jimenez).

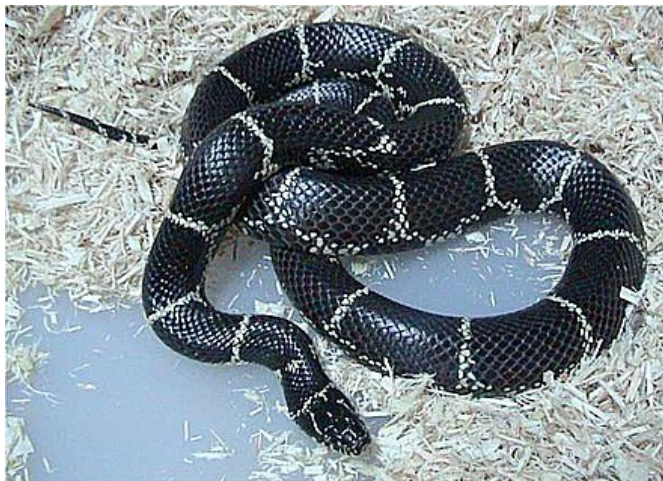


This is a photo of Burío.

Some animals that can be found are armadillos, otters, parakeets, anteaters, and jaguarundis (Jimenez). Bothrops aspers are venomous snakes, but kingsnakes are not.



Above are two types of Bothrops snakes



This is a member of the kingsnake family

Asides from the Montezuma oropendula, birds at Guayabo include rainbow-billed toucans, brown owls, and squirrel cuckoos (Jimenez).



This is a squirrel cuckoo.

I read on a blog somewhere that there are sloths in Guayabo National Monument. I am not sure if that is true, but I hope it is.

Sources:

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