

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

April 17-24, 2010



Leader: David Ascanio

Local guides: Kate Wallace and Miguel Angel Landestoy

Compiled by: David Ascanio

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There are few trips that bring me so much expectation because of the mixture of the endemic bird species and the conditions of the terrain at the birding locations as the one we operate in the Dominican Republic. I believe you all endorsed my feelings when describing this tour as a real adventure, an epic road trip and a tour for perseverant birders!

No wonder why despite its size (about 18,000 square miles) the Dominican Republic shows an incredible mixture of habitats from coastal magrove to grasslands and three forest types: moist, cloud and pine forests. Although we spent the main bulk of the tour in forest types we also visited gardens, grassland and desert scrub in the southern section of the country.

Our tour started in Los Limones where we appreciated how humans and birds can coexist together. Here, we saw more than 7 Ridgway's Hawk sharing their habitat with the local farmers whom seem to respect the forest in the hills to let the hawk search for prey. Although conflicts remains between the farmers and the hawk hopes remains for the survival of the species. We can only cross our fingers and wish that the NGO running the conservation program will remain in the area to deal with such conflicts.

After a succesful day in los Limones we drove to a lodge near Barahona which is the headquarters for visiting the Sierra de Bahoruco. Here the road was rough thus our chances for seeing the endemic species were reduced to few hours at a day. Nevertheless despite the limited time and the road conditions we managed not only to see well all the endemics but nailed most of it throughout the scope!

You might have fix in your mind that some endemic birds were relatively easy to see but other required a good effort and time standing at the edge of the forest. Remember the Eastern Chat-Tanager showing for few seconds to sing before hiding again in the forest? Or, the LaSelle Thrush that came after a while so close to us that no binoculars were needed to appreciate it! The enclosed birdlist hopes to bring all these memories that included not only great birds but also incredible companion and a lot of fun. And, you bet I will always remember Alan's warning that brought laughs after we finished the checklist the first night: "David, we had a great day but remember that tonight everythign resets to zero!".

Before I end the introduction to this birdlist I believe it is worthy to emphasize that our drives throughout this portion of the Hispaniola allowed sights of 27 birds endemic to the island plus many Caribbean specialties. Among the endemic species the *Todidae*, Ridgway's Hawk, Black-crowned Palm-Tanager, LaSelle Thrush, Ashy-faced Owl and Antillean Piculet were voted as the favorites.

I would like to invite you to give a look of my tours covering Southeastern Venezuela, Trinidad & Tobago, The Lesser Antilles or the Amazon Cruise. Each one has its own birding style but all share the same spirit to find the rare and endemic bird species while having a lot of fun!



The enclosed birdlist follows the AOU taxonomy. Alternative names given in Clements and other sources are also indicated in the text accompanying the species. I hope to see you soon!

The Birdlist.

Anatidae

West Indian Whistling-Duck. *Dendrocygna arborea* (monotypic). After a bit of a search in the Santo Domingo Botanical Gardens we enjoyed a scope view of an individual foraging on the nuts at the infrutescence of a Royal Palm (*Roystonea borinquena*). We documented this behavior and posted in the IBC website. Although fairly common in some of the Caribbean islands, the population of this species has suffered from extensive hunting thus considered vulnerable under the IUCN. Look for the video at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_th5RiSUsYE

Podicipedidae

Least Grebe. *Tachybaptus dominicus dominicus*. This species was first seen in the Santo Domingo botanical gardens and later a pair was seen with juveniles along the Rabo de Gato trail, near Puerto Escondido.

Sulidae

Brown Booby. *Sula leucogaster leucogaster*. A single individual was observed with a loose flock of Magnificent Frigatebird and Royal Terns at the beach of Los Patos in the south west side of the island.

Pelecanidae

Brown Pelican. *Pelecanus occidentalis occidentalis*. About six individuals were seen near Barahona.

Fregatidae

Magnificent Frigatebird. *Fregata magnificens* (monotypic). This species was seen regularly on the drives along the coast of the Dominican Republic.

Ardeidae

Great Egret. *Ardea alba egretta*. Interesting enough, this species was once pushed into the brink of extinction due to the breeding plume trade back in the late 19th century. We observed about 6 individuals near Rabo de Gato.

Snowy Egret. *Egretta thula thula*. Unlike the previous year this time we observed a very low number of individuals: only 2!

Tricolored Heron. *Egretta tricolor ruficollis*. One individual was observed at the channels of Rabo de Gato being a new species for the bird inventory of the location.

Cattle Egret. *Bubulcus ibis ibis*. We reported daily views in pastures and open areas. The first record of the species in the Americas dates back to 1877 when Haverschmidt reported for Suriname.

Green Heron. *Butorides virescens virescens*. Single individuals were observed in small wetlands. This species is sometimes considered conspecific with Striated Heron (*Butorides striatus*).

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron. *Nyctanassa violacea bancrofti*. A single individual was observed near the swimming pool in El Quemaito near Barahona.

Cathartidae

Turkey Vulture. *Cathartes aura aura*. It was common around Los Limones at the buffer zone of Los Haitises national park. It is absent elsewhere in the island. This is one of the southernmost breeding populations of the red-nape form of North America.

Accipitridae

Seeing *Accipitridae* in island is both interesting and fascinating due to the isolation force working on the populations. Since most birds of prey need land bridges to migrate it is most likely that they become trapped in its own small territory when reaching these islands by accident. Here is where evolution at work shape the new species and or the distinctiveness in the races.

Ridgway's Hawk. *Buteo ridgwayi*. **Endemic to Hispaniola.** We may have beaten the world record of seeing more individuals of the species in a single morning. In our visit to los Limones we were honored to actually see two active nests and later a single individual soaring over the ranger house. We nailed a total of 7 individuals in a single morning! When reading this account bear in mind that this is probably the most endangered *Buteo* in the world. Also, notice that plumage and voice resembles that of Roadside Hawk (*Buteo magnirostris*) of South America. Maybe there is a genetic link to it! For seeing the video of the individual near the nest go to: <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/video/ridgways-hawk-buteo-ridgwayi/single-individual-perched-branch-cecropia-near-nest-site-chick-ju>

Red-tailed Hawk. *Buteo jamaicensis jamaicensis*. One individual was seen soaring in the slopes of the Sierra de Bahoruco national park and another in Aceitillar, Alcoa road.

Falconidae

American Kestrel. *Falco sparverius dominicensis*. We enjoyed this small bird of prey almost every day and noticed the very pale underparts of the race inhabiting Hispaniola.

Merlin. *Falco columbarius columbarius*. A North American migrant. One individual was observed flying over Santo Domingo (Hotel El Embajador).

Rallidae

Purple Gallinule. *Porphyrio martinica (monotypic)*. This species was first seen in Los Limones and later enjoyed by everyone at the Rabo de Gato trail.

Caribbean Coot. *Fulica caribaea (monotypic)*. Given the earthquake in Haiti we avoided Jimani this year. This is why we reported only three individuals in Lago Enriquillo. Sometimes regarded as conspecific with American Coot *F. americana*.

Common Moorhen. *Gallinula chloropus cerceris*. Various individuals were seen throughout the week.

Aramidae

Limpkin. *Aramus guarauna elucus*. We were surprised to listen this species giving its melancholic voice near El Aguacate in the Sierra de Bahoruco since there was no running water in the vicinity!

Charadriidae

Killdeer. *Charadrius vociferus ternominatus*. A pair was seen along the road to Rabo de Gato (Repeated sights at the same location for almost a decade). This species was also seen in Lago Enriquillo. The North American race *vociferus* have been also documented to reach thre Dominican Republic during the wintering migration.

Scolopacidae

Solitary Sandpiper. *Tringa solitaria solitaria?* About 4 individuals were seen in the channel at the botanical gardens. I am not sure wheter the race was *solitaria* or *cinnamomea*.

Greater Yellowlegs. *Tringa melanoleuca*. A single individual was observed in Lago Enriquillo.

Laridae

Royal Tern. *Thalasseus maxima maximus*. More than a dozen individuals were enjoyed moving along with a feeding flock from the beach of Los Patos.

Columbidae

Usually overlooked, members of this family can show an incredible set of plumage coloration. Up to the last morning we were trying to gain a view of the White-fronted Quail-Dove in order to claim to have seen all the *Columbidae* of the island but unfortunately we failed to see it this time.

Scaly-naped Pigeon. *Patagioenas squamosa (monotypic)*. This species was seen in the Sierra de Bahoruco national park at elevations above 1000 meters. We reported more than 12 individuals.

White-crowned Pigeon. *Patagioenas leucocephala (monotypic)*. Only seen flying across the road on the drive from Puerto Escondido to Barahona.

Plain Pigeon. *Patagioenas inornata inornata*. This one was first seen in a scrub near Los Limones. A pair was later seen in Fundo Paradí.

White-winged Dove. *Zenaida asiatica asiatica*. This species was fairly common along the road and locations with desert scrub.

Zenaida Dove. *Zenaida aurita zenaida*. This one remains less common than other members of the genus. We managed to see two pairs in the slopes of Sierra de Bahoruco in an quarry where they usually swallow small pebbles to help them grind up the seeds in their muscular gizzards.

Mourning Dove. *Zenaida macroura macroura*. This species was common in Santo Domingo and Barahona.

Common Ground-Dove. *Columbina passerina insularis*. This species was also common in Santo Domingo and in the arid areas of the SW region of the country. This is the smallest *Columbidae* in the Dominican Republic.

Key West Quail-Dove. *Geotrygon chrysis (monotypic)*. We all enjoyed scope views of an individual spotted by Miguel Angel in a river bed in Sierra de Bahoruco.

Ruddy Quail-Dove. *Geotrygon montana montana*. Despite much search this species was only heard in La Placa.

Psittacidae

Hispaniolan Parakeet. *Aratinga chloroptera chloroptera*. **Endemic to Hispaniola.** We enjoyed scope views of several individuals in a roost in Hotel Embajador. We estimated about 104 individuals in this location. Additionally, few pairs were seen in Rabo de Gato trail and in the colonial zone of Santo Domingo. It has been suggested to be conspecific with White-eyed Parakeet *Aratinga leucophthalmus*.

Hispaniolan Parrot. *Amazona ventralis (monotypic)*. **Endemic to Hispaniola.** We might have had one of the best views ever of the species in a VENT tour. We first scoped a single individual in Zapotén and later enjoyed another one near El Aguacate. In our checklist we piled up to 17 individuals in two days. The species is currently considered as Vulnerable under the IUCN. For seeing a video of the individual scoped near the international border with Haiti please go to <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/video/hispaniolan-amazon-amazona-ventralis/single-individual-perched-atop-small-tree-area-heavily-de>

Cuculidae

Mangrove Cuckoo. *Coccyzus minor (monotypic)*. This species was seen more regularly than in previous years. This time we observed individuals in the Botanical Gardens and in Rabo de Gato trail. Also, this year it seemed more vocal than in previous years.

Bay-breasted Cuckoo. *Coccyzus (Hyetornis) ruficularis (monotypic)*. **Endemic to Hispaniola.** This time we nailed a pair but had poor views of it. Although we found this species to be more responsive than in previous years it remained shy and difficult to see. Most participants happened to see either the underparts and the size of it.

Hispaniolan Lizard-Cuckoo. *Coccyzus (Saurothera) longirostris longirostris*. **Endemic to Hispaniola.** We saw this impressive long-billed cuckoo several times, from the beginning of the tour to the end of it. In Jaragua we enjoyed one individual perched atop a dead branch in full sunlight.

Tytonidae

Ashy-faced Owl. *Tyto glaucops (monotypic)*. **Endemic to Hispaniola.** What a view! We enjoyed one individual perched at the entrance of the nest. Bear in mind that until recently this species was considered conspecific with the Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) but today is accepted as a separate species. Also, some taxonomist have suggested that the races *nigrescens* and *insularis* of Barn Owl (found in Dominica, St Vincent and Grenada) should be treated as part of Ashy-faced Owl but this have not been formally accepted as yet. For seeing a video of the individual we saw throughout the scope please visit the link <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/video/ashy-faced-owl-tyto-glaucops/individual-perched-mouth-nest-southern-part-island>

Strigidae

Burrowing Owl. *Athene cunicularia troglodytes*. Various pairs were seen near Puerto Escondido and along the road to the Sierra de Bahoruco.

Nyctibiidae

Northern Potoo. *Nyctibius jamaicensis abbotti*. A single individual was heard near La Placa in the slopes of Sierra de Bahoruco. Unfortunately it was not seen.

Caprimulgidae

Commonly referred as the *Goatsuckers*, the nighthawks and nightjars can be difficult to identify in the field. Aspects such as voice, habits and habitat are relevant for field identification.

Antillean Nighthawk *Chordeiles gundlachii gundlachii*. We first saw it flying at dawn near lago Enriquillo. Later, it was observed flying at day time over the Rabo de Gato trail.

Least Poorwill (Least Pauraque). *Siphonorhis brewsteri (monotypic)*. **Endemic to Hispaniola.** Only heard in la Placa. Unfortunately we did not have enough time to spend in the area to look for it. This species was formerly considered conspecific with the Jamaican Poorwill (*S.americana*).

Greater Antillean Nightjar (Hispaniolan Nightjar). *Caprimulgus cubanensis (Caprimulgus ekmani)*, (*monotypic*). Sometimes considered an endemic to Hispaniola. Two individuals were heard in la Placa, Sierra de Bahoruco. Despite our efforts to locate one perched at the edge of the forest we failed to see it thus this counts as only heard. *Caprimulgus cubanensis* is found in Cuba and Hispaniola but differences in vocalization may warrant a future recognition as two separate species.

Apodidae

Antillean Palm-Swift. *Tachornis phoenicobia phoenicobia*. Fairly common in the lowlands were feeds most of the day with circular flights and mixed glides, or with fast wing beats. This species is particularly large compared with other palm-swift species in South America. Although the size difference is not very relevant as in other species this case can be taken as an example of gigantism as a consequences of island isolation.

Trochilidae

Antillean Mango. *Anthracothorax dominicus*. This species was seen almost every day from the lowlands up to the highlands and from the forest edge to well inside the forest.

Hispaniolan Emerald. *Chlorostilbon swainsonii* (*monotypic*). **Endemic to Hispaniola.** We enjoyed very close views of this large-headed hummingbird. The conical forehead resembles more a *Trochilidae* of the genus *Heliodoxa* rather than a member of the *Chlorostilbon*. Its robustness and deep forked tail is another odd aspect of this species since in South America most of the emeralds of the genus *Chlorostilbon* are small and delicate.

Vervain Hummingbird. *Mellisuga minima vieillota*. About half a dozen individuals were seen at the Botanical Gardens. It was also seen in Lago Enriquillo, Rabo de Gato trail and near Zapotén. This species is fond to perch atop the vertical spike of the fresh leaves in the Royal Palms while calling frequently.

Trogonidae

Hispaniolan Trogon. *Priotelus roseigaster* (*monotypic*). **Endemic to Hispaniola.** A pair was enjoyed singing near Zapotén while scope. A second pair was heard in Cachote.

Todidae

Fossil evidence suggests that todies evolved from Central America but became extinct for unknown reasons. Five species remain in the Great Antilles and two are represented in Hispaniola. Todies are relatives of the motmots and more distantly to the kingfishers.

Broad-billed Tody. *Todus subulatus* (*monotypic*). **Endemic to Hispaniola.** This is the commonest of both todies in Hispaniola and is found in almost every lowland habitat. We saw it virtually every day but never got tired of its bright colors and cartoon-like shape and behavior! The specific name *subulatus* refers to the shape of its bill (broad). For seeing a short video taken during our tour please go to <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/video/broad-billed-tody-todus-subulatus/another-dorsal-view-individual-searching-insects>

Narrow-billed Tody. *Todus angustirostris* (*monotypic*). **Endemic to Hispaniola.** This species is less widespread than the previous one and usually is found at higher elevations. We enjoyed 4 pairs in a short transect of Sierra de Bahoruco and saw another pair in Cachote. The specific name *angustirostris* refers to the narrow bill of it.

Picidae

Antillean Piculet. *Nesocittes micromegas* (*monotypic*). **Endemic to Hispaniola.** After a couple of days looking for this species in Sierra de Barahona and in Zapotén we found a pair in Jaragua national park. We noticed its large size compared with those piculet species found in South America (*Picumnus*). The genus *Nesocittes* refers to the fact that is an island species, with *nesos* meaning island and *ktites* meaning an inhabitant.

Hispaniolan Woodpecker. *Melanerpes striatus* (*monotypic*). **Endemic to Hispaniola.** This one was seen every day and in fact many pairs were seen nesting. This species is quite tolerant to human presence and seems to adapt well to farmland, urban areas and other open areas.

Tyrannidae

Greater Antillean Elaenia. *Elaenia fallax cherriei*. A pair in Zapotén happened to be the only individuals for the whole tour. The pair we saw was foraging in the canopy strata.

Hispaniolan Pewee. *Contopus hispaniolensis (monotypic)*. **Endemic to Hispaniola.** This was another species found in Sierra de Bahoruco national park. Although uncommon, we were able to locate two pairs in the mountains. This species was formerly part of Greater Antillean Pewee which turned out to be split into four species.

Stolid Flycatcher. *Myiarchus stolidus dominicensis*. A common and vocal species found mainly in scrubby vegetation in the lowlands. The genus *Myiarchus* is widespread in South America with many look-alike species and are best told by voice. It was seen regularly in Sierra de Bahoruco, Lago Enriquillo and the surroundings of it.

Gray Kingbird. *Tyrannus dominicensis dominicensis*. Many pairs and individuals were seen / heard during the trip.

Loggerhead Kingbird. *Tyrannus caudifasciatus flavescens*. We had great views of the species in El Aguacate plantation along the road to Sierra de Bahoruco. The specific name *caudifasciatus* makes reference to the rufous edges in the tail. To enjoy a video of the pair seen during our trip please go to <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/video/loggerhead-kingbird-tyrannus-caudifasciatus/pair-well-exposed-lowlands-contiguous-avocado-plan>

Vireonidae

Flat-billed Vireo. *Vireo nanus*. **Endemic to Hispaniola.** We enjoyed great views of a pair in the Sierra de Bahoruco. A second responsive pair was observed around La Placa.

Black-whiskered Vireo. *Vireo altiloquus altiloquus*. Although said to be difficult to observe we managed to see this species almost every day.

Corvidae

Palm Crow (Hispaniolan Palm Crow). *Corvus palmarum (monotypic)*. **Endemic to Hispaniola** We had superb views of three individuals in Lago Enriquillo. This species was once considered conspecific with the Cuban Palm Crow, *C. minutus*.

White-necked Crow. *Corvus leucognaphalus (monotypic)*. **Endemic to Hispaniola** What a view ! We enjoyed scope views of a single individual perched and later saw a pair flying while giving its distinctive voice.

Hirundinidae

Caribbean Martin. *Progne dominicensis*. We saw this species mainly around Bani and also near Santo Domingo. We did not see large numbers in either location as we did in previous years but saw a flock of about 20 individuals at the airport in Santo Domingo.

Golden Swallow. *Tachycineta euchrysea sclateri*. **Almost endemic to Hispaniola as the populations of Jamaica have been extirpated.** We had great views of 4 individuals in Zapotén. It was also later seen in Aceitillar. This

species is apparently extincted in Jamaica. If you have been in South America you might have notice its resemblance with the Blue-and-white Swallow.

Cave Swallow. *Petrochelidon fulva fulva*. This one was only seen the day of departure along the highway between the hotel and the airport.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow. *Stelgidopteryx serripennis*. A single individual was observed near Los Limones (buffer zone of Los Haitises national park).

Turdidae

Rufous-throated Solitaire. *Myadestes genibarbis montanus*. What a beautiful song! It sounds like a musician giving short and pause blows throughout a flute. Its high frequency whistle was enjoyed while we searched for LaSelle Thrush and other endemic species in Zapotén. We enjoyed 7 individuals with some singing while observed at the scope. This species is a good candidate for a technical split so keep your eyes on it.

La Selle Thrush. *Turdus swalesi swalesi*. **Endemic to Hispaniola** This is probably the most difficult and the least common of the Hispaniola endemic species. Only few years ago it was a dream to see this species and today we have learned so much that we have seen it for six consecutive years. This year we enjoyed a pair singing and foraging close to the ground near Zapotén. At one point they came so close to us that we could not use our binoculars!

Red-legged Thrush. *Turdus plumbeus ardosiaceus*. This long-legged thrush is the commonest and most widespread *Turdidae* in Hispaniola. We saw it almost every day.

Bicknell's Thrush. *Catharus bicknelli (monotypic)*. A pair was seen by few participants near Zapotén. The Hispaniola is by default the wintering ground of this species that is showing some dramatic drop-off of population density. It was once considered a race of Gray-cheeked Thrush.

Mimidae

Northern Mockingbird. *Mimus polyglottos orpheus*. Widespread. Many individuals were observed in open areas and arid scrub. The specific name *polyglottos* makes reference to the mimic capabilities of it!

Dulidae

Monotypic and endemic family of Hispaniola which is represented by only one widespread species, the Palmchat.

Palmchat. *Dulus dominicus (monotypic)*. **Endemic to Hispaniola** This is the national bird of the Dominican Republic and there are good reasons for it. First, it is widespread and very vocal. Second, it builds bulky and conspicuous nests in palm trees. Third, the Ridgway's Hawk use the Palmchat nest to bulds its rough platform that serves as a nesting site. The genus *Dulus* refers to the name given by the local people (The slave) that apparently make reference to the subservient behavior of the species to other birds in contrast to that of the Gray Kingbird which is usually aggressive.

Parulidae

Northern Parula. *Parula americana*. We saw a pair in the gardens of the Hotel El Embajador. It was also heard at the Botanical Gardens.

Cape May Warbler. *Dendroica tigrina*. A pair was seen in Hotel El Embajador. Also, additional individuals were observed in los Limones and near Barahona.

Black-throated Blue Warbler. *Dendroica caerulescens (caerulescens?)*. A male and a female were observed in Sierra de Bahoruco. Another male was seen in Aceitillar.

Black-throated Green Warbler. *Dendroica virens*. A female was seen in the gardens of Hotel El Embajador.

Pine Warbler. *Dendroica pinus chrysoleuca (resident race)*. Three individuals were seen on the Alcoa road. Not that responsive to playback as they were in previous years.

Prairie Warbler. *Dendroica discolor (discolor?)*. A single individual was observed in the grounds of Hotel El Embajador.

Prothonotary Warbler. *Protonotaria citrea*. A single individual was enjoyed the first afternoon at the gardens of Hotel El Embajador.

Hooded Warbler. *Wilsonia citrina*. A big thank you goes to Mike for spotting a female for us, and for finding it again for everyone in the gardens of Hotel El Embajador. Another female was seen later near Zapotén.

Black-and-white Warbler. *Mniotilta varia*. Three individuals were seen on the trip. It was first seen in Zapotén.

American Redstart. *Setophaga ruticilla*. Common. This species was seen almost every day.

Ovenbird. *Seiurus aurocapilla aurocapilla*. The first pair was seen in El Aguacate and a second pair was observed in Rabo de Gato trail.

Louisiana Waterthrush. *Seiurus motacilla*. One individual was heard in Sierra de Bahoruco.

Common Yellowthroat. *Geothlypis trichas trichas*. One individual was seen in a remnant of a wetland the day we drove to Barahona.

Note about the following two species. Genetic studies have revealed that *Microligea* and *Xenoligea* are close relatives to *Phaenicophilus (Palm-Tanagers)* suggesting that are indeed tanagers, not warblers. This controversy keeps back and forth so they are retained here with the traditional taxonomy.

Green-tailed Warbler. *Microligea palustris palustris / vasta*. **Endemic to Hispaniola** Also named Green-tailed Ground-Warbler. Two pairs were seen in Sierra de Bahoruco acting very silently (no very vocal). Another individual was seen later in El Aguacate. The genus *Microligea* gives reference to a small warbler, while the specific epithet *palustris* indicates tha inhabit marshy / boggy areas. Apparently it was first collected in areas of dense vegetation with damp ground hence the specific name.

White-winged Warbler. *Xenoligea montana (monotypic)*. **Endemic to Hispaniola**. We enjoyed amazing views of this always-active species that joins feeding flocks. We saw 5 individuals in Zapotén!

Genus incerta sedis

Bananaquit. *Coereba flaveola bananivora*. This species was seen every day, from disturbed habitat to edge of forest. Its bill shape and voice resembles that of Central America.

Thraupidae

This family is represented in Hispaniola for few species most of which are endemic to the island. Of special interest are the two species of chat-tanager (*Calyptophilus sp.*). These were once considered two races of the same species but recently have been accepted as two separate species, both endemic of Hispaniola.

Black-crowned Palm-Tanager. *Phaenicophilus palmarum* (monotypic). **Endemic to Hispaniola** This species is locally named “Cuatro Ojos” (Four-eyes) referring to the plumage of the head having four white spots. It was seen almost daily as it is a widespread species. You may have noticed its tolerant to human presence.

Western Chat-Tanager. *Calyptophilus tertius* (monotypic). **Endemic to Hispaniola.** We had to work a bit hard to get this one in Sierra de Barahona but once we found it we enjoyed throughout the scope. We did a nice video and is now posted in the Internet Bird collection at <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/video/western-chat-tanager-calyptophilus-tertius/individual-singing-perched-some-17-meters-ground-ar>

Eastern Chat-Tanager. *Calyptophilus frugivorus* (monotypic). **Endemic to Hispaniola.** This species was first seen in a VENT tour back in 2006 since previous to that year it was believed that it was found only in the central mountain range. More recently, studies of the population in Cachote demonstrate that it was indeed this species! After a bit of a work we managed to see it, and it took various attempts to secure that everyone got superb views of it.

Hispaniolan Spindalis. *Spindalis dominicensis*. **Endemic to Hispaniola.** Everyone loved the small family groups foraging on berries along the road to Zapotén (Sierra de Barahona). This is certainly one of the most beautiful endemic species of Hispaniola. The genus *Spindalis* is also endemic to the Greater Antilles.

Emberizidae

Yellow-faced Grassquit. *Tiaris olivaceus olivaceus*. This species is widespread throughout the Dominican Republic. It was seen every day.

Greater Antillean Bullfinch. *Loxigilla violacea affinis*. We enjoyed views of pairs or small groups foraging on fruits and berries in Sierra de Bahoruco. The genus *Loxigilla* makes reference to the heavy bill of the bullfinches.

Icteridae

Greater Antillean Grackle. *Quiscalus niger niger*. This species is fairly common and widespread but usually shy and difficult to see (Inversely proportional in Puerto Rico). A small group was also seen near Barahona at the entrance of Rabo de Gato.

Greater Antillean Oriole. *Icterus dominicensis* (monotypic). We saw one individual in Puerto Escondido. This species is sometimes treated as Hispaniolan Oriole an endemic species of the island. Originally, the Greater Antillean Oriole was part of the Black-cowled Oriole (*Icterus prothemelas*).

Fringillidae

Antillean Euphonia. *Euphonia musica* (monotypic). A group of 5 individuals was seen in Zapotén, Sierra de Bahoruco. The plumage suggests an affinity with Golden-rumped Euphonia (*E. cyanocephala*) of South America. This species was formerly considered part of the Blue-hooded Euphonia that have

been split into three species: one for Central America, one for the Antilles and another for South America. You can see the video of the individuals we saw at <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/video/antillean-euphonia-euphonia-musica/male-perched-atop-dead-branch-emergent-tree>

Hispaniolan Crossbill. *Loxia megalaga* (*monotypic*). **Endemic to Hispaniola.** We enjoyed great views of a male perched atop a dead branch of a conifer along the Alcoa road, near Aceitillar. This species is unpredictable and can turn out to be very difficult to find.

Antillean Siskin. *Carduelis dominicensis* (*monotypic*). **Endemic to Hispaniola.** We observed two small flocks and managed to see one throughout the scope. This species is apparently declining due to habitat loss.

Shiny Cowbird. *Molothrus bonariensis*. A single individual was seen near Lago Enriquillo.

Introduced Species.

Numididae

Helmeted Guineafowl. *Numida meleagris*. A loose group was found along the Rabo de Gato trail.

Columbidae

Rock Pigeon. *Columba livia*. It is common and widespread in Santo Domingo and in Barahona.

Psittacidae

Olive-throated Parakeet. *Aratinga nana*. Presumably introduced. There are no early records for the Dominican Republic. In our tour we saw a pair seen in the lowlands of Sierra de Bahoruco national park. This species was first documented in 1995 but is expanding its range rapidly. Ornithologists have expressed concern about the possible competition with the endemic Hispaniola Parakeet *Aratinga chloroptera*.

Passeridae

House Sparrow. *Passer domesticus*. 4 individuals were seen in Barahona.

Ploceidae

A bird family of Sub-Saharan Africa, consisting on heavy bill species specialized for eating seeds. The only member of the family in our continent was brought by pet traders and is currently found in wild populations in some Caribbean islands and in other countries of South America.

Village Weaver. *Ploceus cucullatus*. A small group of 3 individuals was seen at the entrance of Rabo de Gato. Earliest records in Hispaniola date for the late 18th century.

Amphibians, Reptiles and Fishes.

Bufo

Marine Toad. *Bufo marinus*. Barahona.

Rana

American Bullfrog. *Rana catesbeiana*. Rabo de Gato.

Boidae

Hispaniolan Boa. *Epicrates gracilis*. A fresh road kill was found along the road to Sierra de Bahoruco.

Colubridae

Hispaniolan Brown Racer. *Haitiophis anomalus*. Another fresh road killed was observed along the road to Sierra de Barahona.

Blunt-headed Green Treesnake. *Uromacer catesbyi*. This snake was seen twice along the road to Sierra de Bahoruco.

Iguanidae

Rhinoceros Iguana. *Cyclura cornuta*. We enjoyed great views of males and females along the Alcoa road.

Teiidae

Whip-tailed Lizard. *Cnemidophorus sp.* Common around Hotel El Embajador.

Polychrotidae

Bark Anole. *Anolis distichus*. Los Limones.

Hispaniolan Green Anolis. *Anolis chlorocyanus*. Los Limones.

Large-headed Anole. *Anolis cybotes*. Los Limones.

Dominican Giant Anole or **Saltacocote.** *Anolis baleatus*. Los Patos.

Poeciliidae

Platy Fish. *Poecilia sp.* Jaragua national park.

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