



ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Jamaica

Boswell Trip Report

23rd to 28th March 2018 (6 days)



Crested Quail-Dove by Rich Lindie

Trip report compiled by Tour Leader: Rich Lindie





Jamaican Tody by Rich Lindie

For those of us who arrived in-country a night in advance, the Jamaican birding adventures began within the confines of Kingston, where, it seems, sightings of endemic parrots and unknown *Myiarchus* flycatchers were a highlight. Not to downplay the city itself which, although congested and rather lacklustre in many parts, certainly does have a few intriguing sites, as well as a great deal of goings-on to see - especially while whiling away time in slow traffic. Well, for the unlucky, anyway. Once out of the city, and along one of the island's many narrow and winding roads, the scenery and pace was distinctly different though interesting, too, though I'm sure it was with a great sense of calm and welcome that the first day ended at the somewhat charming Greencastle Estate. Well, again, it was for me. Not least of which because we all got to meet up as a group for the first time! Celebratory drinks, introductions and reunions, and plenty of stories to follow.

But soon it was time for business, and the next morning saw us up bright and early, and off into the forest, where a host of super endemics awaited. Even if Dwayne didn't. Kicking things off in real style, one of the first birds we encountered was an obliging Jamaican Oriole, while a supporting cast that included male Orangequits, a pair of Jamaican Woodpeckers and a Black-faced Grassquit was also much enjoyed. And then it was time to meet Dwayne. Clad as only a Jamaican birder could be, and full of Rastafarian charm and swagger, it wasn't hard to forgive his tardiness and in his defence, he didn't waste time getting one wit' it. And so it was, that we wandered further down the trail, bumping first into a couple of Sad Flycatchers, and then on to an area where Dwayne wanted to get us onto Yellow-shouldered Grassquit. It didn't take long for the grassquit to show up, only it didn't hang around for all of us too see. Fortunately, we were well distracted by some handsome Jamaican Euphonias and yet more Orangequits. Completing the loop, and coming back to the fruiting tree that had attracted the Yellow-shouldered Grassquit earlier, we soon made sure we had all caught up with this tricky little bird before a full breakfast and a cup of coffee began to call. Loudly.

Post-breakfast, we headed out on the property again, where one of the first highlights was a Vervain





Red-billed Streamertail by Rich Lindie

Hummingbird, seen perched on a favourite snag - albeit a little far away. Fortunately, we had further sightings, later in the trip. We then went on to see Jamaican Elaenia, a few more new endemics for our list, as well as a few now-familiar species, though activity quietened down rapidly, and we were soon back at the estate for lunch.

Our afternoon walk produced some goodies, too, when a walk down to the reservoir produced sightings of: Jamaican Lizard Cuckoo, Ruddy Quail-Dove, Northern Jacana, Ruddy Duck, Pied-billed Grebe, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Green Heron and, one of the trip-favourites, a roosting Northern Potoo. Needless to say, we saw several other species along the way, including that little gem, the Jamaican Tody, though one was becoming conspicuous by its absence - Jamaican Becard. Still, there were days to come.

Having set our eyes in, and put many of the more common species on the island in the bag, we set off the next day for a site further afield. Namely: Ecclesdown Road. Once again, our local guide was on Jamaican Flexible Time, though the small delay made no difference in the wee hours of the morning. On-site, one of the first birds we heard was one of our main targets, Jamaican Crow, and though a mad dash ensured wonderful views, it seemed we needn't have worried as the species was heard and seen on a few occasions that morning. Nonetheless, another endemic in the bag. Black-billed Streamertail and the two *Amazon* parrots fell not long after, as did White-eyed Thrush (though it took some time to get great views), Blue Mountain Vireo and, seemingly surprisingly, Jamaican Blackbird. Jamaican Pewee took a little longer to find but by then we had pretty much seen all we had come to see, so little stress was felt. Not that Jamaica seems conducive to much stress. Besides, we had bigger fish to fry. One of

our other main targets, Crested Quail-Dove, had been heard calling on a few occasions, though refused to show - something I eventually tried to rectify by bush-whacking into the understorey, only





Jamaican Blackbird by Rich Lindie

to achieve half the goal. Once more, something had to wait for another day.

More birding around Greencastle that afternoon and the following day gave us further opportunities to familiarize ourselves with some regular but interesting species - including Greater Antillean Grackle, Loggerhead Kingbird, Jamaican Woodpecker and the ever-present male Red-billed Streamertails - as well as to find a few outstanding species. Stolid Flycatcher was, of course, among the most important of these, as was Jamaican Becard. Thankfully, the flycatcher put up little resistance, while the becard showed to only two of us. At least the Potoo was still in his place, even if some weren't able to find it! We also had simply fantastic views of Caribbean Dove as a result of our efforts, while I finally got a Jamaican Tody shot with which I was happy! And who can forget the Jamaican Mango we finally found - in a mango tree, of all places - and admired in all his glory on a couple of occasions. Other highlights included a Mangrove Cuckoo at the top of the drive, while the obvious big highlight of the last day on the estate was a wonderful Jamaican Owl that Dwayne took all of 5 minutes to show us. Magic stuff indeed!

For our final day on the island, now firmly within sight of reaching our main target of cleaning up on all the endemics, we headed off to the Blue Mountains with high hopes. Immediately after arrival, we got straight to work, beginning with a climb up to a spot where we *finally* all laid eyes on Crested Quail-Dove. And a few at that. Getting wonderful views, and pictures to boot, it was one of the best encounters of the trip. In the same spot, a few Black-faced Grassquits showed exceptionally well, too, and the whole experience started the day off on a high note. Just around the corner, we then went on to see Rufous-throated Solitaire brilliantly, too! Surely it was time to stop for coffee? Just around the corner from the

coffee shop we had great close-ups of Jamaican Pewee, another Jamaican Woodpecker and Orangequits in the sun, before anxiety over the becard became too much. Further on, we had wonderful views of Arrowhead Warbler, and the best views yet of Jamaican Spindalis. And then it was time. We wandered down a steep road, and waited impatiently near a Jamaican Becard nest,





Arrowhead Warbler by Rich Lindie

which, thankfully was still occupied, and, in actually no time at all, we all had great views of this, the final endemic to bring us all to the same page. Magic! Then it was time for coffee. And not just the regular stuff...Blue Mountain coffee! We sampled some of this great stuff, chatted to the coffee shop owner, and bought some of his ware, much to his delight. A little more birding then lay ahead, though it was all downhill from there, and the rest of the day was spent slowly making our way back to Kingston, where our beachside hotel would be the final place we would enjoy a meal and drinks together. And in an agreeable symmetry, everyone departed before me, leaving me to enjoy the Cabot's Terns and hotel cats to myself! A fitting end to a great tour!



Boswell Jamaica - Island Endemics 2018

Annotated List of species recorded

List powered through the report generator of our partner iGoTerra.

Birds (85 in total)

Nomenclature and taxonomy follows Gill, F and D Donsker (Eds). 2017. IOC World Bird List (v 7.3).

Status codes: **E** = Endemic, **NE** = Near-endemic, **I** = Introduced

IUCN codes: **CR** = Critically endangered, **EN** = Endangered, **VU** = Vulnerable, **EW** = Extinct in the Wild,

NT = Near Threatened, **DD** = Data Deficient

Ducks, Geese & Swans *Anatidae*

Blue-winged Teal

Spatula discors

Ruddy Duck

Oxyura jamaicensis jamaicensis

Grebes *Podicipedidae*

Pied-billed Grebe

Podilymbus podiceps antillarum

Ibises, Spoonbills *Threskiornithidae*

American White Ibis

Eudocimus albus

Hérons, Egrets, and Bitterns *Ardeidae*

Yellow-crowned Night Heron

Nyctanassa violacea bancrofti

Green Heron

Butorides virescens

Western Cattle Egret

Bubulcus ibis

Little Blue Heron

Egretta caerulea

Snowy Egret

Egretta thula thula

Pelicans *Pelecanidae*

Brown Pelican

Pelecanus occidentalis occidentalis

Frigatebirds *Fregatidae*

Magnificent Frigatebird

Fregata magnificens

New World Vultures *Cathartidae*

Turkey Vulture

Cathartes aura aura

Kites, Hawks & Eagles *Accipitridae*

Red-tailed Hawk

Buteo jamaicensis jamaicensis

Rails, Crakes & Coots *Rallidae*

Common Gallinule

Gallinula galeata cerceris

American Coot

Fulica americana americana



Stilts and Avocets *Recurvirostridae*

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus mexicanus*

Jacanas *Jacanidae*

Northern Jacana *Jacana spinosa*

Sandpipers and Allies *Scolopacidae*

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres morinella*
Sanderling *Calidris alba rubida*
Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*

Gulls, Terns & Skimmers *Laridae*

Laughing Gull *Leucophaeus atricilla atricilla*
Royal Tern *Thalasseus maximus maximus*
Cabot's Tern *Thalasseus acuflavidus acuflavidus*

Pigeons and Doves *Columbidae*

Rock Dove *Columba livia var. domestica*
White-crowned Pigeon (NT) *Patagioenas leucocephala*
Common Ground Dove *Columbina passerina jamaicensis*
Crested Quail-Dove (NT) *Geotrygon versicolor*
Ruddy Quail-Dove *Geotrygon montana montana*
Caribbean Dove *Leptotila jamaicensis jamaicensis*
Zenaida Dove *Zenaida aurita zenaida*
White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica asiatica*

Cuckoos *Cuculidae*

Smooth-billed Ani *Crotophaga ani*
Mangrove Cuckoo *Coccyzus minor*
Chestnut-bellied Cuckoo *Coccyzus pluvialis*
Jamaican Lizard Cuckoo *Coccyzus vetula*

Barn-Owls *Tytonidae*

American Barn Owl *Tyto furcata furcata*

Potoos *Nyctibiidae*

Northern Potoo *Nyctibius jamaicensis jamaicensis*

Swifts *Apodidae*

Antillean Palm Swift *Tachornis phoenicobia phoenicobia*

Hummingbirds *Trochilidae*

Jamaican Mango *Anthracothorax mango*
Red-billed Streamertail *Trochilus polytmus*
Black-billed Streamertail *Trochilus scitulus*
Vervain Hummingbird *Mellisuga minima minima*



New World Warblers *Parulidae*

Worm-eating Warbler	<i>Helmitheros vermivorum</i>
Black-and-white Warbler	<i>Mniotilta varia</i>
Common Yellowthroat	<i>Geothlypis trichas trichas</i>
Arrowhead Warbler	<i>Setophaga pharetra</i>
American Redstart	<i>Setophaga ruticilla</i>
Northern Parula	<i>Setophaga americana</i>
Black-throated Blue Warbler	<i>Setophaga caerulescens</i>
Prairie Warbler	<i>Setophaga discolor discolor</i>

Oropendolas, Orioles & Blackbirds *Icteridae*

Jamaican Oriole	<i>Icterus leucopteryx leucopteryx</i>
Jamaican Blackbird (EN)	<i>Nesopsar nigerrimus</i>
Greater Antillean Grackle	<i>Quiscalus niger crassirostris</i>

Bananaquit *Coerebidae*

Bananaquit	<i>Coereba flaveola flaveola</i>
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Tanagers and allies *Thraupidae*

Yellow-faced Grassquit	<i>Tiaris olivaceus olivaceus</i>
Black-faced Grassquit	<i>Tiaris bicolor marchii</i>
Yellow-shouldered Grassquit	<i>Loxipasser anoxanthus</i>
Greater Antillean Bullfinch	<i>Loxigilla violacea ruficollis</i>
Orangequit	<i>Euneornis campestris</i>
Jamaican Spindalis	<i>Spindalis nigricephala</i>

Cardinals, Grosbeaks and allies *Cardinalidae*

Indigo Bunting	<i>Passerina cyanea</i>
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