



Field Guides Tour Report

Jamaica (Kania Private Tour) 2019

Dec 2, 2019 to Dec 8, 2019

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Jamaica. Lush vegetation, amazing birds, warm climate, good food, great people! It was "tough" waking up to sunrises like this at Green Castle but we somehow managed. Photo by guide Cory Gregory.

When compared to the Midwestern winter gloom that all of us would have faced, spending a week in Jamaica was just the respite we needed! With a warm climate, a gaudy avifauna, spicy Jamaican jerk, and a fun group of friends, this really was a great trip filled with smile-inducing memories.

As with any tour, there are things that we didn't expect. Thankfully, all the Jamaican endemics fell into place nicely and in quick fashion! Our birding on the grounds of Green Castle Estate on our first day got us off to a great start with sightings of Jamaican Lizard-Cuckoo, Vervain Hummingbird, Jamaican Spindalis, Jamaican Woodpecker, Jamaican Mango, Streamertail, and many others. And who can forget the Jamaican Owl and Northern Potoo we added in quick fashion!

We ventured east into the John Crow Mountains where we encountered a whole new subset of endemic targets like White-eyed Thrush, Black-billed and Yellow-billed parrot, Chestnut-bellied Cuckoo, Jamaican Vireo, and others. Of course, the "Black-billed" Streamertail there was a highlight as well! But when Dwayne spotted the Crested Quail-Dove, we kicked it into another gear! Seeing this "mountain witch" is notoriously difficult but we made it happen. Whew!

The following day we were lucky to explore some areas close to Green Castle that don't often get birded. In Robins Bay we found Louisiana Waterthrush and Green-rumped Parrotlets, Annotto Bay yielded Northern Jacana and a variety of uncommon shorebirds, and in the shade of the mangroves we saw the "Golden" subspecies of Yellow Warbler in fantastic fashion! That afternoon we even had time to check out the old stone tower on the GCE grounds.

The Blue Mountains contain some of the most remote and pristine forests in Jamaica and our fourth full day took us deep inside this bird-rich realm. We connected with the rare Jamaican Blackbird, White-eyed Thrush, Blue Mountain Vireo, and even glimpses of the sneaky Rufous-throated Solitaire. A quick coffee break and a chance to buy some chocolate-covered coffee beans (yum!), a picnic lunch, and before long it was time to head back to Green Castle.

We had a full day to wind our way back to Montego Bay but with a couple of key birding stops en route. At an area near Dunn's River Falls, we bushwhacked into a clearing looking for water (didn't find any) but what we found instead was even rarer! Perched atop a tree were two Plain Pigeons! Although the name doesn't inspire excitement, this was indeed a big moment; this is a very rare and tough-to-find specialty in Jamaica and it was a lifer for almost everyone including Dwayne! What luck! Closer to Montego Bay, we all took turns feeding Streamertails at the famed Rocklands Bird

Sanctuary, how cool was that! Both Jamaican Mangos and Streamertails hovered at arms reach and even perched on our fingers. Meanwhile, Caribbean Doves strolled through boldly, grassquits littered the ground, and a sneaky Ruddy Quail-Dove even made an appearance!

We spent the last evening and the following morning at The Mynt in Montego Bay, in the good hands of our host Valerie. With a beautiful dinner by candlelight in the private courtyard and a tasty hot breakfast the next morning, it was a great send-off for our group.

I want to thank all of you for joining forces and visiting Jamaica with Field Guides. Kudos to all of you for your preparedness, major thanks to Dwayne and Raymond who's expertise made it all possible, and to Sharon in our home office who worked on all the logistics. We certainly hope you enjoyed Jamaica and the many avian gems that make it such a special place.

Until next time!

Cory

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).

WEST INDIAN WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna arborea*) – Our tour got off to a great start when our driver Raymond took us to his secret spot in Discovery Bay where there were seven of these rare ducks!

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Spatula discors*) – This wintering dabbler was fairly common on bodies of water throughout the trip. The reservoir at Green Castle, a few of the rivers, and then the Montego Bay sewage lagoons all hosted this familiar duck.

NORTHERN SHOVELER (*Spatula clypeata*) – Large numbers of these big-billed dabblers had gathered at the sewage lagoons in Montego Bay.

RING-NECKED DUCK (*Aythya collaris*) – This *Aythya* species is typically the most common of that genus in Jamaica during the winter months. We tallied them at the reservoir at Green Castle Estate and the Spanish River Bridge.

RUDDY DUCK (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) – There were at least five of these at the reservoir at Green Castle but those were the only ones we saw until the Montego Bay sewage lagoons towards the end of the trip.

Podicipedidae (Grebes).

LEAST GREBE (*Tachybaptus dominicus*) – This small and dark-colored grebe was tallied on our first day in Discovery Bay, at the reservoir at Green Castle, and the Swift River Bridge.

PIED-BILLED GREBE (*Podilymbus podiceps*) – Our only sighting of this familiar grebe was from the Swift River Bridge.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves).

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Common in urban areas. [I]

WHITE-CROWNED PIGEON (*Patagioenas leucocephala*) – This chunky, dark pigeon was actually fairly common throughout our time in Jamaica, especially in the lowlands where we saw them in treetops and in flight.

PLAIN PIGEON (*Patagioenas inornata*) – This sighting took the cake for the most unexpected lifer! A duo of these were perched atop a tree near Dunn's River Falls. Thanks to Raymond who spotted them, we all got scope views of these before they eventually flew off. A notoriously tricky species to find anywhere in Jamaica, this pigeon was a lifer for nearly everyone including Dwayne!

RING-TAILED PIGEON (*Patagioenas caribaea*) – An endemic of Jamaica, this big pigeon was most often seen at higher elevations such as Ecclesdown Road and in the Blue Mountains. [E]

COMMON GROUND DOVE (*Columbina passerina jamaicensis*) – Fairly common around Montego Bay including at the Mynt and Rocklands Bird Sanctuary.

CRESTED QUAIL-DOVE (*Geotrygon versicolor*) – Arguably the toughest of the Jamaican endemics to see, the "Mountain Witch" was certainly seen on this tour, twice! Dwayne found a bird along Ecclesdown Road that stayed long enough for everyone to get a scope view. Then lightning struck again a couple days later when one popped up and landed out in the open for a few seconds. [E]

RUDDY QUAIL-DOVE (*Geotrygon montana*) – Although probably common, this ground-loving species is fairly secretive which makes finding them problematic. However, one strolled through during our time at Rocklands Bird Sanctuary which was great!

CARIBBEAN DOVE (*Leptotila jamaicensis jamaicensis*) – This regional specialty fell into place nicely at Rocklands Bird Sanctuary where they were common.

WHITE-WINGED DOVE (*Zenaida asiatica*) – Fairly common around Montego Bay, these provided good looks right from the Mynt.

ZENADA DOVE (*Zenaida aurita*) – A common species in Jamaica, this species is in the *Zenaida* genus which makes it easy to remember! Although somewhat similar to Mourning Dove, these are slightly more plump with a shorter tail and more white in the wings.

MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaida macroura*) – This familiar species was tallied on our final full day as we ventured back to Montego Bay.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos).

SMOOTH-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga ani*) – These long-tailed black birds were seen several times, always in or around overgrown grassy fields.

MANGROVE CUCKOO (*Coccyzus minor*) – Although we can't be sure if they were different birds, a couple of these were seen on the day we birded on the grounds of Green Castle Estate.

CHESTNUT-BELLIED CUCKOO (*Coccyzus pluvialis*) – A major thanks goes to Raymond for spotting this hard-to-see endemic during our morning along Ecclesdown Road! Despite the rain, we all got good scope views of this large specialty before it climbed some branches and went out of view. [E]

JAMAICAN LIZARD-CUCKOO (*Coccyzus vetula*) – This is the other special, endemic cuckoo found in Jamaica. This flashy species made the Top 3 for a lot of folks and for good reason! We encountered a couple on the grounds of Green Castle on our first full day of birding. [E]

Nyctibiidae (Potoos).

NORTHERN POTOO (CARIBBEAN) (*Nyctibius jamaicensis jamaicensis*) – Although our first views of this nightbird was the eyeshine way off in the dark, we caught up to one properly the next day when we all enjoyed views of a dayroosting bird right up the road from our cabins!

Apodidae (Swifts).

WHITE-COLLARED SWIFT (*Streptoprocne zonaris pallidifrons*) – Noticeably larger than the following species, this tropical swift was seen soaring overhead a couple of times including a flock of 40+ at Green Castle Estate.

ANTILLEAN PALM-SWIFT (*Tachornis phoenicobia phoenicobia*) – Small, slender, and swift indeed! This regional specialty was seen numerous times but most often in the lowlands. This species is typically found only in Cuba, Hispaniola, and Jamaica.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds).

JAMAICAN MANGO (*Anthracothorax mango*) – We enjoyed lots of looks at this endemic hummingbird right from the patio at the Green Castle Estate. Quite a colorful and showy mango too! [E]

VERVAIN HUMMINGBIRD (*Mellisuga minima minima*) – Found only in Jamaica and on Hispaniola, this specialty in the 2nd smallest species of bird in the world. We had looks numerous times including our first morning at Green Castle where they were feeding at flowers behind some of our rooms.

STREAMERTAIL (RED-BILLED) (*Trochilus polytmus polytmus*) – This long-tailed hummingbird is surely one of the most iconic and flashy birds in all of Jamaica! The red-billed subspecies (or species depending on what nomenclature you follow) is present in much of the country and we had them commonly right on the grounds of the Green Castle Estate. [E]

STREAMERTAIL (BLACK-BILLED) (*Trochilus polytmus scitulus*) – This endemic has an even smaller range than the "Red-billed" Streamertail and is found only on the eastern tip of Jamaica. We encountered them in the John Crow Mountains along Ecclesdown Road. [E]

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots).

COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*) – Fairly common in a variety of wetlands and ponds throughout the trip.

AMERICAN COOT (*Fulica americana*) – Actually less numerous than the gallinules but still regular at places like the Green Castle reservoir and other wetlands.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets).

BLACK-NECKED STILT (*Himantopus mexicanus*) – This lanky, black-and-white shorebird was fairly common in the right habitat and we encountered them at places like the Green Castle Estate reservoir.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings).

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – We had to go to the shoreline before we saw this big wintering plover. We encountered it along the beach near the Wag Water River Bridge.

SEMPALMATED PLOVER (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) – Like the previous species, the only spot we found this smaller plover was the beach on our 4th day.

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*) – This noisy plover isn't as common here as what we're used to from farther north. Still, we encountered them a few times including in Discovery Bay on our first day.

Jacaniidae (Jacanas).

NORTHERN JACANA (*Jacana spinosa violacea*) – This long-toed denizen of wetlands is a common resident through much of the neotropics from Panama northward. In the Caribbean, they're found only in Cuba, Hispaniola, and Jamaica. We encountered ours in a small wetland along the beach on our 4th day.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies).

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*) – A couple of these shorebirds were seen foraging along the rocky shoreline near Green Castle Estate one morning. At this time of year, they don't have their bright colors.

SANDERLING (*Calidris alba*) – Perched atop some wooden pilings, these pale wintering shorebirds were seen just the once, near Annotto Bay.

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*) – A fairly common shorebird for us, this tiny species of peep was tallied from Discovery Bay, Green Castle Estate, the Salt Marsh ponds, and the Montego Bay Sewage Lagoon.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*) – One of our most common shorebirds of the trip, this tail-bobbing species was seen just about anywhere other shorebirds were seen.

SOLITARY SANDPIPER (*Tringa solitaria*) – A rather uncommon shorebird in Jamaica, this small *Tringa* was feeding along the back edge of the Green Castle Estate reservoir during our visit.

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – Only one was seen, a lone bird at the Spanish River Bridge.

WILLET (*Tringa semipalmata*) – The views weren't great but we did successfully find one of these large shorebirds at the Salt Marsh ponds on our last full day.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*) – This dainty *Tringa* was seen on both ends of our tour; day one in Discovery Bay and then our final day at the Montego Bay Sewage Lagoon.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers).

LAUGHING GULL (*Leucophaeus atricilla*) – Our only gull on the tour, these were common anywhere along the ocean shoreline.

ROYAL TERN (*Thalasseus maximus*) – Our only tern of the trip, these too were common along the shoreline.

Fregatidae (Frigatebirds).

MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD (*Fregata magnificens*) – When you're soaking up the sun on a tropical beach in the Caribbean, this is a species that you almost expect to see gliding overhead! So it was for us, these were common along the shorelines throughout our stay.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans).

BROWN PELICAN (SOUTHERN) (*Pelecanus occidentalis occidentalis*) – Although a different subspecies from the Brown Pelicans you might have seen back in the US, these were still familiar to us and we tallied them most days along the shoreline.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns).

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – The Spanish River Bridge was the only spot we found this big, familiar heron.

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – The largest of the white egrets, these were fairly common in the right habitat throughout our stay.

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*) – A smaller, more slender egret, these were also common in wetlands, rivers, and ponds.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*) – Perhaps our most common heron of the trip! These were seen nearly every day and in a variety of wet habitats.

TRICOLORED HERON (*Egretta tricolor*) – This slender, uncommon heron was tallied twice; first from the Wag Water River Bridge beach area and again on our final full day as we drove westward.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – This is a small white egret and they were seen several times in grassy fields alongside cattle and horses.

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*) – Up to three of these small, quiet herons were seen from the Swift River Bridge.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – We managed to see both species of night-herons! This one was tallied from the Swift River Bridge.

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nyctanassa violacea*) – There was a flock of these sitting in a tree near the Swift River Bridge (watch your head!) and then another at the Spanish River Bridge.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

GLOSSY IBIS (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – This is the same species of ibis from the eastern/southeastern US. We found them a couple of times including at the Spanish River Bridge and then again from the Montego Bay Sewage Ponds.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*) – Common and tallied everyday. Known locally as the "John Crow" bird.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

RED-TAILED HAWK (JAMAICENSIS) (*Buteo jamaicensis jamaicensis*) – Note the subspecies, the hawks we saw in Jamaica were the nominate subspecies of this very widespread Buteo! We managed several great looks including at Green Castle Estate, Robins Bay, and a duo at Dunn's River Falls.

Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

BARN OWL (AMERICAN) (*Tyto alba furcata*) – One of these ghostly owls flushed from the side of the road early one morning but just a couple lucky folks saw it.

Strigidae (Owls)

JAMAICAN OWL (*Pseudoscops grammicus*) – On our very first night at Green Castle we took a nocturnal hike deep into the Jamaican forests. It took a little work but we were eventually rewarded with looks at this hard-to-see endemic specialty! What a start to the trip! [E]

Todidae (Todies)

JAMAICAN TODY (*Todus todus*) – This bright little jewel of a bird showed up here and there throughout our Jamaican birding adventure and several picked it as a Top 3 bird. It belongs to a family of five tody species and they're all endemic to various Caribbean islands. [E]

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle alcyon*) – If you spend enough time around water, you're sure to eventually see this fish-eating species in Jamaica. We tallied them on three of our days.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER (*Sphyrapicus varius*) – This wintering woodpecker is rare in Jamaica but we managed to find one at Green Castle Estate on our first morning of birding!

JAMAICAN WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes radiolatus*) – Woodpeckers are easy to identify in Jamaica... there's really just one common species! This attractive endemic was seen numerous times throughout our stay including every full day we were there. A close relative of the Red-bellied Woodpecker from farther north, you might have recognized the sounds of this bird without knowing it! [E]

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*) – These crazy-looking kestrels were fairly common including at The Mynt on our final morning. Interestingly, these might be a mix of Cuban, Hispaniolan, and northern birds.

Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots)

BLACK-BILLED PARROT (*Amazona agilis*) – Of the two endemic parrots in Jamaica, this one is usually the rarer of the two and can be hard to find. However, we had good luck along Ecclesdown Road in the John Crow Mountains. [E]

YELLOW-BILLED PARROT (*Amazona collaria*) – Like the previous species, this parrot is only found in Jamaica. Ecclesdown Road seemed to be the spot this year and we had numbers of both kinds there. With any kind of proper view, it wasn't hard to tell these apart even in flight; the yellow bill and blush on the neck really stood out. [E]

GREEN-RUMPED PARROTLET (*Forpus passerinus*) – Native to northern South America, this tiny species has become firmly established here in Jamaica. We saw some in Robins Bay during our morning walk along the coast. [I]

OLIVE-THROATED PARAKEET (JAMAICAN) (*Eupsittula nana nana*) – Note the taxonomy, this is the nominate (and native) subspecies of this fairly common parakeet. Who knows, maybe they'll be split someday into different species.

Tityridae (Tityras and Allies)

JAMAICAN BECARD (*Pachyrhamphus niger*) – Of all the Caribbean Islands, Jamaica is the only one with a becard! This all-dark endemic was spotted on the grounds of the Green Castle Estate during our first full day of birding. [E]

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

JAMAICAN ELAENIA (*Myiopagis cotta*) – Jamaica also has an endemic elaenia, this one with bold wingbars and a faint eyeline. Green Castle Estate is a good place to find this species and we did just that on our first full day. [E]

GREATER ANTILLEAN ELAENIA (JAMAICAN) (*Elaenia fallax fallax*) – This elaenia is very hard to find in Jamaica away from the breeding season but we managed to briefly find one in the Blue Mountains. It didn't stick around for long though and only a few lucky folks caught a glimpse.

This species is found only in Jamaica and on the island of Hispaniola.

JAMAICAN PEWEE (*Contopus pallidus*) – The Blue Mountains is a reliable place for this quiet flycatcher and that's where we saw ours. In terms of behavior and coloration, this pewee fits in with all the other *Contopus* pewees. [E]

SAD FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus barbirostris*) – There are three species of *Myiarchus* flycatchers in Jamaica and we saw all of them. This one, the smallest and most common of the three, is endemic to Jamaica. We saw these in a variety of forested habitats including several at Green Castle and Ecclesdown Road. [E]

RUFIOUS-TAILED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus validus*) – This big and endemic *Myiarchus* was easy to identify based on the boldly bicolored bill with the pale base, as well as a lot of rufous in the wings and tail. We encountered this species in forested habitats at Green Castle, Ecclesdown Road, and Dunn's River Falls. [E]

STOLID FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus stolidus stolidus*) – Although this species isn't endemic to Jamaica, the subspecies is. Worldwide, Stolid Flycatchers are found only in Jamaica and on the island of Hispaniola. Our only encounter was with a curious one near the reservoir at Green Castle Estate.

LOGGERHEAD KINGBIRD (LOGGERHEAD) (*Tyrannus caudifasciatus jamaicensis*) – This kingbird was common and tallied every day. From a distance, they may have reminded you of Eastern Kingbird from farther north.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis).

BLUE MOUNTAIN VIREO (*Vireo osburni*) – Jamaica hosts two different endemic vireos and this one is the harder-to-find member. We found ours in, well, the Blue Mountains of course! These can be tricky to get a good look at but we all eventually saw it well. [E]

JAMAICAN VIREO (*Vireo modestus*) – This vireo, with wingbars and a pale eye, was actually fairly common. However, seeing them was the trickier part. We had our best luck at Green Castle Estate on our first full day, Robins Bay, and then up in the Blue Mountains. [E]

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies).

JAMAICAN CROW (*Corvus jamaicensis*) – Sometimes tough endemics do weird things and aren't tough at all! For example, we stumbled into this distinctive specialty on our first day without even trying.... twice! We also had them again at Dunn's River Falls. [E]

Hirundinidae (Swallows).

CAVE SWALLOW (CARIBBEAN) (*Petrochelidon fulva poeciloma*) – There were good numbers of these swallows overhead in the lowlands but it was tough to see them well enough to make out the pertinent details.

Sturnidae (Starlings).

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) – This introduced species was seen a few times in Montego Bay. [I]

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers).

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus polyglottos*) – A rather familiar species for most of us, this mimic was common and tallied every day.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies).

RUFIOUS-THROATED SOLITAIRE (RUFIOUS-THROATED) (*Myadestes genibarbis solitarius*) – This is a beautiful regional specialty with a simple but pretty song. Although tough to see well, a couple of these put in appearances in the Blue Mountains where we scoped them.

WHITE-EYED THRUSH (*Turdus jamaicensis*) – For this tour, this Jamaican endemic made us work a little. This is an underrated thrush that's found mostly in the mountains, such as the Blue Mountains, which is where we found ours. [E]

WHITE-CHINNED THRUSH (*Turdus aurantius*) – The "Hopping Dick", as it's known locally, was actually fairly common although never exceedingly bold. This Jamaican endemic was tallied about every day. [E]

Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies).

SCALY-BREADED MUNIA (*Lonchura punctulata*) – This introduced species has been established in Jamaica for some time now. We stumbled into one in Discovery Bay at one of our first stops of the tour. [I]

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies).

JAMAICAN EUPHONIA (*Euphonia jamaica*) – Jamaica is special and has an endemic species of euphonia. This one is interesting; it's colored very uniformly which bucks the trend of other euphonias. We ended up with numerous encounters including some eating fruit right in front of the Green Castle Estate main building. [E]

Spindalidae (Spindalises).

JAMAICAN SPINDALIS (*Spindalis nigricephala*) – A gorgeous Jamaican endemic, this black-and-orange species was formerly part of the Stripe-headed Tanager complex before it was split out and renamed. [E]

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies).

JAMAICAN ORIOLE (*Icterus leucopteryx leucopteryx*) – This regional specialty was fairly common and tallied most days. The "Auntie Katie" bird, as it's sometimes called locally, isn't actually endemic to Jamaica, it's also found on a distant Colombian island.

JAMAICAN BLACKBIRD (*Nesopsar nigerrimus*) – Of all the Jamaican endemics, this one might be the most range-restricted and rarest. With a vast majority of sightings coming from the Blue Mountains, which is where we saw ours, the world range of this specialty is extremely small! [E]

SHINY COWBIRD (*Molothrus bonariensis*) – This native cowbird was spotted on our first morning on the grounds of the Green Castle Estate. Turns out, that would be our only one of the trip.

GREATER ANTILLEAN GRACKLE (*Quiscalus niger crassirostris*) – This grackle actually has a shorter tail than a lot of the grackle species. We encountered these right off the bat on our first day and ended up tallying them daily. This species is essentially found only in Cuba, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, and on Hispaniola.

Parulidae (New World Warblers).

OVENBIRD (*Seiurus aurocapilla*) – This wintering warbler was seen several times which is noteworthy for this uncommon and quiet species. Often, they were seen walking on the trails or road edges ahead of us.

WORM-EATING WARBLER (*Helmitheros vermivorum*) – This is another wintering species that is always a treat to see! We encountered this stripe-headed warbler on the grounds at Green Castle on our first morning.

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia motacilla*) – We don't often get to see this rare wintering warbler on these tours but we did manage to find one in a creek-bed near the coast in Robins Bay.

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – At least one of these came in to check us out when we were looking at the Yellow Warblers in the mangroves near the shore.

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER (*Mniotilta varia*) – A distinctive and fairly common species during our trip. These are choosing to spend their winters in Jamaica which doesn't sound half bad!

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis trichas*) – It wasn't until our final full day, at Dunn's River Falls, that we heard (and glimpsed) this wintering warbler in the thick vegetation that they like so much.

ARROWHEAD WARBLER (*Setophaga pharetra*) – This fancy warbler is a nonmigratory resident of Jamaica which is the only island it's found on! High on our target list, this species showed up at places like Ecclesdown Road and in the Blue Mountains. [E]

HOODED WARBLER (*Setophaga citrina*) – This attractive wintering warbler is quite uncommon in Jamaica and has been seen on only a couple of our tours there. For us, we had glimpses of one along Ecclesdown Road in the John Crow Mountains.

AMERICAN REDSTART (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – This familiar warbler was perhaps the most common of the warblers on our trip.

CAPE MAY WARBLER (*Setophaga tigrina*) – Not a particularly abundant wintering warbler in Jamaica, these were spotted only a couple of times at Green Castle Estate and Ecclesdown Road.

NORTHERN PARULA (*Setophaga americana*) – This tiny but stocky warbler was one of the more common woodland species we encountered. Jamaica sits right in the middle of their wintering range.

MAGNOLIA WARBLER (*Setophaga magnolia*) – A couple of folks got a glimpse of this rare wintering warbler right on the grounds of Green Castle Estate.

YELLOW WARBLER (GOLDEN) (*Setophaga petechia eoa*) – We couldn't have gotten a better look at this beauty in the mangroves near the shoreline at Green Castle. This subspecies is widespread and resident throughout most of the Caribbean.

BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER (*Setophaga caerulea*) – This is a beautiful wintering species and we all enjoyed repeated looks throughout the tour. Jamaica is in the core of the wintering range of this migrant.

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (*Setophaga coronata*) – A few folks saw a bird that they described as this species, a very rare bird in Jamaica in December and one of just a few records from the coast at that time of year.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER (*Setophaga dominica*) – We were at Bamboo Beach when one of these very attractive warblers came in to check us out. This species isn't very common in Jamaica and is certainly not seen on a majority of our trips.

PRAIRIE WARBLER (*Setophaga discolor*) – Tallied on about half of our days, this is another fairly widespread warbler that we saw repeatedly at Green Castle Estate.

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

BANANAQUIT (GREATER ANTILLEAN) (*Coereba flaveola flaveola*) – A tiny but colorful species that ended up being quite common, especially in flowering trees and bushes.

YELLOW-FACED GRASSQUIT (*Tiaris olivacea olivacea*) – Our best looks at this small, ground-loving species came from the Rocklands Bird Sanctuary where they were coming to feed on the seed.

ORANGEQUIT (*Euneornis campestris*) – This Jamaican endemic is a curious study; it's the sole member of its genus. It's a nice-looking bird too; the males with that distinct orange chin patch. We had numerous sightings of these including some really close views from Rocklands Bird Sanctuary. [E]

GREATER ANTILLEAN BULLFINCH (*Melopyrrha violacea ruficollis*) – This red-faced regional endemic turned up a time or two, mostly at Green Castle and Ecclesdown Road.

YELLOW-SHOULDERED GRASSQUIT (*Loxipasser anoxanthus*) – Of all the grassquits on our tour, this one was the specialty of the bunch, an endemic to Jamaica. Most of us got repeated looks but there were times when these guys would just not sit still! We saw them at Green Castle on our first day, up in the Blue Mountains, and again at Dunn's River Falls. [E]

BLACK-FACED GRASSQUIT (*Melanospiza bicolor marchii*) – Our best looks at this plainly-marked grassquit came from the Blue Mountains and Rocklands Bird Sanctuary.

MAMMALS

SMALL INDIAN MONGOOSE (*Herpestes auropunctatus*) – We actually encountered quite a few of these introduced animals including a little group of them in Discovery Bay on our first day. Sadly, these take a biological toll on the native wildlife in Jamaica. [I]

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 118 bird taxa and 1 mammal taxa