



Field Guides Tour Report

Jamaica I 2016

Feb 27, 2016 to Mar 4, 2016

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For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE.



Yellow-billed Parrots were definitely the more common of Jamaica's two endemic parrots, with big, noisy flocks seen on several days. Photo by participant Kevin Heffernan.

In the middle of a chilly northern winter, there's nothing like a trip to the Caribbean to bring a smile to the face of a North American birder. Instead of ice and snow, a profusion of flowers bloom. The warblers that have abandoned northern woodlands flit through tropical forests dripping with vines and epiphytes, sharing branches with the exotic year-round locals. Add in the excitement of searching for a bundle of endemic species (27 found only on Jamaica, plus a handful of others limited to just a few Caribbean islands), a comfortable lodge (Green Castle Estate, which is abbreviated as GCE in the following report), pleasant and helpful staff, and some fine local cuisine, and you have a very pleasant way to spend a "winter" week!

Our time in the field was spent largely in the island's less trammelled (and more forested) northeast, principally in the John Crow and Blue Mountains. With the exception of our first soggy day and a half, we had delightful weather -- including a few days warm enough to make our lodge's pool seem awfully inviting! And we found plenty to watch and enjoy during our six days of birding. The endemics cooperated wonderfully -- with one notable exception (we're talking to you, Crested Quail-Dove!!) everybody saw all of them very well.

Tiny Jamaican Todies flitted from branch to branch, shouting big challenges for such a little bird. A point-blank Northern Potoo did its best "Don't mind me, I'm just a tree stump" imitation just over our heads, while another wide-eyed bird hunted moths from a telephone pole behind our lodge. A Jamaican Lizard-Cuckoo made a slow, methodical search of a huge bromeliad right beside the road, giving us fine views of all sides as it poked and prodded through the cracks and crevices, pulling out tasty morsels. Yellow-billed Parrots wheeled overhead in big, noisy flocks, while our only Black-billed Parrots lurked in a ridge top tree, quietly nibbling fruits. Handsome Caribbean Doves trundled around the Rocklands patios, gobbling up the grain spilled for them.

Orangequits glowed blue against the foliage, Bananquits spun on sugar feeders, and a male Yellow-shouldered Grassquit preened over our heads. A well-hidden Jamaican Owl snoozed on its dayroost. A Blue Mountain Vireo foraged at eye level along the roadside. A Jamaican Crow rummaged through a big bromeliad on a hillside below us (while its flock mates gabbled in the distance) and a Jamaican Blackbird did the same through several smaller bromeliads along a branch -- before popping out to sit right over the road for a bit of a preen. A huge Chestnut-bellied Cuckoo bounded through a tree like an overgrown squirrel, calling gruffly. A Rufous-tailed Flycatcher bounced down the road mere yards from our toes, carefully peering at the underside of roadside vegetation. And who will soon forget the Red-billed Streamertails that sat on our fingers to drink sugar water from little bottles?!

Thanks so much for joining us for a week away in (mostly) sunny Jamaica. It was good fun sharing some adventures with you! I hope to see you again soon in another far-flung locale. Until then, good birding!

-- Megan

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

AMERICAN WIGEON (*Anas americana*) – A handful, sprinkled across the reservoir at GCE. [b]

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Anas discors*) – A pair lifted out of the marsh at Blue Hole Pond, flew a few hundred yards and dropped back in -- immediately out of view. Fortunately for those who missed the first pair, we found 8 at the same location the next day. [b]

RING-NECKED DUCK (*Aythya collaris*) – Quite common at the GCE reservoir, where dozens floated among the Ruddy Ducks. [b]

RUDDY DUCK (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) – Quite common on the GCE reservoir, including several males in their bright breeding plumage -- rusty bodies, black heads, bright white cheek patch and neon blue bills.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

LEAST GREBE (*Tachybaptus dominicus*) – One, tucked low in the thick marsh grass at Blue Hole Pond, didn't look like much until viewed in the scope -- where its staring yellow eye and thin, pointed beak were a lot more obvious!

PIED-BILLED GREBE (*Podilymbus podiceps*) – An adult with four fully grown youngsters (still sporting striped faces) floated and dove on the Swift River, which we checked from the bridge on our drive back from the John Crow Mountains.

Fregatidae (Frigatebirds)

MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD (*Fregata magnificens*) – A few floated over as we birded along the coast on our way back from the John Crow Mountains.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

BROWN PELICAN (SOUTHERN) (*Pelecanus occidentalis occidentalis*) – One floated on the sea beside a fisherman cleaning his catch, waiting for tidbits to be thrown its way; we saw it on our drive back to Montego Bay.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – A couple of individuals seen standing in river mouths as we drove along the coast. This is a winter visitor to the island. [b]

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – Scattered individuals in wetlands across the island. This species is resident in Jamaica.

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*) – A small number stood along the edges of the Swift River, showing their distinctive yellow feet nicely against the dark rocks they were standing on.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*) – Seen on most days, typically standing in rivers and creeks we passed as we drove to our birding spots. The one we found standing in the road as we worked our way up into the Blue Mountains was a bit less expected!

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Many, scattered in fields across Jamaica -- typically lurking around the feet of livestock.

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*) – Our first was perched in a tree outside a restaurant where we took a early pit stop en route to the John Crow Mountains. We saw another in the Swift River, and one flew across the GCE reservoir, seen (between the bamboo) from our perch atop the hill (before we climbed down to the water).

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nyctanassa violacea*) – One seen from the bus as we headed towards our hotel from the airport on that first rainy afternoon, with better looks at another perched beside the Swift River, seen from the bridge.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

GLOSSY IBIS (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – We saw one in a roadside field as we drove towards Cockpit Country, and another flew out of a little roadside marsh we briefly stopped beside on our way back to Montego Bay.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*) – "John Crow" (the local name for this species) was abundant across the island, with plenty seen kettling over fields and forests -- including a group spiraling over our picnic site in the John Crow Mountains.

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – One soared over the forest, seen from the Ecclesdown road -- good spotting, Kevin! This is a winter visitor to Jamaica. [b]

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

RED-TAILED HAWK (JAMAICENSIS) (*Buteo jamaicensis jamaicensis*) – Every day but the first (that wet drive from the airport), including one sailing past overhead as we birded around the tennis court on our first morning at GCE, one getting dive-bombed by an American Kestrel while we enjoyed our jerk lunch in Boston, and one being harassed by a Jamaican Crow in Cockpit Country.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

PURPLE GALLINULE (*Porphyrio martinicus*) – A youngster picked its way through the tall grasses edging Blue Hole Pond, occasionally vanishing completely from view.

COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*) – A gaggle of these flashed their red shields as they chugged back and forth across the Swift River.

AMERICAN COOT (*Fulica americana*) – By far, the vast majority of the coots we saw on the island were this species, readily distinguished by the red knobs at the top of their bill shields.

CARIBBEAN COOT (*Fulica caribaea*) – Only a couple this trip: one among the American Coots on the Swift River, and another on the GCE reservoir. Taxonomists are increasingly doubtful that this taxon merits species status, so it may soon be lumped back with American Coot.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – A dozen or so stood along the graveled edge of the sea near the turnoff for GCE. [b]

SEMIPALMATED PLOVER (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) – A single bird stood on the beach near the GCE turnoff, looking small beside a handful of Black-bellied Plovers. [b]

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*) – One dropped in to Blue Hole Pond, rummaged around the mudflats for a bit, then laid down for a snooze.

Jacanidae (Jacanas)

NORTHERN JACANA (*Jacana spinosa violacea*) – A single adult poked its way along the back edge of Blue Hole Pond, occasionally flashing its yellow wings as it flew from one spot to another.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*) – Distant views of one perched on a snag sticking out of the Swift River, seen from our perch on the bridge. [b]

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*) – A couple of winter-dulled birds mingled with the Black-bellied Plovers on the beach near the GCE turnoff, and some starting to show some breeding color foraged in the mud along the coast, seen as we headed back to Montego Bay. [b]

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*) – A single bird foraged on the muddy edge of Blue Hole Pond, seen on one late afternoon's visit. [b]

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER (*Limnodromus griseus*) – A couple of birds probed a muddy channel along the coast, seen on our drive back to Montego Bay. [b]

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

LAUGHING GULL (*Leucophaeus atricilla*) – A big group roosted on a muddy island along the coast, with a few paying close attention to a nearby fisherman cleaning his catch. This is the only gull to regularly occur on the island.

ROYAL TERN (*Thalasseus maximus*) – A scattering along the coast (seen from the bus on various drives), including a small number mingling with the Laughing Gulls at a roost east of Montego Bay. They too were keeping an eye on that fish-cleaning fisherman!

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Feral flocks seen cities and towns. [I]

WHITE-CROWNED PIGEON (*Patagioenas leucocephala*) – Quite common throughout, with many birds seen in flight. That white crown is easy to spot, even at a distance.

RING-TAILED PIGEON (*Patagioenas caribaea*) – Good scope views of these -- biggest of Jamaica's pigeons -- in the Blue Mountains, where we could clearly see their distinctively banded tails and green napes. They proved equally common in the John Crow Mountains and around Vinery. [E]

COMMON GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina passerina jamaicensis*) – Scope studies of one in a tree along the road in the John Crow Mountains, showing nicely that distinctively scaly breast and head. We saw lots of others feeding on the seeds scattered on the patios at Rocklands. [E]

CRESTED QUAIL-DOVE (*Geotrygon versicolor*) – Arg! Dwayne spotted one in the road while we walked the Woodside trail, but it had walked over a rise before we could get everybody assembled. Only John was tall enough to see its head -- and it flew as soon as we tried to walk up to where we could all see it. Booooo! [E]

RUDDY QUAIL-DOVE (*Geotrygon montana*) – A few of these big, rufous pigeons (called "Partridges" by the locals) flushed off down various roads and trails in front of us throughout the tour.

CARIBBEAN DOVE (*Leptotila jamaicensis jamaicensis*) – The mournful calls of this widespread dove were a regular part of the tour soundtrack, but we never laid eyes on a singer (despite considerable effort) until we got to Rocklands our final afternoon. Then we saw plenty of these handsome doves trundling around the patios, gobbling up the seed placed for them. [E]

WHITE-WINGED DOVE (*Zenaida asiatica*) – Common and widespread, with perched and flying birds seen well.

ZENAIDA DOVE (*Zenaida aurita*) – Another common species, including one perched in a dead snag along the Ecclesdown Road that flashed its iridescent neck patch (first blue, then pink, then blue again) in the sun. The white line on the back edge of its secondaries in flight is diagnostic.

MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaida macroura*) – A scattering, particularly along the roads near GCE.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

MANGROVE CUCKOO (*Coccyzus minor*) – Those who elected to stay out a bit longer on the afternoon we visited the GCE reservoir were rewarded with scope views of a pair of calling birds near the gates into the compound.

CHESTNUT-BELLIED CUCKOO (*Coccyzus pluvialis*) – Superb views of this big cuckoo at one of our first stops in the John Crow Mountains. The croaking call of the "Old Man Bird" was a regular part of that outing's soundtrack. [E]

JAMAICAN LIZARD-CUCKOO (*Coccyzus vetula*) – Watching a pointblank bird carefully searching through every section of a big bromeliad (and the leafy debris it had captured) was a highlight of our morning on the Ecclesdown road. We saw another well in the John Crow Mountains. [E]

SMOOTH-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga ani*) – Trevor and Mary spotted some along the Ecclesdown Road (while the rest of us were walking the Woodside track looking for quail-doves). The rest of us caught up with a small group in the gardens at GCE, and some saw more at Rocklands.

Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

BARN OWL (AMERICAN) (*Tyto alba furcata*) – Pointblank views of one (looking a bit fed up with the rain) on a fence post as we left GCE in the dark on our first morning. We saw another hunting over the fields around Blue Hole Pond -- in broad daylight -- on two different days.

Strigidae (Owls)

JAMAICAN OWL (*Pseudoscops grammicus*) – Our first encounter was decidedly frustrating -- a close bird, calling repeatedly near the entrance to the GCE compound, retreated steadily further and further into the forest without giving us so much as a peek. Fortunately, thanks to Fritz, the local expert at Rocklands, we got scope studies of a snoozing bird just up the hill from Rocklands itself on our last afternoon. [E]

Nyctibiidae (Potoos)

NORTHERN POTOO (CARIBBEAN) (*Nyctibius jamaicensis jamaicensis*) – Wow! Our first encounter was good fun, watching a bird hunting from the top of a light pole near the GCE office; it repeatedly disappeared off into the darkness, only to return seconds later to the same pole. The two roosting birds we saw at Rocklands (one only yards over our heads) in broad daylight on our last afternoon were icing on the cake! Thanks, Fritz...

[E]

Apodidae (Swifts)

WHITE-COLLARED SWIFT (*Streptoprocne zonaris pallidifrons*) – Added to a number of people's "birds seen while in the swimming pool" lists, as a diffuse flock cruised over the GCE property late on the afternoon we visited the reservoir.

ANTILLEAN PALM-SWIFT (*Tachornis phoenicobia phoenicobia*) – A busy mob whirling over the Montego Bay airport's parking lot kept us entertained while we waited for everyone's flights to arrive. We saw others swirling around a densely thatched palm tree beside a church in Annato Bay. The slim, long-tailed shape of this small swift is distinctive.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

JAMAICAN MANGO (*Anthracothorax mango*) – Several of these big, dark hummingbirds entertained us well on our first soggy day at GCE, as they flitted around the flower beds or perched on convenient sticks in the garden, and a few lucky folks fed one brave bird at Rocklands. [E]

VERVAIN HUMMINGBIRD (*Mellisuga minima minima*) – Common and widespread, with wonderful views -- some from less than 8 feet away -- on our first morning at GCE, including a courting pair doing a lot of mirror head wagging (after the male did some high-flying, high-speed display dives) atop a tree near the tennis court. We also had a female sitting on her tiny, lichen-bedecked nest over the Vinery road. [E]

STREAMERTAIL (RED-BILLED) (*Trochilus polytmus polytmus*) – Many lovely views of this spectacular hummingbird, with several males seen well on the grounds of GCE, and a close perched female along the road up into the Blue Mountains -- and who will soon forget those brave birds that sat on our fingers at Rocklands?! The purring sound created by the male's streamers was heard regularly in the forests of GCE and the Blue Mountains. [E]

STREAMERTAIL (BLACK-BILLED) (*Trochilus polytmus scitulus*) – This subspecies is only found east of the Rio Grande, which is Jamaica's largest river. After some initial frustration -- darn those quick-moving birds -- we had superb views of one that perched mere yards above the Ecclesdown Road in the John Crow Mountains; it returned again and again to the same few branches after feeding or chasing other hummingbirds (and Bananaquits) away from "its" flowers. [E]

Todidae (Todies)

JAMAICAN TODY (*Todus todus*) – Is there anything cuter than a tody?! We had wonderful looks at these endearing little birds at many locations. [E]

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle alcyon*) – One peered down at the Buff Bay Valley River from a perch on some overhead wires, and another hunted from a snag along the river -- eventually catching a good-sized fish and whacking it to death on a branch.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

JAMAICAN WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes radiolatus*) – Very common across the island, with especially nice looks at several in the John Crow Mountains, seen as we searched for quail-doves. [E]

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

AMERICAN KESTREL (HISPANIOLAN) (*Falco sparverius dominicensis*) – Scattered individuals, including one dive-bombing a passing Red-tailed Hawk, seen as we enjoyed our jerk chicken and pork at the restaurant in Boston.

Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots)

BLACK-BILLED PARROT (*Amazona agilis*) – It took until our very last morning, but we finally connected with this, the less common of Jamaica's parrots, in Cockpit Country, where we found a pair feeding in a tree high above the road. With patience, we all could see the distinctive dark ear spot and dark bill (and the lack of other colors on the face) of this species. [E]

YELLOW-BILLED PARROT (*Amazona collaria*) – By far the most common of Jamaica's parrots, with noisy flocks flying overhead in the mountains and in Cockpit Country -- including a group of more than 40 over our last picnic lunch site. One lurking in mid-canopy along the Ecclesdown Road gave us our closest view. [E]

OLIVE-THROATED PARAKEET (JAMAICAN) (*Eupsittula nana nana*) – A perched bird in a Cecropia tree down the hill from the Ecclesdown Road in the John Crow Mountains was cooperative, facing us (and sitting still) until everyone had had a look in the scope. We saw others in flight throughout the tour. [E]

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

JAMAICAN ELAENIA (*Myiopagis cotta*) – A calling bird along the Coffee Walk trail at GCE proved very accommodating, repeatedly sitting in the open, where we could get it in the scope. We saw others in the Blue Mountains and Cockpit Country. That thin, dark eyeline is distinctive. [E]

JAMAICAN PEWEE (*Contopus pallidus*) – Abundant in the Blue Mountains, with pairs (and sometimes trios) regularly spaced along the road; we saw another well near the becard nest in Cockpit Country. This species is more uniformly dark than our North American pewees are. [E]

SAD FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus barbirostris*) – Jamaica's most common Myiarchus flycatcher, seen well on nearly every outing. It's also the smallest of the island's Myiarchus flycatchers. [E]

RUFOUS-TAILED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus validus*) – Great studies of one bird hopping along and carefully peering up at the underside of leaves along the Vinery road; the only way it could have been closer is if it had actually landed on somebody! This is the largest -- and rustiest -- of the island's Myiarchus flycatchers. [E]

STOLID FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus stolidus stolidus*) – Our first was sitting quietly on a branch over the track down to the GCE reservoir, conveniently close to a smaller Sad Flycatcher for good comparison -- nice spotting, John! We saw another, a bit further away, along the Vinery road. [E]

LOGGERHEAD KINGBIRD (LOGGERHEAD) (*Tyrannus caudifasciatus jamaicensis*) – Very common and widespread, with many good studies -- including the pair hunting from the chain-link fence around the tennis court at GCE. [E]

Tityridae (Tityras and Allies)

JAMAICAN BECARD (*Pachyrhamphus niger*) – After our first eluded some of the group, we had far more luck with subsequent birds, including one near a huge bag nest along the Vinery road. Interestingly, all but one of the birds we saw were males; perhaps the females were all sitting on nests! [E]

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

JAMAICAN VIREO (*Vireo modestus*) – Regular throughout, with many good views -- and even more heard than seen! [E]

BLUE MOUNTAIN VIREO (*Vireo osburni*) – One foraging right beside the road -- at eye level -- in the Blue Mountains was something of a surprise. This species can be a challenge to find, let alone get a good look at! Talk about cooperative... [E]

BLACK-WHISKERED VIREO (*Vireo altiloquus altiloquus*) – We heard quite a few this trip -- a bit surprisingly, considering that most leave the island during the winter months, and don't return until March of so. Our best views came along the Coffee Walk at GCE, where one hopped around in the canopy. [E]

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

JAMAICAN CROW (*Corvus jamaicensis*) – Particularly common in Cockpit Country, where several pairs winged past overhead, and one close bird rummaged through a bromeliad just down the hill from the road. The musical calls of this species (known locally as "Jabbering Crow") are certainly distinctive. [E]

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

CAVE SWALLOW (CARIBBEAN) (*Petrochelidon fulva poeciloma*) – A big flock swarmed over the coastline one afternoon, seen as we birded the Blue Hole Pond before heading back to the hotel. [E]

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

RUFOUS-THROATED SOLITAIRE (RUFOUS-THROATED) (*Myadestes genibarbis solitarius*) – We heard the fluting calls of this species in the mountain, but never caught up with the singers. [E*]

WHITE-EYED THRUSH (*Turdus jamaicensis*) – Great studies of one that sat for long minutes on an open branch along the Woodside track in the Blue Mountains. That combination of smoky gray back, warm brown head and white iris is pretty striking! [E]

WHITE-CHINNED THRUSH (*Turdus aurantius*) – Abundant throughout, bouncing down roadsides all across Jamaica. The local name for this species is "Hopping Dick" -- which is certainly an apt description. [E]

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus polyglottos*) – Another common and widespread species, including a pair (or maybe a trio) hanging around the tennis court at GCE.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

WORM-EATING WARBLER (*Helmitheros vermivorum*) – One picked through the dead leaves hanging in a tree along the Ecclesdown road. [b]

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia motacilla*) – We found one wagging its way along the edge of the road in the Blue Mountains. It spent much of its time out of view, but occasionally walked out into the road for short stretches, giving us quick views. Its supercilium (flared behind the eye) and warmer-colored flanks -- and its occasional calls -- helped identify it as this species rather than the more expected Northern Waterthrush. [b]

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER (*Mniotilta varia*) – Scattered birds seen crawling up tree trunks and branches. [b]

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis trichas*) – A few skulking birds seen: a male near the Blue Hole Pond, and a couple of females in marshes high in the Blue Mountains.

ARROWHEAD WARBLER (*Setophaga pharetra*) – Reasonably common in the Blue Mountains and along the Vinery road. Unlike wintering Black-and-white Warblers, which look superficially similar, this species doesn't crawl up and down trunks. And they considerably spottier underneath! [E]

AMERICAN REDSTART (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – A sizable percentage of the North American population appears to overwinter on Jamaica -- they were everywhere! [b]

CAPE MAY WARBLER (*Setophaga tigrina*) – Those who waited for the second shuttle up the Vinery hill saw a winter-dulled male flicking through some roadside trees. [b]

NORTHERN PARULA (*Setophaga americana*) – Like this redstart, this one was seen in good numbers every day. [b]

YELLOW WARBLER (GOLDEN) (*Setophaga petechia eoa*) – We heard some calling from the trees near the entrance to GCE while checking out the two ponds that bracket the entrance drive. [*]

BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER (*Setophaga caerulescens*) – A handful sprinkled throughout the tour, with both bright males and drabber females seen well. [b]

PRAIRIE WARBLER (*Setophaga discolor*) – Bright males seen flitting through the dripping trees at GCE and in the Blue Mountains. This species regularly pumps its tail. [b]

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER (*Setophaga virens*) – A couple of birds, including one bright male, flitted through a leafless tree along the Woodside road (and another tree further down the valley) in the Blue Mountains. This was a lifer for Dwayne! [b]

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

BANANAQUIT (CARIBBEAN) (*Coereba flaveola flaveola*) – Nearly ubiquitous, with dozens seen -- and even more heard. [E]

YELLOW-FACED GRASSQUIT (*Tiaris olivaceus olivaceus*) – Our first sighting was of a pair slipping through the bushes around the tennis court at GCE, but our best view came at Rocklands, where they were common in the gardens.

BLACK-FACED GRASSQUIT (*Tiaris bicolor marchii*) – A handful in the grassy middle of the Vinery track, with even better looks at one parked on the seed feeder at Rocklands -- keeping an eye on us while we waited for the Streamertails to pick a finger to sit on.

ORANGEQUIT (*Euneornis campestris*) – After struggling with our first (on a wet afternoon at GCE), we had fabulous views of several -- including a gorgeous male -- in a little coffee and banana field we walked past on our way to the Blue Mountains. [E]

GREATER ANTILLEAN BULLFINCH (*Loxigilla violacea ruficollis*) – Another species seen well in the Blue Mountains, where we found a small gang of them gorging on fruits in a fig tree. [E]

YELLOW-SHOULDERED GRASSQUIT (*Loxipasser anoxanthus*) – It took a few encounters before we found a really cooperative bird, but the male we found preening and foraging on our day in Vinery certainly qualified. We had multiple fine scope views. [E]

JAMAICAN SPINDALIS (*Spindalis nigricephala*) – Many great encounters with this handsome species in the Blue Mountains, where they glowed among the moss-bearded branches. We saw others in the John Crow Mountains and along the Ecclesdown road. [E]

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

JAMAICAN BLACKBIRD (*Nesopsar nigerrimus*) – WOW!! This is one of Jamaica's toughest endemics to find, so to get a look like we had in the John Crow Mountains -- where one rummaged through dead leaves and bromeliads for several minutes, moving steadily closer until it was in the open right over our heads -- was a real treat. [E]

GREATER ANTILLEAN GRACKLE (*Quiscalus niger crassirostris*) – Abundant in the lowlands, including many noisy birds foraging in the

bottlebrush tree visible from the GCE dining room. [E]

SHINY COWBIRD (*Molothrus bonariensis*) – A handful of birds visited the feeders at Rocklands, and one iridescent male bathed in one of the birdbaths near the porch while we fed hummingbirds nearby.

JAMAICAN ORIOLE (*Icterus leucopteryx leucopteryx*) – Common and widespread, with multiples seen (and heard) every day; we had particularly nice studies of those visiting the sugar feeders at Rocklands. This one has the obscure local name of "Auntie Katie" -- don't ask ME why! [E]

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

JAMAICAN EUPHONIA (*Euphonia jamaica*) – After our first rather frustrating encounter with a little group on the Waterfall trail (on a dark, damp day in the forest at GCE), we had superb views of a pair foraging in a little banana and coffee plantation on the road into the Blue Mountains. They seemed particularly fond of green bananas! This one is a lot more colorful than you'd expect from the picture in the field guide. [E]

MAMMALS

NORWAY (BROWN) RAT (*Rattus norvegicus*) – A couple -- one bigger, one smaller -- crept repeatedly out from among the birdbaths at Rocklands to grab a morsel of corn before retreating back into their hole. According to Fritz, they didn't have long to live! [I]

SMALL INDIAN MONGOOSE (*Herpestes auropunctatus*) – Seen most days, typically darting across the road in front of our vehicles. This species is unfortunately widespread on the island. [I]

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 103 bird taxa and 2 mammal taxa