

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours

CUBA

Birds and Culture
(People-to-people program)

March 4-14, 2015



Bee Hummingbird, *Mellisuga helenae*. Photo: D. Ascanio

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Cuba continues to offer a unique mix of birds, culture and architecture hardly matched anywhere in the Caribbean. Our first approach to the Cuban birdlife allowed us views of the widespread Cuban Blackbird and the territorial Cuban Emerald. We also saw our first Red-legged Thrush, a distant Cuban Pewee and several Antillean Palm Swifts nesting in the restaurant's entrance roof.



From Santa Clara we drove north and across the causeway to reach Cayo Coco, one of the most important birding locations in Cuba. We started the second day with superb views of Key West Quail-Dove followed by shocking views of the endemics Cuban Tody, Cuban Green Woodpecker and Cuban Blackbird. Later, a family of the colorful Western Spindalis reached a low branch of a tree packed with small berries. As the day warmed up we added more endemics including Cuban Gnatcatcher, Cuban Emerald, Black-cowled (Cuban) Oriole, Cuban Vireo, Cuban Martin and Cuban Pewee. Some of the relevant Caribbean specialties were Bahamas Mockingbird and West Indies

Whistling-Duck. The afternoon was slower in birdlife but still provided views of a couple of Great Lizard-Cuckoo, active Oriente Warblers and several Neotropical migrants. As the afternoon cooled-off many waders and American Flamingo rounded up an unforgettable day.

We continued the tour with a drive to the town of Trinidad and later to Topes del Collante. In Trinidad we learned much of Cuba's history at the time of the sugar mills and its importance in the Caribbean economy. A wait-time in Topes del Collante for checking-in allowed views of three new endemic birds: Cuban Trogon (national bird of the country), Black-cowled (Cuban) Oriole –now seen by everyone in the tour– and Cuban Parrot. In Topes del Collante we enjoyed a mix of nature contact and culture along with close views to Cuba's national bird, the Cuban Trogon. A visit to the Colorado's family allowed us to understand the Cuban culture and its unique social system.



The following location had both an historical and ornithological connotation: The Peninsula de Zapata. From the ornithological point of view this is probably the most important endemic bird area of Cuba. We enjoyed superb views of the astonishingly beautiful Blue-headed Quail-Dove, Bee Hummingbird, Yellow-headed Warbler, Cuban Pygmy Owl and Bare-legged Owl, all of which are restricted to Cuba. In one afternoon we

hired three old Chevrolet taxis and drove to La Turba, a location known for the unique Zapata Wren. We came across the territory of two pairs and eventually got everyone to seeing this intriguing species. By watching this interesting Cuban endemic I realized that we have set a milestone in our company's history: we are the first VENT tour ever to see this amazing wren! To end the visit to the Zapata Swamp we enjoyed *Son Cubano* music in the old Chevrolet vehicles.



The third location offered beautiful scenery, more endemic birds and more culture: the valley of Viñales with its unique *Mogotes* and the community of Las Terrazas. In Viñales we nailed a Cuban Solitaire. It was projecting its suit and penetrating voice against the limestone of *Cueva de los Indios*. Additionally, the community of Las Terrazas offered the opportunity to learn about this Biosphere Reserve and allowed us to appreciate the beauty of the Cuban Grassquit along with interesting art and unique coffee.



Once in the capital city we were astonished with the beauty of Old Havana. A full day was deserved to learn about Cuba's colonial time and the importance of this island in the days when Spanish ruled much of the Caribbean and South America. A visit to Hemingway's house rounded up an unforgettable tour filled with unique birds, kids smiles, incredible and charming people, amazing history and a people-to-people contact that will remind in our minds for several years to come.

Now that you have enjoyed the Caribbean taste and have birded the tropical region to enjoy its avifauna, I want to invite you to consider joining us in other similar destination rich in endemic birds and unique history. Some of these destinations are:

The Lesser Antilles aboard the Sea Clouds. In this cruise we look for much of the endemic species of these tiny but ornithological important islands and we put a strong effort in seeing its endemic parrot species. You can enjoy the images of our 2014 cruise in:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/davidascanio/sets/72157644407922424/>

The Amazon Cruise. This journey focuses in the riverine forest, oxbow lakes and sedimentary river islands of the rich Amazon biome. Offers unique opportunities to see parrots and macaws as well as antbirds, flycatchers and cotingas! You can visit the photo album and video of this year's departures at:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/davidascanio/sets/72157648167839064/>

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/davidascanio/sets/72157648767973783/>

There are also several other interesting and unique tours, some in a *relaxed and easy* pace that still provides you with amazing birds. Some are:

Birding the Panama's Canal. The Panama's Canal area is one of the classic birding destinations in Central America. Birding is fairly easy and offers easy access to prime forest areas. Enjoy a wealth of birds and other species seen in our photo gallery at:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/davidascanio/sets/72157648765567967/>

Costa Rica. Our relaxed & easy tour to this bird rich and efficiently managed country offers the opportunity to see many hummingbirds, visit the famous La Selva reserve and the unique Cerro de la Muerte. Enjoy some of the birds seen last year at:

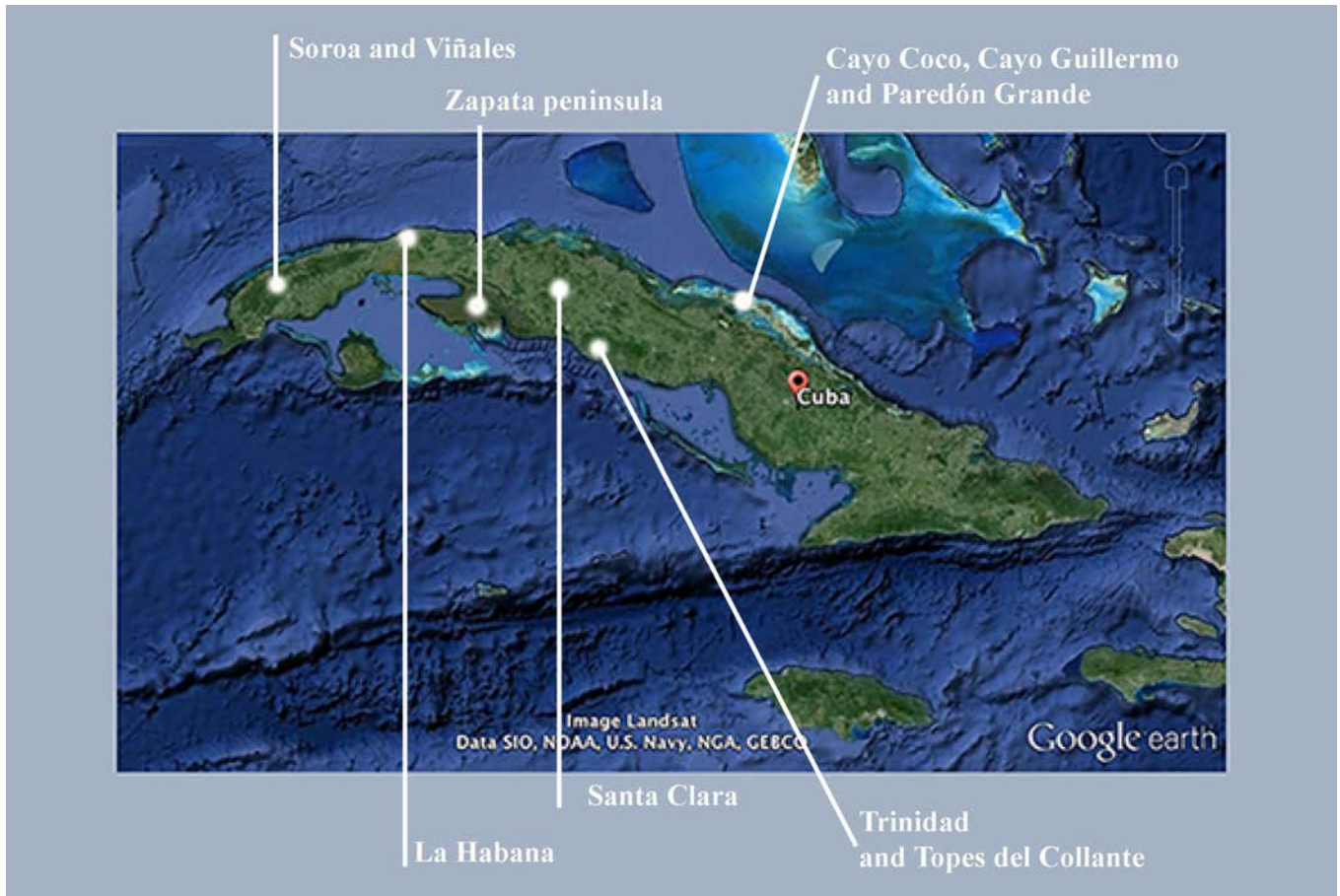
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/davidascanio/sets/72157649285592572/>

Casa Maria & Hato Piñero. Despite so much bad publicity of Venezuela, our tour to the mountains and the plains of this beautiful country offers a unique introduction to South America's birds and, gives you the opportunity to see macaws, scarlet ibis, sunbitterns and capibaras at very close distance. See the photo album at:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/davidascanio/sets/72157648429028713/>

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VENT-IE CUBA TOUR MAP WITH LOCATIONS



THE ITINERARY

05 March 2015. Arrival to Santa Clara. Drive to Cayo Coco.
06 March 2015. Cayo Coco, Cayo Guillermo and Cayo Paredón Grande.
07 March 2015. Cayo Coco – Trinidad – Topes del Collante.
08 March 2015. Topes del Collante - Bermejas, Playa Larga.
09 March 2015. Zapata Peninsula.
10 March 2015. Soplillar – Havana – Soroa.
11 March 2015. Viñales. – Soroa.
12 March 2015. Soroa – Las Terrazas – Havana.
13 March 2015. Old Havana.
14 March 2015. Departure.

THE IMAGES AND VIDEO

Photo album: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/davidascanio/sets/72157651912764991/>
Video link: <https://youtu.be/D-aqLhIGLAA>

THE BIRDLIST

The order, and common and scientific names are those given by the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) Checklist of North American Birds, 7th edition with all current updates.

Waterfowl, *Anatidae*

West Indian Whistling-Duck. *Dendrocygna arborea*. Great views of about 7 individuals in Cayo Coco.

American Wigeon. *Anas americana*. 50+ individuals were observed in Cayo Guillermo.

Blue-winged Teal. *Anas discors*. 12+ were seen in two wetlands along the road to Cayo Guillermo.

Northern Shoveler. *Anas clypeata*. 30+ were seen in two wetlands along the road to Cayo Guillermo.

Red-breasted Merganser. *Mergus serrator*. Mike saw an individual along the road to Cayo Guillermo.

Flamingos, *Phoenicopteridae*

American Flamingo. *Phoenicopterus ruber*. Close views of this elegant flamingo allowed participants (and myself!) to take excellent shots. We discussed about the origin of the name and wondered what came first, the *flamenco* dance, or the name of the *flamingo*!

Frigatebirds, *Fregatidae*

Magnificent Frigatebird. *Fregata magnificens*. Common in Cayo Coco, Cayo Guillermo and Cayo Paredón Grande.

Cormorants, *Phalacrocoracidae*

Neotropic Cormorant. *Phalacrocorax brasilianus*. Common around Cayo Coco.

Anhinga, *Anhingidae*

Anhinga. *Anhinga anhinga*. Seen on 6th, 09th and 10th March.

Pelicans, *Pelecanidae*

American White Pelican. *Pelecanus erythrohynchos*. A flock of about 7 individuals was seen in ponds along the highway between Soroa and Havana.

Brown Pelican. *Pelecanus occidentalis*. Seen daily.

Hérons, Egrets & Bitterns, *Ardeidae*

Great Blue Heron. *Ardea herodias*. Seen on 06th, 09th and 12th March. On Cayo Paredón Grande we enjoyed views of a white morph individual.

Great Egret. *Ardea alba*. Seen in most wetlands.

Snowy Egret. *Egretta thula*. This was one of the commonest egrets in the tour. Daily views went up to about 50 individuals.

Little Blue Heron. *Egretta caerulea*. This was a common species seen almost daily from individuals to pairs. Not recorded in flocks.

Tricolored Heron. *Egretta tricolor*. Cayo Coco.

Reddish Egret. *Egretta rufescens*. This species was seen only twice in Cayo Coco.

Cattle Egret. *Bubulcus ibis*. This species was common, numerous and widespread.

Green Heron. *Butorides virescens*. 2 individuals were seen in Cayo Coco.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron. *Nycticorax nycticorax*. Seen three different days, usually in low numbers.

Ibises and Spoonbills, *Threskiornithidae*

White Ibis. *Eudocimus albus*. Cayo Coco is named after this species. Mostly seen in Cayo Coco and, along the road to Soroa and Viñales.

Roseate Spoonbill. *Platalea ajaja*. This one was seen first in Cayo Guillermo and later along the road to Soroa.

New World Vultures, *Cathartidae*

Turkey Vulture. *Cathartes aura*. We observed this species every day of the tour. It was commoner in open areas.

Osprey, *Pandionidae*

Osprey. *Pandion haliaetus*. It was seen first in Cayo Paredón Grande and later along the road to Trinidad.

Hawks, Eagles & Kites, *Accipitridae*

Snail Kite. *Rothramus sociabilis*. Three individuals were observed by all group members on the 11th March. There was also an earlier record by Jan, the day we drove to Cayo Coco.

Common Black-Hawk. *Buteogallus anthracinus*. 5 individuals were observed in Cayo Guillermo. Some taxonomists have called this population an endemic species of Cuba.

Broad-winged Hawk. *Buteo platypterus*. A pair was seen in Topes del Collante.

Red-tailed Hawk. *Buteo jamaicensis*. Several individuals were seen throughout the tour.

Rails, Gallinules and Coots, *Rallidae*

Clapper Rail. *Rallus longirostris*. We enjoyed views of a single individual in Cayo Guillermo. This population is apparently closely related with the one in Puerto Rico. Clapper Rail is currently believed (by some taxonomists) to be three separate species.

Purple Gallinule. *Porphyrio martinicus*. A pair was observed on a wetland along the road from Soroa to Havana.

Common Gallinule. *Gallinula galeata*. Observed several times in wetlands.

American Coot. *Fulica Americana*. 500+ were observed in Cayo Guillermo. Also, seen in a wetland along the road from Soroa to Havana.

Limpkin, Aramididae

Limpkin. *Aramus guarauna*. Heard in Topes del Collante.

Stilts and Avocets, Recurvirostridae

Black-necked Stilt. *Himantopus mexicanus*. A common species in Cayo Guillermo.

Plovers and Lapwings, Charadriidae

Black-bellied Plover. *Pluvialis squatarola*. 3 ind. were seen in Cayo Guillermo.

Wilson's Plover. *Charadrius wilsonia*. We came across a small group of 12 individuals near Cayo Guillermo.

Semipalmated Plover. *Charadrius semipalmatus*. This species was the commonest plover in N Cuba. We saw 120+ ind.

Killdeer. *Charadrius vociferous*. We came across the species only twice during the tour.

Sandpipers and Allies, Scolopacidae

Spotted Sandpiper. *Actitis macularia*. Two individuals were seen in a wetland towards the end of the tour.

Willet. *Tringa semipalmata*. 8+ Cayo Guillermo.

Lesser Yellowlegs. *Tringa flavipes*. A single one in Cayo Guillermo.

Ruddy Turnstone. *Arenaria interpres*. Jean observed two pairs in Cayo Guillermo.

Least Sandpiper. *Calidris minutilla*. A single individual was observed in Cayo Guillermo..

Short-billed Dowitcher. *Limnodromus griseus*. I assume this was the dowitcher seen quite distant in Cayo Guillermo.

Gulls, Terns and Skimmers, Laridae

Laughing Gull. *Leucophaeus atricilla*. A common species in beaches and wetlands near Cayo Coco.

Ring-billed Gull. *Leucophaenus delawarensis*. A distant individual was observed from the Malecón of Havana.

Royal Tern. *Thalasseus maximus*. A common species in Cayo Coco and also along the causeway.

Sandwich Tern. *Thalasseus sandvicensis*. A single individual was seen from the Malecón of Havana.

Pigeons and Doves, Columbidae

Feral (Rock) Pigeon (I). *Columba livia*. A common species in urban areas.

Scaly-naped Pigeon. *Patagioenas squamosa*. Topes del Collante and Las Terrazas.

White-crowned Pigeon. *Patagioenas leucocephala*. Common in Soroa and in Bermeja.
Eurasian Collared-Dove (I). *Streptopelia decaocto*. We observed several individuals in farmland and urban areas.

White-winged Dove. *Zenaida asiatica*. Common in lowland locations.

Zenaida Dove. *Zenaida aurita*. Seen well in Bermeja, along with the quail dove species.

Mourning Dove. *Zenaida macroura*. A common species in lowlands and in urban areas.

Common Ground-Dove. *Columbina passerina*. A common species in lowland open areas.

Key West Quail-Dove. *Geotrygon chrysa*. First seen in *Cueva de los Jabalíes* in Cayo Coco. Later, seen in Bermeja, Zapata peninsula.

Gray-fronted Quail-Dove. *Geotrygon caniceps*. We enjoyed astonishing views of about four individuals in Bermeja.

Ruddy Quail-Dove. *Geotrygon montana*. We were shocked to find two individuals in two consecutive days in Soroa. Great views!

Blue-headed Quail-Dove. *Starnoenas cyanocephala*. A pair was observed in two consecutive days in Bermeja. A favorite among tour participants!

Cuckoos, Cuculidae

Great Lizard-Cuckoo. *Coccyzus merlini*. This amazing cuckoo was seen almost daily!

Smooth-billed Ani. *Crotophaga ani*. Common in farmland near Bermeja and other open areas.

Owls, Strigidae

Bare-legged Owl (E). *Margarobias lawrencii*. We owe a big *thank you* to Orlando and the guide in Bermejas for showing us this peculiar owl only found in Cuba. We were honored with views of two different nests!

Cuban Pygmy-Owl (E). *Glaucidium siju*. We saw this gorgeous owl twice in the Zapata peninsula. It was voted among the favorite for the tour!

Swifts, Apodidae

Antillean Palm-Swift. *Tachornis phoenicobia*. A widespread species. A nice breeding colony was observed in the first afternoon in Los Caneyes.

Hummingbirds, Trochilidae

Bee Hummingbird (E). *Mellisuga helenae*. We observed three individuals of the smallest hummingbird in the world: an adult male, a juvenile male and a female.

Cuban Emerald. *Chlorostilbon ricordii*. This is the commonest hummingbird in Cuba. We enjoyed views of it on every day!

Trogon, Trogonidae

Cuban Trogon (E). *Priotelus temnurus*. This is the national bird of Cuba. The national bird of Cuba was observed in most locations in central and west Cuba. The genus *Priotelus* means *an accomplished or complete saw* and refers to the ruffled appearance of the tail feathers.

Todies, Todidae

Cuban Tody (E). *Todus multicolor*. Fossil evidence suggests that todies evolved from Central America but became extinct for unknown reasons. Five species remain in the Great Antilles and one is found in Cuba. Todies are relatives of the motmots and more distantly to the kingfishers. We enjoy this comical species almost at every day of the tour!

Kingfishers, *Alcedinidae*

Belted Kingfisher. *Megaceryle alcyon*. Seen near Cayo Coco and near Soroa.

Woodpeckers, *Picidae*

West Indian Woodpecker. *Melanerpes superciliaris*. This species is a relative of Red-bellied Woodpecker (of North America) and Re-crowned Woodpecker (of South America). We saw singles and pairs almost in every day.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. *Sphyrapicus varius*. Most of the group members saw this species near Soroa.

Cuban Green Woodpecker (E). *Xiphidiopicus percussus*. Without a doubt, this is the most beautiful Picidae in Cuba. It was first seen in Cayo Coco and there were many *wow!* expressions when it came close to us. Despite that we saw it again towards the end of the tour, we never got tired of seeing it over and over!

Northern Flicker. *Colaptes auratus*. It was seen in Cayo Coco and in Las Terrazas.

Fernandina's Flicker (E). *Colaptes fernandinae*. We owe a big thank you to the park manager for spotting a nesting pair to us. Everyone saw it!

Falcons and Caracaras, *Falconidae*

Crested Caracara. *Caracara cheriway*. A single individual was observed in Cayo Coco. Notice than some taxonomist treats the Caribbean and Northern South America populations as a separate species, and name it northern Crested Caracara.

American Kestrel. *Falco sparverius*. This is a common and widespread species in Cuba. We saw it several times.

Peregrine Falcon. *Falco peregrinus*. We found a single individual (potentially a female due to its size) flying near the Hotel Nacional de Cuba.

Parrots, *Psittacidae*

Cuban Parakeet (E). *Aratinga euops*. Few individuals were observed in flight in Bermeja.

Cuban Parrot. *Amazona leucocephala*. We enjoyed astonishing views of this amazing parrot in the Zapata peninsula.

Tyrant Flycatchers, *Tyrannidae*

Cuban Pewee. *Contopus caribaeus*. This was another common endemic of Cuba seen almost every day.

La Sagra's Flycatcher. *Myiarchus sagrae*. This genus comprises very similar species that are found from southern USA to Argentina. In Cuba there's only one species, so its identification is straightforward! We came across this flycatcher towards the end of the tour in Soroa and Viñales. Its common and specific name is after Ramón de La Sagra (1801-1871), a Cuban writer and naturalist. He authored *Historia física, política y natural de la isla de Cuba*, in 1837.

Gray Kingbird. *Tyrannus dominicensis*. Only seen once. Weird!

Loggerhead Kingbird. *Tyrannus caudifasciatus*. This fancy kingbird with a distinctive contrasting cap was observed in most locations although decidedly commoner in Soroa, Viñales and Las Terrazas. One individual was observed feeding on a katydid.

Vireos, Vireonidae

Thick-billed Vireo. *Vireo crassirostris*. A pair was observed near Cayo Coco. The race we saw is *cubensis* and is restricted to NE Cuba.

Cuban Vireo (E). *Vireo gundlachii*. This was another common endemic species of Cuba. Nevertheless, it can be difficult to see. It was frequently heard in Cayo Coco and seen in three different days.

Black-whiskered Vireo. *Vireo altiloquus*. Pairs were observed in Soroa.

Crows, Jays and Magpies, Corvidae

Cuban Crow. *Corvus nasicus*. A pair was seen in the Zapata peninsula.

Swallows, Hirundinidae

Cuban Martin. *Progne cryptoleuca*. We saw several individuals in Cayo Coco and in Old Havana.

Tree Swallow. *Tachycineta bicolor*. Reported by Jan along the road to Soroa.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow. *Stelgidopteryx serripennis*. Alan near La Turba observed about three individuals.

Cliff Swallow. *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*. Dorothy called this species on the 7th March.

Barn Swallow. *Hirundo rustica*. La Turba.

Wrens, Troglodytidae

Zapata Wren (E). *Ferminia cerverai*. We enjoyed superb views of two pairs in La Turba. We are officially the first VENT tour ever to see this species. What a milestone!

Gnatcatchers, Polioptilidae

Cuban Gnatcatcher (E). *Polioptila lembeyi*. This elusive bird is sometimes hard to see. We nailed a pair in Cayo Coco and, saw it well!

Thrushes and Allies, Turdidae

Cuban Solitaire (E). *Myadestes elisabeth*. We scoped an individual projecting its unique and profound whistle and we learn how they use the cave acoustic to reverberate it! The specific name of this species was given after Queen Isabel I of Castile and Spain (1451-1504). It remains unknown why the person who described this species (Lembeye) used the English equivalent (*Elisabeth*) rather than the Spanish way (*Isabel*).

Red-legged Thrush. *Turdus plumbeus*. The race to occur in Cuba is the most colorful one. We saw this species every day.

Mockingbirds and Thrashers, Mimidae

Gray Catbird. *Dumetella carolinensis*. Seen sporadically.

Bahama Mockingbird. *Mimus gundlachii*. We were astonished to see an individual so close to us and for such long period! A big thanks to Odey for finding this species to us.

Northern Mockingbird. *Mimus polyglottos*. A common species in Cuba.

New World Warblers, *Parulidae*

Ovenbird. *Seiurus aurocapilla*. A boreal migrant seen about five times. Seen well and lengthily in Bermeja.

Louisiana Waterthrush. *Parkesia motacilla*. Cayo Coco.

Black-and-white Warbler. *Mniotilta varia*. About 8 individuals were reported during the tour. Locations were Cayo Coco, Playa Larga, Soplillar, Soroa and Viñales.

Common Yellowthroat. *Geothlypis trichas*. First seen in Topes del Collante with nesting material. Later, seen in Soroa and Viñales.

American Redstart. *Setophaga ruticilla*. A common boreal migrant in Cuba. Seen daily. The male of this species is known in South America and much of the Spanish speaking Caribbean as *Candelita* (Candela = fire), given its flashes of red when spreading the tail.

Cape May Warbler. *Setophaga tigrina*. A pair was observed in Cayo Coco and in Topes del Collante.

Northern Parula. *Setophaga americana*. Single individuals or pairs were seen during the tour.

Magnolia Warbler. *Setophaga magnolia*. A pair was observed in Cayo Coco.

Black-throated Blue Warbler. *Setophaga caerulescens*. Cuba is a regular stopover island for several neotropical migrants and this species is one that spend much of the Boreal winter in this island. We saw it almost daily.

Palm Warbler. *Setophaga palmarum*. The commonest neotropical migrant in Cuba. It was seen in all locations and in every day.

Olive-capped Warbler. *Setophaga ptyophila*. Another specialty of Cuba. We enjoyed great views near Viñales.

Yellow-rumped Warbler. *Setophaga coronata*. Bill saw this one on the 06th March. It was also seen in Las Terrazas.

Yellow-throated Warbler. *Setophaga dominica*. A common Neotropical migrant seen in Cayo Coco and in Soroa.

Prairie Warbler. *Setophaga discolor*. Reported only twice.

Black-throated Green Warbler. *Setophaga virens*. A single individual was observed in Soroa.

Yellow-headed Warbler (E). *Teretistris fernandinae*. Three pairs were seen near Viñales. This is the sister species of the allopatric Cuban endemic Oriente Warbler. Although placed in this family, it is currently considered *Incertade Sedis*.

Oriente Warbler (E). *Teretistris fornsi*. Several pairs were seen in Cayo Coco and the Peninsula de Zapata.

Tanagers and Allies, *Thraupidae*

Western Spindalis. *Spindalis zena*. The spindalis are endemic to the Greater Antilles. Some taxonomists consider this to be part of the cardinals rather than to the tanagers. From our first sight we immediately felt in love wit it. What a beauty! It was seen in almost every location.

Red-legged Honeycreeper. *Cyanerpes cyaneus*. A small group was seen near Las Terrazas.

Buntings, Sparrows and Allies, *Emberizidae*

Cuban Bullfinch. *Melopyrrha nigra*. Various pairs were observed during the tour. This is one of the dullest of all the bullfinches occurring in the Caribbean.

Cuban Grassquit (E). *Tiaris canorus*. How can I give you a post about this bird without thanking Gisela, our guide in Las Terrazas, for taking us to see it? We were rewarded with views of about 5 individuals. This was the last Cuba endemic for the tour.

Yellow-faced Grassquit. *Tiaris olivaceus*. A common and widespread species in Cuba. It was seen every day.

Zapata Sparrow (E). *Torreornis inexpectata*. Odey made it again for this bird. We enjoyed views of a pair perched for a while at eye level in Cayo Coco.

Cardinals and Allies, *Cardinalidae*

Blue Grosbeak. *Passerina caerulea*. A male was observed in Soroa.

Indigo Bunting. *Passerina cyanea*. A male was seen in Las Terrazas.

Troupials and Allies, *Icteridae*

Red-shouldered Blackbird (E). *Agelaius assimilis*. Two individuals in female plumage were seen in the Zapata peninsula.

Tawny-shouldered Blackbird. *Agelaius humeralis*. A common species in Zapata and Soroa.

Cuban Blackbird (E). *Dives atrovioleaceus*. Another Cuban endemic seen almost every day.

Greater Antillean Grackle. *Quiscalus niger*. Another Caribbean specialty found in Cuba. We enjoyed daily views of this species in the tour.

Shiny Cowbird. *Molothrus bonariensis*. A pair was found in the gardens of the hotel in Zapata peninsula by Jan.

Black-cowled Oriole. *Icterus prothemelas*. We came across this species almost every day. According to Clements, this species is found in Central America and the Caribbean. Notice that some taxonomists consider the populations of the Caribbean to be a separate species. This one has been called Cuban Oriole, *Icterus melanopsis*.

Old World Sparrows, *Passeridae*

House Sparrow (I). *Passer domesticus*. Observed in several urban areas including Santa Clara and Havana.

OTHER SPECIES LIST

Jamaican Fruit-eating Bat . *Artibeus jamaicensis*.

Cuban crocodile. *Crocodylus rhombifer*.

Cuban False Chameleon. *Chamaleolis sp.*

Curly-tailed Lizard. *Leiocephalus cubensis*. Trinidad.

House Gecko. *Hemidactylus mabouia*.

American Bull Frog. *Lithobates catesbeianus*. Heard in Topes del Collante.

Coquí (frog). *Eleutherodactylus coquí*. Heard in Topes del Collante.

Arboreal termite. *Nasutitermes*.

Leaf-cutting ant. *Atta sp.* or *Acromyrmex sp.*