



ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Dominican Republic

Endemics of Hispaniola II

8th to 15th February 2018 (8 days)

Trip Report



Hispaniolan Trogon by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Trip report compiled by Tour Leader, Forrest Rowland

Top five birds as voted for by participants:

1. Bay-breasted Cuckoo
2. Hispaniolan Trogon
3. Ashy-faced Owl
4. White-fronted Quail-Dove/Western Chat-Tanager
5. White-tailed Tropicbird

Tour Summary



Palmchat by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Our Endemics of Hispaniola tour started with some quality capital birding in the Botanical Garden of Santo Domingo. Upon arrival, we were greeted by the Dominican Republic's national bird: the Palmchat, a common and conspicuous endemic placed in its own monotypic family, *Dulidae*. We watched several of the gregarious Palmchats as they were building their huge stick nest, actually a cluster of multiple nests, as it is a communal breeder. Especially numerous were Antillean Palm Swifts. The numerous Royal Palms planted in the gardens serve as roost and nest sites for this near-endemic. *We had dozens zooming low overhead!* One of our targets, Black-whiskered

Vireo, was soon heard singing. Before long we had two seen, eating the fruits of a gumbo limbo tree alongside a Grey Kingbird, and a surprise Yellow-throated Vireo! Another highlight was finding a pair of Hispaniolan Parakeets using a nest hole. A little further down the track, we heard another target, a Mangrove Cuckoo. It took a few minutes but eventually, we got great views of this tricky cuckoo, which was a long-wanted lifer for Carlos and couple other participants.

Our principal target for the morning, West Indian Whistling Duck, was easily located along a small stream. The Botanical Garden is a safe haven for this vulnerable species of whistling duck that is still hunted illegally in many places. We watched a couple of these handsome ducks foraging in the stream; as well as a pair of Common Gallinules. Antillean Mango and Vervain Hummingbird were both seen perched, the latter being tiny compared to the other (*it's the second smallest bird in the world!*). Hispaniolan Woodpeckers were present in great numbers and we had great views of this spectacular island endemic. We also enjoyed watching a few fancy Red-legged Thrushes, handsome Black-crowned Tanagers, and a lovely pair of Hispaniolan Lizard Cuckoos! After bagging our targets successfully, we started the longish drive towards Villa Barancoli, at the base of the magical Sierra



Hispaniolan Parakeet by Forrest Rowland

de Bahoruco at the far western end of the country. We didn't bird much en route, but made a quick stop when Hispaniolan Oriole flew across the road, netting us great looks at that species perched at eye-level. A late afternoon walk along the Rabo de Gato trail produced several species of neotropical migrant warblers, White-necked Crows, and our hoped-for target of the afternoon: White-fronted Quail-Dove. This special island endemic can be very tough to see. We enjoyed scope-filling views of a very cooperative individual! We also got to see our first Broad-billed Tody – *a real stunner!*



Broad-billed Tody by Forrest Rowland

The next morning, we had an early start with two 4x4 vehicles. In order to see Greater Antillean Nightjar, we needed to get to the higher parts of the Sierra de Bahoruco before dawn. We arrived at the site, where there was a howling wind, with little hope of seeing the species. We should've been more optimistic, as one individual came so close it appeared to want to land on us! The rare and endangered La Selle Thrush was our next major target bird at Zapoten. The species is typically found foraging on the track, but only in the early morning hours. Once we reached the upper part of the Sierra de Bahoruco (Zapoten), we walked the first few curves in the forest in search of the thrush. The wind was still ripping through the treetops, though we found a few sheltered spots. A Red-legged Thrush on the track got us excited for a split-second and kept us sharp. A little further up, we luckily got the real deal: a stunning adult La Selle Thrush! Not everyone had

initial looks, so we coaxed it back into view, a few times, for everyone to see. Afterwards, we walked back to the vehicles for breakfast while looking for other highland targets. It wasn't long before we had an exceptionally close, cooperative Green-tailed Warbler, and several beautiful Hispaniolan Spindalis. One of the highlights of the entire tour was our outstanding experience with a group of 3 Western Chat-Tanagers coming up into full view by the roadside for us, after already having seen one hop right into the track in front of us. *This skulking, often difficult species treated us spectacularly well!*

After breakfast, we heard a Bicknell's Thrush respond to our tape but the bird didn't want to show itself. An obliging pair of White-winged Warblers did, though! Again, beyond all expectation, a pair foraged to within a few metres of us, allowing great looks at every detail. A male Hispaniolan Emerald showed itself beautifully. Antillean Siskin and Antillean Euphonia were soon added to the mix and we also found several nice Greater Antillean Elaenia.



White-winged Warbler by Dušan Brinkhuizen

In the pine forest, we trawled for the crossbill, in the continuing, unrelenting wind. This was our last target endemic for the morning. Fairly soon, we got a vocal response, but after a bit of waiting, we almost decided to move on and try another patch of pine forest when I spotted a female perched up nicely in full view! She hung on, blowing in the wind, for all participants to get great scope views. Next was a superb pair of Hispaniolan Trogons that teed up

beautifully, Antillean Euphonias feeding on some mistletoe (awesome views!), and Rufous-throated Solitaire. The cute Narrow-billed Todies were heard and seen on a couple occasions; while Black-crowned Tanager, Greater Antillean Bullfinch, and Hispaniolan Pewee were other goodies that were added to the growing prize list.

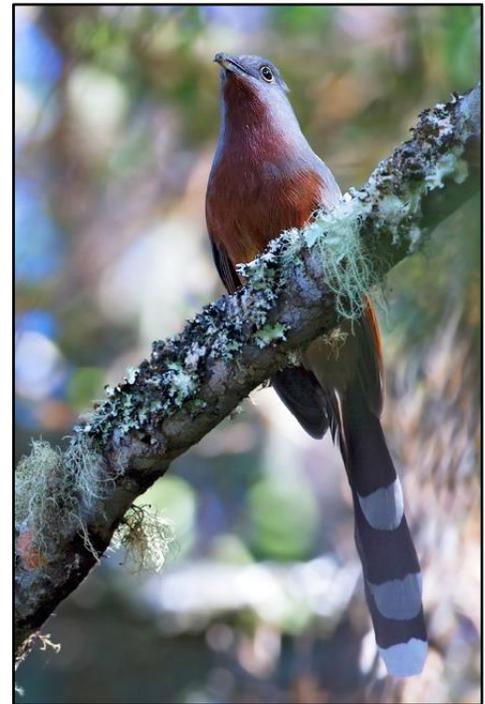


Northern Potoo by Dušan Brinkhuizen

The resident Pine Warblers turned up at the guardhouse on the way down, though there were no signs of Golden Swallow, which had been kept down in the intense wind. Happy with all the targets in the bag, we drove the rough track back down towards Puerto Escondido. At the border checkpoint, we could see the deforested and completely devastated landscape of Haiti – *a very sad contrast to the green forests on the Dominican side of Sierra de Bahoruco*. It was a good place for some photo ops, as well, and a quick eBird checklist of one Antillean Euphonia inside the border of Haiti. About halfway down to the camp from Aguacate (checkpoint), we stopped for a stakeout of Northern Potoo, with stunning eye-level views of a bird on its day roost! We enjoyed a picnic lunch and a superb Antillean Piculet, a bit of relaxation, and then continued down to Villa Barrancoli for a much-deserved nap.

After a short break at Villa Barancoli, we went back to the Rabo de Gato trail to try for some more endemics. A superb Broad-billed Tody was seen nicely in the understory, and we also got to see our first White-necked Crow perched in a palm tree. We had a quick view of Ruddy Quail-Dove and fabulous looks at a cooperative Flat-billed Vireo. We hung around until dusk, at which point we successfully targeted Least Poorwill (heard by all, seen by some) and had another encounter Hispaniolan Nightjar! *A fine ending to a day packed with fantastic endemics.*

In the early morning, we visited La Placa in the lower foothills of the Sierra de Bahoruco. Our two main targets were Flat-billed Vireo and Bay-breasted Cuckoo. The cuckoo is a rare and endangered endemic that is difficult to target, so we knew that seeing it was kind of a long shot. The vireo was not too difficult to find, and fairly soon we all got our bins on a singing individual. After trawling with playback, we suddenly got a response from a Bay-breasted Cuckoo nearby! It was a loud and spectacular call that got us all excited. We had to take our time, using various vocalisations to tease in this wary stunner. After several minutes, we managed poor views of one individual. Suddenly, another bird called right behind us. After I calmly instructed everyone to turn around, one came soaring over the track, elegant tail splayed widely, in the full sun. *It was awesome!* Then another individual called farther back down the track. This one was right near the road, in a huge fig tree. With very little coaxing, this particular bird put on the show we were all hoping for: views from every angle, calls, a complete



Bay-breasted Cuckoo by Dušan Brinkhuizen

experience with walk-away looks. Broad-billed Tody, Antillean Piculet, Green-tailed Warbler and Black-crowned Tanager were other species of interest seen at La Placa.

Before lunch, we had a bit of downtime around the camp. Some folks birded while others went for photos of some of the species seen right around the cabins. Some of the species seen included Stolid



Hooded Warbler by Adam Riley

Flycatcher, Broad-billed Tody (the Barrancoli for which the location is named), Hispaniolan Lizard Cuckoo, Ovenbird, Black-and-white, Prairie, Black-throated Blue, and Hooded Warblers, and several species of Anoles. After lunch, we said goodbye to Kate and the lovely staff at Villa Barancoli and started our longish journey to the town of Pedernales. A birding stop at Laguna de Oviedo produced a few nice water birds, including American Flamingo, though the wind was ripping at gale force, which hampered our efforts somewhat. Dinner in town with a cold beer and fresh seafood was simply delicious!

Today we saw the dawn from Cabo Rojo. This scenic point looks south-west along red cliffs and wide waters, the morning sun at our backs. The surrounding scrub is different to other habitats on the island, though holds little new for us. Our main targets here could only be seen over the ocean, and we were richly rewarded. Several Royal Terns, Magnificent Frigatebirds, and a half-dozen Brown Boobies were great to see, but it was the White-tailed Tropicbird that we came for. We ended up with a great display of four adults, two of which spent several minutes chasing each other! The experience was topped off with a few close Caribbean Martins, which have only been seen on a couple of tours previously.

We made a productive and quick stop en route up the Alcoa Road by a small lagoon. It was teeming with shorebirds, herons, and the like! We added a wad of nice trip birds, including Mangrove Warbler, Black-necked Stilt, Stilt Sandpiper, Dunlin, Red Knot, both species of Yellowlegs, Ruddy Turnstone, and many others. From here we continued our drive up to the higher elevation pine forest of the Alcoa Road. This is the tour's only real shot at Hispaniolan Palm Crow and Golden Swallow, should the latter be missed at Zapoten. We all knew it would be a very difficult morning, when we stepped out of the vehicle at the quarry, where there are nestboxes for the Golden Swallow. The wind was howling with 50+mph gusts. Sustained winds were certainly 35+mph most of the morning. The worst possible weather for birding. The swallows were nowhere to be seen. We split up to search for them all over the quarry, and farther beyond the guard station when that failed. They were nowhere to be found, and none of us could blame them. *How could a swallow fly in this wind?*



White-tailed Tropicbird by Adam Riley

That failed, and the palm crow was now our main target for the morning, so we continued to the hotspot. The trick to this being the best place to see the palm crow relies entirely on the park rangers feeding them. Upon arrival, we were greeted by no one in sight, anywhere. It was abandoned. It



Hispaniolan Oriole by Dubi Shapiro

appeared that, from the state of the dog chained there, the site had been abandoned for at least two or three days. We fed the dog, and gave it water. Thinking that perhaps the crows might come in for food, regardless of the ranger's presence, we set out some food for the birds. It didn't work. The crows came near once, calling, but did not respond to playback or provide a visual. They did not come to the food.

We had waited, overall, for about four hours for signs of the swallow or the palm crow, both of which had been seen on every tour previously. Alas, the powerful wind and abandoned guard post had conspired to thwart our efforts. We weren't entirely skunked, adding a few nice trip birds, such as White-collared Swift (which have been proven to survive, flying, in a hurricane) and a Yellow-rumped Warbler or two. But it was pretty grim. We then decided to drive the Alcoa road up and down in order to maximise our search for the Hispaniolan Palm Crow and swallow, but by 1 PM, we decided that 4 hours of searching in the wind was enough. It wasn't going to happen. Thankfully, we could count on a delicious lunch back in Pedernales, and a bit of downtime at Hotel Quemaito before our owl search this evening.

Late afternoon at the hotel grounds yielded Palmchats, Cape May Warblers, including a male in breeding plumage, and marvellous looks at Hispaniolan Oriole. After dusk, we quickly located a wonderful Ashy-faced Owl that was marvellously seen by the entire team at close range! It was a welcome success after being a bit deflated from the morning's misses.

Up at Cachote, early the next morning, we had a single target: Eastern Chat-Tanager. We were at the right spot at dawn and several chat-tanagers were singing around us. It was still dark and the birds were hidden in dense foliage, so seeing them was nearly impossible. As it got lighter, we tried to attract the birds with playback. Some people obtained brief views but the birds proved to be extremely difficult to see. Luckily, after about an hour, everybody had views of this notorious skulker! *Quite a feat.* Most participants saw the bird quite well, singing! After a nice local breakfast on site, we started our long drive to Sabana de la Mar in the north-eastern corner of the country. We arrived a bit after dark, and had a delicious dinner before heading to bed.



Eastern Chat-Tanager by Dubi Shapiro

Los Haitises National Park, west of Sabana de la Mar, is the stronghold for one of the rarest raptors in the world: the critically

endangered Ridgway's Hawk. Our local guide at Caño Hondo, Juan Sepede, carefully monitors the hawks in the area and the day before we arrived, he had found the potential nesting site of a pair. In the Dominican Republic, getting meals at times one prefers can be hard-to-impossible. The staff at Paraiso de Cano Hondo were unable to prepare breakfast before 8:30 AM, which our local guide assured would pose a problem viewing the hawk. So, a few participants took full advantage of the lie-in; while others of us met up and strolled along the main drive to see what we could find. Of note, we had first tour records of Shiny Cowbird, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, and Tree Swallow. After breakfast, we undertook the short, muddy hike to the nest area.



Ridgway's Hawk by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Before arriving at the site, I spotted a buteo soaring with the Turkey Vulture – Ridgeway's Hawk! Most got a view of it soaring, but we were excited because we knew the birds were indeed around. Once we arrived at the hawk stake-out, we waited patiently. The hawks had been investigating a palm tree the day before, strongly suggesting that they were going to nest there. Bird activity around us was good, with species including Antillean Piculet, Antillean Mango, Vervain Hummingbird, Village Weaver, Palmchat, Black-crowned Tanager, Grey Kingbird, and Yellow-faced Grassquits keeping us busy. Red-tailed Hawks and

Osprey provided the odd jolt of excitement, when, finally, after about two hours of waiting, I spotted the hawk come sailing in over ridge into the valley! For several minutes, we enjoyed great views of this mega bird soaring above us, banking this way and that, for several minutes. A second individual appeared, and they flew off in a similar direction, presumably the pair Juan had staked out for us. *It was wonderful!*

I asked Juan a couple of questions about the plight of the species. He told us that he was involved in an ongoing struggle with some of the local farmers because they threatened to shoot the hawk. According to the farmers, the hawk hunts the small chickens that they have. According to Juan, the only way to solve this problem was the construction of small henhouses to keep the chicks safe from predation. Therefore, after going through some details, I made a direct donation to Juan so he could start his small-scale conservation project as soon as possible.

After a leisurely lunch, we departed for Santo Domingo, stopping at Sabana del Mar briefly to pick up a few odd terns and shorebirds. This ended the birding, and we high-tailed it to Santa Domingo for a lovely farewell dinner and some revelry. Thank you to all the wonderful, patient, fun-loving participants of the tour! Your enthusiasm was appreciated.

Annotated List of species recorded

Note: "*" preceding species indicates "Heard Only" species. Number in brackets () indicate number of days on the tour the species was recorded.

List powered through the report generator of our partner iGoTerra.

Birds (129 in total: 125 seen, 4 heard)

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

Status codes: **E** = Hispaniolan Endemic, **NE** = Near-endemic (only found on one other Island), **I** = Introduced

IUCN codes: **CR** = Critically endangered, **EN** = Endangered, **VU** = Vulnerable, **NT** = Near Threatened, **DD** = Data Deficient

Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl Anatidae

West Indian Whistling Duck (VU) *Dendrocygna arborea*

(1) 2 Santo Domingo Botanical Gardens

An endemic to the West Indies. Two of this Vulnerable species were seen along a stream inside the Botanical Garden.

Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors*

(1) Cabo Rojo

A few were observed at a small wetland locally known as Laguna Cabo Rojo.

Grebes Podicepsidae

Least Grebe *Tachybaptus dominicus*

(1) En route to Santa Domingo from Sabana del Mar

Guineafowl Numididae

***Helmeted Guineafowl** *Numida meleagris*

Flamingos Phoenicopteridae

American Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber*

(1) Laguna de Oviedo

An individual spotted in high winds.

Tropicbirds Phaethontidae

White-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon lepturus catesbyi*

(1) Cabo Rojo

No fewer than four birds were observed flying chasing one another, and interacting, during our early morning seavatch at the Cape!!! Was a tour highlight.

Hérons, Egrets, and Bitterns Ardeidae

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax hoactli*

(1) Santo Domingo Botanical Gardens

One immature was spotted at a small pond on the first day. A first for this tour!

Green Heron *Butorides virescens virescens*

(4) Seen at several wetland sites during the tour.

Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

(7) A common and widespread species seen every day.

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias occidentalis*

(1) Cabo Rojo

A singleton was observed at the small marsh Laguna Cabo Rojo.

Great Egret *Ardea alba egretta*

(4) Laguna de Oviedo, Cabo Rojo, en route and Caño Hondo.

A common and widespread species observed at various sites.

Tricolored Heron *Egretta tricolor ruficollis*

(1) Cabo Rojo.

A few were present at the small wetland Laguna Cabo Rojo.

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea*

(2) Cabo Rojo and en route to Sabana del Mar.

A bird was seen in the small lagoon near Cabo Rojo, another was seen on the long drive.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula thula*

(5) A common species seen at several sites.

Pelicans Pelecanidae**Brown Pelican** *Pelecanus occidentalis occidentalis*

(3) en route, Cabo Rojo and Sabana de la Mar.

Only seen along the coast, where fairly common.

Frigatebirds Fregatidae**Magnificent Frigatebird** *Fregata magnificens*

(4) Laguna de Oviedo, en route and Sabana de la Mar Wharf.

Only seen along the coast, where fairly common.

Boobies and Gannets Sulidae**Brown Booby** *Sula leucogaster leucogaster*

(1) 2 Cabo Rojo.

At least four individuals were observed flying close to shore.

New World Vultures Cathartidae**Turkey Vulture** *Cathartes aura aura*

(4) 2 en route, and 35 Caño Hondo.

A widespread species, but in the Dominican Republic: fairly scarce and only seen at a few sites.

Osprey Pandionidae**Western Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus carolinensis*

(1) Sabana del Mar.

Two birds were seen flying in the area.

Hawks, Eagles, and Kites Accipitridae**Sharp-shinned Hawk** *Accipiter striatus striatus*

(2) Cachote and Sabana del Mar.

We had close, but quick views of one at Cachote. The second was spotted soaring with the following species.

Ridgway's Hawk (E, CR) *Buteo ridgwayi*

(1) 2 Caño Hondo.

A Critically Endangered species. Nice looks at a resident pair of this major target endemic.

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis jamaicensis*

(3) 2 Zapoten, Alcoa Road and Sabana del Mar.

Birds in flight were seen at several sites during the tour.

Rails, Gallinules, and Coots Rallidae

- *Sora** *Porzana carolina*
Common Gallinule *Gallinula galeata cerceris*
 (2) Botanical Gardens and Cabo Rojo.
 One pair in Santo Domingo, and a few were present at Laguna Cabo Rojo.

Limpkin Aramididae

- Limpkin** *Aramus guarauna*
 (1) Sabana del Mar
 We had nice views of a pair at the Ridgeway's Hawk site.

Stilts and Avocets Recurvirostridae

- Black-necked Stilt** *Himantopus mexicanus*
 (1) Cabo Rojo
 A big flock were seen at the productive lagoon near the cape

Plovers and Lapwings Charadriidae

- Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola cynosurae*
 (1) Sabana del Mar dock.
 One bird in non-breeding plumage was scoped along the shore.
- Semipalmated Plover** *Charadrius semipalmatus*
 (1) Sabana del Mar dock.
 Two were scoped along the shore.
- Killdeer** *Charadrius vociferus ternominatus*
 (2) Laguna de Oviedo and Sabana del Mar.
 Lone individuals at two sites only.

Sandpipers and Allies Scolopacidae

- Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*
 (1) Cabo Rojo.
 A few seen at the small lagoon near Cabo Rojo.
- Red Knot** *Calidris canutus*
 (1) Cabo Rojo.
 Three individuals seen briefly before flushed, calling as they flew. A first for the tour!
- Stilt Sandpiper** *Calidris himantopus*
 (1) Cabo Rojo
 A large flock of 30+ at the lagoon near the cape.
- Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*
 (1) Cabo Rojo.
 Nearly a dozen at the lagoon near the cape. A first for the tour!
- Least Sandpiper** *Calidris minutilla*
 (1) Laguna Oviedo.
 A nice size flock at Laguna Oviedo
- Short-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus griseus*

(1) Cabo Rojo.

There were a good number of these at the small lagoon near the cape.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*

(2) Cabo Rojo and en route.

A few were observed at Laguna Cabo Rojo.

Willet *Tringa semipalmata semipalmata*

(1) Sabana de la Mar Wharf.

A single bird was observed at the wharf. First for the tour!

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*

(1) Cabo Rojo.

Two seen at the laguna Cabo Rojo.

Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers *Laridae*

Laughing Gull *Leucophaeus atrocilla*

(1) Laguna Oviedo.

Only one seen from the dock at Oviedo.

Royal Tern *Thalasseus maximus maximus*

(4) A common species along the shore. A large flock was observed at Sabana de la Mar Wharf.

Cabot's Tern *Thalasseus acufavidus acufavidus*

(1) Sabana de la Mar Wharf.

Small numbers mixed in with a large flock of Royal Terns at Sabana de la Mar Wharf.

Pigeons and Doves *Columbidae*

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

(7) A feral species, commonly seen in the towns.

White-crowned Pigeon (NT) *Patagioenas leucocephala*

(2) La Placa, Sabana del Mar.

One flyover at La Placa was seen fairly well; a second at the Ridgeway's site was a longer view

Scaly-naped Pigeon *Patagioenas squamosa*

(1) en route to Sabana del Mar.

A flock of 7 were perched up nicely, roadside en route to Sabana del Mar

Plain Pigeon (NT) *Patagioenas inornata*

(4) Rabo de Gato, Zapoten and en route.

This species was seen at various sites.

Common Ground Dove *Columbina passerina insularis*

(5) A common resident seen on most days of the tour.

Ruddy Quail-Dove *Geotrygon montana montana*

(1) Rabo de Gato

One of these was seen fairly well, just before flushing and as it flew by, near La Mina.

White-fronted Quail-Dove (E, EN) *Geotrygon leucometopia*

(1) Rabo de Gato

Outstanding binocular and scope views of a cooperative bird on our first evening at Barrancoli!

Key West Quail-Dove *Geotrygon chrysis*

(1) La Placa

One seen as it flushed up from the road and perched briefly in a low roadside bush

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura macroura*

(5) A common resident seen throughout the tour.

Zenaida Dove *Zenaida aurita zenaida*

(1) Zapoten

A single perched bird was observed on the road.

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica asiatica*

(4) This species was seen on every longish drive, and in Santo Domingo.

Cuckoos Cuculidae

Smooth-billed Ani *Crotophaga ani*

(5) A common and widespread species seen at various sites en route.

Mangrove Cuckoo *Coccyzus minor*

(1) Santo Domingo Botanical Gardens.

Great views in the gardens after some playback!

Bay-breasted Cuckoo (E, EN) *Coccyzus ruficularis*

(1) La Placa

A superb endemic seen fantastically at La Placa. We got very lucky to get such good looks at this rare and Endangered species!

Hispaniolan Lizard Cuckoo (E) *Coccyzus longirostris longirostris*

(5) A fairly common and widespread endemic seen at various sites during the tour. Its distinct call was typically heard at dawn and dusk.

Barn-Owls Tytonidae

Ashy-faced Owl (E) *Tyto glaucops*

(1) Cachote

Stellar views of this beauty along the Cachote road! Everybody was able to connect with this major target bird. We got great looks of a calling adult in the spotlights.

Owls Strigidae

Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia troglodytes*

(2) La Placa

Fairly common on the island, but only seen at La Placa on this route.

Potoos Nyctibiidae

Northern Potoo *Nyctibius jamaicensis abbotti*

(1) Zapoten.

A bird at a day-roost was seen fantastically on our way down from Zapoten! Perched perfectly at eye-level.

Nightjars and Allies Caprimulgidae

Least Poorwill (E, NT) *Siphonorhis brewsteri brewsteri*

(1) Rabo de Gato.

Brief views of this Near-Threatened endemic after dusk along Rabo de Gato track towards La Mina. Spotlight views of this tiny nightjar were quick but we heard it very nicely.

Hispaniolan Nightjar (E) *Antrostomus ekmani*

(2) Zapoten, La Placa.

Awesome encounter with a bird that nearly landed on us in the lower pine belt up Zapoten. Another low, slow, flyover at La Placa was great, too.

Swifts *Apodidae*

White-collared Swift

Streptoprocne zonaris pallidifrons

(1) Alcoa Road

A large species of swift that could navigate the gale force winds; we saw many and close.

Antillean Palm Swift

Tachornis phoenicobia phoenicobia

(6) A common and widespread Caribbean species seen on all days of the tour.

Hummingbirds *Trochilidae*

Antillean Mango (NE)

Anthracothorax dominicus dominicus

(5) A regional endemic seen well at several sites.

Hispaniolan Emerald (E)

Chlorostilbon swainsonii

(1) 3 Zapoten

A Hispaniolan endemic only seen in the higher parts of Sierra de Bahoruco, where it was fairly common.

Vervain Hummingbird (NE)

Mellisuga minima vielloti

(3) Rabo de Gato, Santo Domingo Botanical Gardens, Puerto Escondido and Caño Hondo. Endemic to Hispaniola and Jamaica. The second smallest bird in the world!

Trogons *Trogonidae*

Hispaniolan Trogon (E, NT)

Priotelus roseigaster

(1) 2 Zapoten

A stunning Hispaniolan endemic seen beautifully at Zapoten! A pair posed for us.

Kingfishers *Alcedinidae*

Belted Kingfisher

Megaceryle alcyon

(2) Cabo Rojo, Sabana del Mar.

Fairly common in proper habitat, the two times were in wetland habitats it was detected.

Todies *Todidae*

Broad-billed Tody (E)

Todus subulatus

(4) A superb Hispaniolan endemic seen at several sites, especially at lower elevations.

Narrow-billed Tody (E)

Todus angustirostris

(3) Zapoten, La Placa, and Cachote.

Another superb Hispaniolan endemic observed at several sites, especially at higher elevations. At La Placa we had both species of tody side-by-side in the same tree!

Woodpeckers *Picidae*

Antillean Piculet (E)

Nesoctites micromegas micromegas

(2) Zapoten and Caño Hondo.

A neat island endemic seen very well! Unique amongst piculets and woodpeckers.

Hispaniolan Woodpecker (E)

Melanerpes striatus

(6) A very attractive Hispaniolan endemic common to abundant throughout the tour.

Falcons and Caracaras *Falconidae*

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius dominicensis*
 (6) A common and widespread species seen at several sites. Beautiful subspecies!

Merlin *Falco columbarius*
 (2) Puerto Escondido and Cabo Rojo.
 Two birds seen well during the tour; seen on half the trips here.

African & New World Parrots *Psittacidae*

Hispaniolan Amazon (E, VU) *Amazona ventralis*
 (2) Rabo de Gato, La Placa.
 Our best views of this Vulnerable island endemic were on the road up La Placa, where we had some nice flight views.

Olive-throated Parakeet (I, NT) *Eupsittula nana*
 (1) La Placa.
 We had short, though close, views of a small group cruising through the treetops at La Placa. The group perched briefly, visible for most of the group.

Hispaniolan Parakeet (E, VU) *Psittacara chloropterus chloropterus*
 (3) Santo Domingo Botanical Gardens, Rabo de Gato, La Placa.
 A Hispaniolan endemic common in Santo Domingo but generally scarce throughout the island. We had numerous encounters, mostly of groups in flight, save for spectacular looks at a pair at a nest in the botanical gardens.

Tyrant Flycatchers *Tyrannidae*

Greater Antillean Elaenia (NE) *Elaenia fallax cherriei*
 (1) Zapoten.
 A scarce Hispaniolan endemic that we saw a surprisingly good number of them in the Sierra.

Hispaniolan Pewee (E) *Contopus hispaniolensis hispaniolensis*
 (2) Rabo de Gato and Zapoten.
 A fairly common island endemic that we saw several of, well.

Grey Kingbird *Tyrannus dominicensis dominicensis*
 (5) A common species on Hispaniola, especially in the lowlands.

Loggerhead Kingbird *Tyrannus caudifasciatus gabpii*
 (1) Zapoten.
 We enjoyed wonderful views of a pair of this species near the guardhouse at Zapoten. This endemic subspecies is a probable split.

Stolid Flycatcher (NE) *Myiarchus stolidus dominicensis*
 (5) Endemic to Hispaniola and Jamaica. The *Myiarchus* on the island, and common.

Vireos *Vireonidae*

Flat-billed Vireo (E) *Vireo nanus*
 (1) La Placa.
 Great views of singing birds at La Placa.

Yellow-throated Vireo *Vireo flavigularis*
 (1) Santo Domingo Botanical Gardens.
 Seen well by most participants in the same tree as Grey Kingbird and the following species. A rare migrant, and first for the tour!

Black-whiskered Vireo*Vireo altiloquus altiloquus*

(2) Santo Domingo Botanical Gardens and heard Caño Hondo.

Good views of several birds in the Botanical Garden of Santo Domingo and Cano Hondo.

Crows, Jays, and Magpies Corvidae***Hispaniolan Palm Crow (E, NT)***Corvus palmarum***White-necked Crow (E, VU)***Corvus leucognaphalus*

(3) Rabo de Gato and Caño Hondo.

A Vulnerable island endemic with a beautiful call. Several were seen well during the tour, especially at Caño Hondo where birds were fairly tame.

Palmchat Dulidae**Palmchat (E)***Dulus dominicus*

(6) The national bird of Dominican Republic and endemic to Hispaniola. Abundant in the lowlands. These conspicuous birds were seen well at many sites, including birds at their impressive nests. A species placed in its own monotypic family.

Swallows Hirundinidae**Tree Swallow***Tachycineta bicolor*

(1) Cano Hondo.

A tour first, we had several flying over rice fields!

Caribbean Martin (NE)*Progne dominicensis*

(2) Santo Domingo and Cabo Rojo.

Two fun encounters with this often-missed species: in the middle of Santo Domingo I spotted a group of males circling low over a shopping centre, landing on the terracotta rooves. The second was an all-female group over the cape during our seawatch at Cabo Rojo.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*

(1) Cano Hondo.

We had a few flying over rice field, then one or two surfaced while waiting for the Ridgeway's Hawk. First for the tour!

Barn Swallow*Hirundo rustica erythrogaster*

(1) en route 24.1.

A scarce migrant seen en route.

Cave Swallow*Petrochelidon fulva fulva*

(4) A common and widespread endemic subspecies seen at several sites

Mockingbirds and Thrashers Mimidae**Northern Mockingbird***Mimus polyglottos orpheus*

(6) A common and widespread resident.

Thrushes and Allies Turdidae**Rufous-throated Solitaire (NE)***Myadestes genibarbis montanus*

(2) Zapoten and 1 heard Cachote.

A beautiful singer, seen well in the higher parts of the Sierra de Bahoruco.

La Selle Thrush (E, EN)*Turdus swalesi swalesi*

(1) 2 Zapoten.

A major target bird and sought-after island endemic. Endangered. At least two adults were seen at

Zapoten in the higher part of the Sierra de Bahoruco.

Red-legged Thrush *Turdus plumbeus ardosiaceus*
(5) A common and widespread species in the Caribbean. A very attractive thrush.

Old World Sparrows *Passeridae*

House Sparrow (I) *Passer domesticus domesticus*
(5) An introduced species, commonly seen in human settlements.

Weavers and Allies *Ploceidae*

Village Weaver *Ploceus cucullatus*
(1) Caño Hondo.
Only one pair of this colourful, introduced species, seen during the tour.

Waxbills and Allies *Estrildidae*

Scaly-breasted Munia (I) *Lonchura punctulata*
(2) Puerto Escondido.
Also named Nutmeg Mannikin. A couple of this introduced species were observed en route, and seen well near Sabana del Mar.

Finches, Euphonias *Fringillidae*

Hispaniolan Crossbill (E, EN) *Loxia megalaga*
(2) Zapoten and Alcoa.
An Endangered island endemic. A calling female was eventually located in the canopy. Everybody got great scope views!

Antillean Siskin (E) *Spinus dominicensis*
(1) Zapoten.
A Hispaniolan endemic, seen wonderfully in the forest at Zapoten!

Antillean Euphonia (NE) *Euphonia musica musica*
(1) Zapoten.
Several of this fancy island endemic were seen up at Zapoten!

New World Warblers *Parulidae*

Ovenbird *Seiurus aurocapilla aurocapilla*
(2) Santo Domingo Botanical gardens and Rabo de Gato.
A boreal migrant seen twice, heard much more often.

Louisiana Waterthrush *Parkesia motacilla*
(2) Rabo de Gato and Caño Hondo.
A scarce boreal migrant seen twice along watercourses.

Northern Waterthrush *Parkesia noveboracensis*
(2) Rabo de Gato and Sabana del Mar.
A boreal migrant seen well twice, heard much more often.

Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia*
(4) A common boreal migrant seen at several sites during the tour.

***Common Yellowthroat** *Geothlypis trichas*

Hooded Warbler *Setophaga citrina*
(1) Rabo de Gato.

One first-winter male was seen near the dining area at Villa Barrancoli.

American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla*

(5) A common boreal migrant seen on most days of the tour.

Cape May Warbler *Setophaga tigrina*

(5) A few males in lovely breeding plumage, and a couple drab individuals. Common.

Northern Parula *Setophaga americana*

(2) Santo Domingo Botanical Gardens and Puerto Escondido.

A common boreal migrant seen on every tour.

Black-throated Blue Warbler *Setophaga caerulescens caerulescens*

(3) Rabo de Gato, Zapoten, and Cachote.

A fairly common boreal migrant, especially in the highlands.

Mangrove Warbler *Setophaga petechia albicollis*

(1) Cabo Rojo.

Two singing birds at the lagoon near Cabo Rojo showed well!

Pine Warbler *Setophaga pinus chrysoleuca*

(2) Zapoten and Alcoa Road.

A resident to the highlands of Hispaniola. We had great views at Zapoten.

Myrtle Warbler *Setophaga coronata*

(1) Alcoa Road.

Small numbers of this boreal migrant were seen at Alcoa Road.

Prairie Warbler *Setophaga discolor discolor*

(3) Santo Domingo Botanical Gardens, Rabo de Gato, and La Placa.

A few seen very well!

Family uncertain *Incertae Sedis* 2

Green-tailed Warbler (E) *Microligea palustris*

(1) Zapoten.

Great views of two at Zapoten!

White-winged Warbler (E, VU) *Xenoligea montana*

(1) Zapoten.

A Vulnerable Hispaniolan endemic. We got great views of this species at Zapoten! Sometimes called Hispaniolan Highland Tanager.

Troupials and Allies *Icteridae*

Hispaniolan Oriole (E) *Icterus dominicensis*

(2) Puerto Escondido and Hotel Quemaito.

A beautiful island endemic that we connected with nicely on two occasions.

Greater Antillean Grackle *Quiscalus niger niger*

(3) A common and widespread species in the Caribbean, though not as common on Hispaniola.

Bananaquit *Coerebidae*

Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola bananivora*

(5) A common and widespread species seen throughout the tour.

Tanagers and Allies *Thraupidae*

Yellow-faced Grassquit*Tiaris olivaceus olivaceus*

(4) A common species seen at several sites.

Greater Antillean Bullfinch (NE)*Loxigilla violacea affinis*

(1) Zapoten.

A regional endemic seen well in the higher parts of Sierra de Bahoruco.

Black-crowned Tanager (E)*Phaenicophilus palmarum*

(6) A common and attractive island endemic. Mainly observed in the lowlands.

Western Chat-Tanager (E, NT)*Calyptophilus tertius*

(1) Zapoten.

Three birds were seen absurdly well, allowing for unexpectedly amazing views!

Eastern Chat-Tanager (E, VU)*Calyptophilus frugivorus neibae*

(1) Cachote.

A Vulnerable Hispaniolan endemic. Birds were beautifully heard singing at dawn along Cachote road. In the end, everybody was able to get nice views of this notorious skulker.

Hispaniolan Spindalis (E)*Spindalis dominicensis*

(2) Zapoten and Cachote.

A very attractive Hispaniolan endemic (especially the male!) seen very well.

Mammals (2 in total: 2 seen)**Status codes:** E = Endemic, NE = Near-endemic, I = Introduced**Brown Rat (I)***Rattus norvegicus***Small Asian Mongoose (I)***Herpestes javanicus***Amphibians & Reptiles (7 in total: 7 seen)****Status codes:** E = Endemic, NE = Near-endemic, I = Introduced**Cane Toad (I)***Rhinella marina***Northern Hispaniolan Green Anole (E)***Anolis chlorocyanus***Hispaniolan Green Anole (E)***Anolis coelestinus***Hispaniolan Stout Anole (E)***Anolis cybotes***Hispaniolan Stout Anole (E)***Anolis distichus***Ricord's Ground Iguana/Anole (E)***Cyclura ricordi***Hispaniolan Masked Curlytail Lizard (E)***Leiocephalus personatus***Rockjumper Birding Ltd**

The Hive, Lot 23

Centre Commercial du Barachois

La Place Cap, Tamarin

Mauritius

Tel: (USA & Canada) toll-free: 1-888-990-5552**Email:** info@rockjumperbirding.com**Alternative email:** rockjumperbirding@yahoo.com**Website:** www.rockjumperbirding.com