{rokbox title=| Las Baulas Marine National Park in Northwest Costa Rica, where we monitored the activity of wildlife and detected the presence of *Procyon cancrivorus* :: Image: Authors|images/stories/ieo/imagenespublicaciones/centro-oceanografico-baleares-ieo-csic-first-confirmed-record-ecological-bibi-2026-thumb-et-al.jpg|}images/stories/ieo/imagenespublicaciones/centro-oceanografico-baleares-ieo-csic-first-confirmed-record-ecological-bibi-2026-et-al.jpg{/rokbox}

Keilor E. Cordero-Umaña, **Pilar Santidrián Tomillo** and Eduardo Carrillo Jiménez, 2026.
First confirmed record and ecological observations of crab-eating raccoons (Procyon cancrivorus) at Las Baulas National Park, Costa Rica.
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Abstract:We report here the first record of a crab-eating raccoon (*Procyon cancrivorus*) at Las Baulas Marine National Park, Guanacaste Province, northwest Costa Rica. We obtained repeated camera-trap detections at multiple sites between 2021 and 2025, indicating that the species occurs farther north than previously documented, consistent with a potential northward range expansion. We recorded 70 independent detections of crab-eating raccoons, accounting for approximately 17.9% of all records. Beyond documenting this new record, our study provides insights into one of the least-studied Neotropical carnivores, for which very little information is available on its ecology. We observed crab-eating raccoons actively feeding on garbage and documented adult females with cubs, indicating local reproduction and the use of anthropogenic food subsidies. Crab-eating raccoons overlap in space, activity times (coefficient of overlap (Δ) = 0.82, 95% CI = 0.72 to 0.89), and resource use with northern raccoons (*Procyon lotor*), providing a natural setting to evaluate mechanisms of coexistence, including potential competition for space and food. Additionally, crab-eating raccoons appear to preferentially exploit garbage containers close to mangrove areas, which may indicate differences in their response to anthropogenic disturbance compared with northern raccoons. Continued collection of data and reassessments of previous videos and images are needed to (1) map the distribution of the species accurately, (2) determine the northern distribution limits of the species in Costa Rica, and (3) determine if the presence of the species reflects a recent expansion or a previously undocumented presence.

Keywords:Potential range expansion,Crab-eating raccoon,New record,Camera trap,Guanacaste,Costa Rica.