

## Trip Report — Puerto Rico I 2026

February 8-14, 2026 with Cory Gregory



The Puerto Rican Euphonia is hands-down one of the most-attractive Puerto Rican endemic birds. They don't always behave like this but we were lucky and had a stellar show by this male. Photo by guide Cory Gregory.

Puerto Rico, while still one of the Greater Antilles, is a relatively small island but one that is rich with birdlife. In fact, it's home to 18 species of birds found nowhere else in the world. That fact, and the obvious point that it's a warm, lush, tropical paradise perfect for an escape from the northern winter, made it a perfect destination for us. Of course, we tried our best not to be too distracted by the lovely weather and Caribbean food; we were after some special endemic birds too! But, could we find all of them? Well, by the end of our short trip, I'm happy to report that we swept all the endemics and had good and repeated views of all of them! In fact, we nearly hit 110 species

which is very respectable for such a short trip to this small island. Here is a quick summary of where we went and what we saw.



The only widespread owl in Puerto Rico is the aptly named Puerto Rican Owl. We had this magnificent individual not far from our hotel one night! Photo by participant Pete Ferrera.

We started by leaving San Juan under the cover of darkness and driving to Rio Abajo to the west. Our first morning of birding was definitely fun, lifers were coming at us from left and right! Even before we got away from our yummy picnic breakfast, we were hearing Puerto Rican Owls, seeing Puerto Rican Lizard-Cuckoos, Puerto Rican Orioles, Puerto Rican Todies, Puerto Rican Vireos, and more. Of course, one of the big highlights from this spot was seeing one of the rarest parrots in the world, the Puerto Rican Amazon! Success! After lunch at the Puerto Rican specialty El Meson, we visited the northern shore of the island and, despite the rain, enjoyed numerous White-tailed Tropicbirds as they spun around, wheeling back and forth over the ocean. We continued our drive down and around the western side of the island, stopping again at an oceanside birding spot where we added Brown Booby, distant American Oystercatchers, many Magnificent Frigatebirds and Royal Terns, and even some White-winged Parakeets nearby. We capped off the day by arriving to our lovely oceanside hotel in La Parguera.



Always one of the favorites, the Puerto Rican Lizard-Cuckoo is a flashy, albeit sneaky, endemic found only in Puerto Rico. We had a number of looks of this lanky cuckoo. Photo by participant Pete Ferrera.

The next morning, we slowly drove up the mountains, hoping to see some of the high-elevation endemics. However, we were met with very strong winds and rain! We tried our best at Maricao and ended up seeing a few things like Green Mango, Puerto Rican Spindalis, some brief looks at Elfin-woods Warbler, and glimpses of Puerto Rican Bullfinch. We tried our luck at a nearby roadside and enjoyed Puerto Rican Woodpecker, Puerto Rican

Bullfinch, Black-faced Grassquit, and others. We then stopped at the stone tower but the wind and rain pushed us out of there too. We tried one last roadside stop on the way down, this one providing good looks at Elfin-woods Warbler, finally. But the wind pushed us out of the mountains, and we retreated for lunch and a leisurely afternoon in La Parguera. That afternoon we took a walk along the mangroves and scored a very tame pair of Clapper Rails as well as good looks at Mangrove Yellow Warbler, the newly-elevated species. A few Yellow-shouldered Blackbirds flew by, a Northern Waterthrush skulked around the mangroves, and we found a yard that had 80 Bananaquits in it! Woah. By then, it was about time to call it a night.



Here's our group birding in the highlands near Maricao, probably looking for Elfin-woods Warbler. Photo by participant Brian Bock.

The next morning, we couldn't even get to our cafe for breakfast before seeing a tree full of Yellow-shouldered Blackbirds, one of the rarest

endemics on the island! The day was off to a good start. After breakfast, we ventured up to Laguna Cartagena and took a leisurely stroll down the levee there. We added Least Bittern, Common Ground Dove, Northern Red Bishop, Mangrove Cuckoo, and we even heard Sora and Limpkin. The dinosaur-like Smooth-billed Anis were out in force as well. Later that morning we visited some feeders that were hosting Yellow-shouldered Blackbirds, getting yet more looks at this rare endemic. After a lovely lunch at an oceanside restaurant, we took a stroll down the road at Cabo Rojo. We added White-cheeked Pintail, Puerto Rican Mango (finally both a male and female), and a great variety of shorebirds like Black-necked Stilt, Black-bellied Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Lesser Yellowlegs, Stilt Sandpiper, and many peeps like Least and Semipalmated sandpiper. Just down the road, we finally found our first Caribbean Elaenia as well as another Puerto Rican Mango. After a siesta during the hottest part of the day, we ventured to a nearby canyon after dusk and enjoyed yet another rare endemic, the Puerto Rican Nightjar. Not only did we see eyeshine and see them flying around, but we also enjoyed prolonged looks at one perched. However, maybe the weirdest sighting was a Puerto Rican Woodpecker clinging, asleep, to a telephone pole. Strange!



Although not endemic to Puerto Rico, the Green-throated Carib is still a great-looking, regional specialty. Photo by participant Pete Ferrera.

Our final morning in the southwest corner of the island involved us returning to the higher elevation forests to take care of some species we didn't see on the first, windy visit. Thankfully, the weather on this visit was beautiful and we immediately scored stunning views of a male Puerto Rican Euphonia and finally proper looks at Puerto Rican Tanager. We also enjoyed Puerto Rican Lizard-Cuckoo here, as well as a collection of warblers like Black-throated Blue, Black-and-white, and Northern Parula. But before long, it was time to head east and, after lunch, we stopped at some flowering trees hoping to see some hummingbirds. We were not disappointed! More than ten hummers were zooming around blossoms; the Antillean Crested Hummingbirds with their spiky head plumes and the handsome Green-throated Caribs put on quite a show! After departing, we made our way up to Villa Borinquen but the Plain Pigeons were a no-show. That evening, however, we ventured out

and had a stunning Puerto Rican Owl, point blank! What a cap to a fun day of birding!



A peculiar endemic we encountered is the Puerto Rican Tanager. Not the flashiest of tanagers but a specialty nonetheless. Photo by guide Cory Gregory.

Our last full day on the island started with a leisurely breakfast at the hotel and then departure for the eastern coast. We stopped and added some shorebirds at Punta Santiago (and a whole lot of monkeys!), saw some Caribbean Martins overhead in Ceiba, and then made our way to Medio de Mundo y Daguao. We enjoyed our leisurely walk out through the forest, stopping to enjoy Adelaide's Warblers point-blank, more Caribbean Elaenias, and even some Mangrove Cuckoos. Farther out, amongst the mangroves, we caught sight of some very distant American Flamingos, a few shorebirds, and a smattering of herons like Yellow-crowned Night-Heron. After lunch, we enjoyed the mountains of Puerto Rico one last time when we ventured up into El Yunque National Park. We had a specific mission and we were eventually successful in finding some more Puerto Rican Emeralds as well as

see the Puerto Rican Oriole once more. But all good things must come to an end and it was time to head back to the hotel for our final dinner together.



One of the most range-restricted nightjars in the world, the Puerto Rican Nightjar was high on our target list. Participant Pete Ferrera both spotted the bird perched and managed this photo.

As a whole, this was a really good trip, you were a great group, I enjoyed myself, and I hope all of you made some good memories of birding in Puerto Rico! Although the weather threw some wind and rain at us, we persevered and cleaned up all the endemics very nicely! Thanks to each of you for signing up and making this Caribbean Island birding adventure happen. We at Field Guides are thankful for this chance and we look forward to seeing you again on another trip!



What a lovely view from our hotel! A true Caribbean respite from the winter blues. Photo by guide Cory Gregory.

### **Some of the other critters we saw on tour:**

**Rhesus Macaque** (*Macaca mulatta*) - Perhaps not the wildest, but Monkey Island sure had a bunch!

**Green Iguana** (*Iguana iguana*) - These were all over some places. I think we counted 15 in one yard?

**Puerto Rican Bush Anole** (*Anolis pulchellus*) - Seen on a fence near Aguirre.

**Puerto Rican Racer** (*Borikenophis portoricensis*) - The sunning snake up in the mountains looks to be this species.

**Central Antillean Slider** (*Trachemys stejnegeri*) - Seen and photographed at Laguna Cartagena.

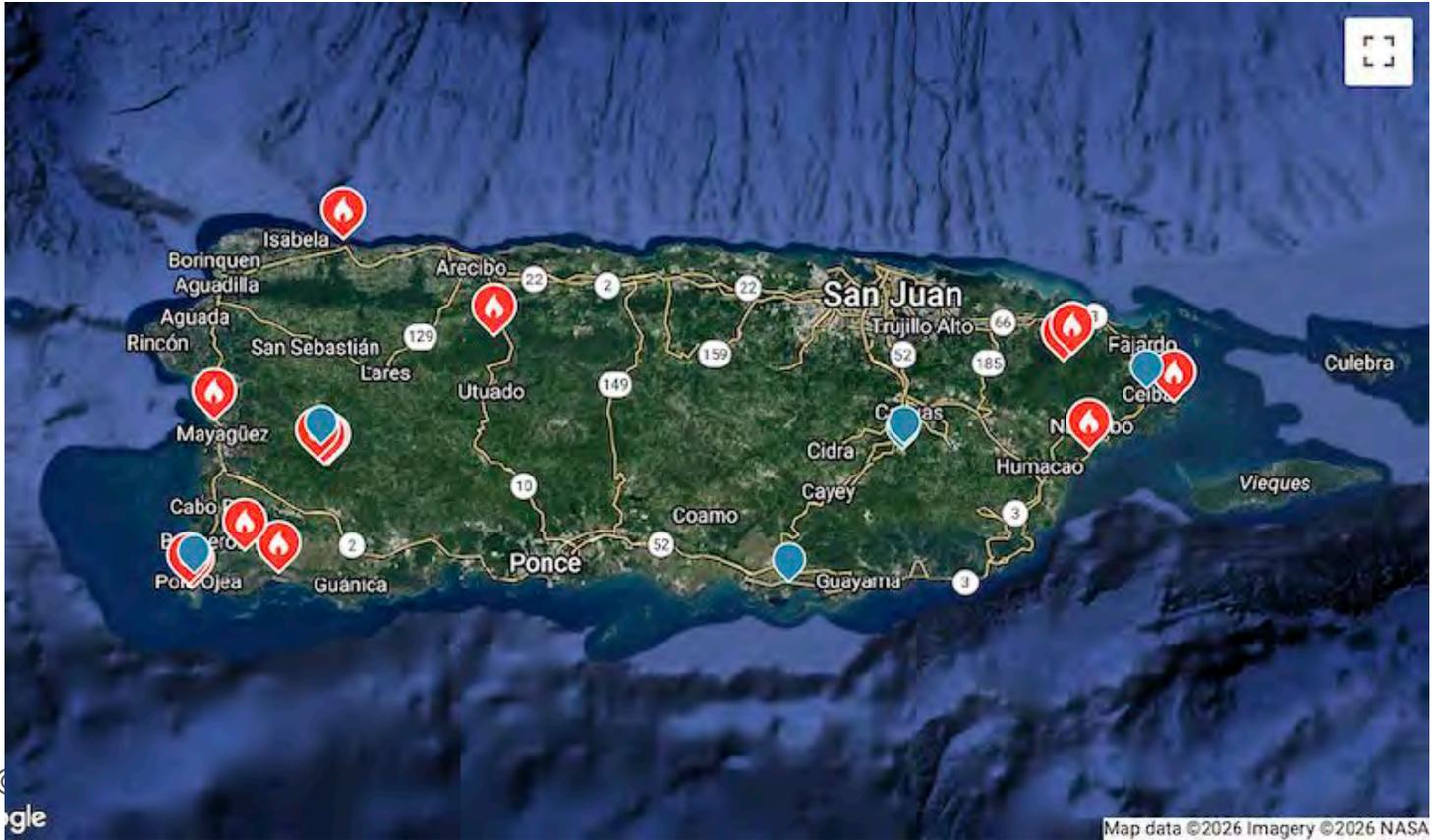
**Puerto Rican Tree Snail** (*Caracolus caracolla*) - Fairly common.

You can see my complete trip report on eBird at this link: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/478913>

-- Cory Gregory (Curlew)

# Field Guides Birding Tours -- PUERTO RICO I, 2026 (with Cory Gregory)

9 – 14 Feb 2026 (6 days) Link-only



## Puerto Rico

Arecibo | Cabo Rojo | Caguas | Ceiba | Humacao | Lajas | Maricao | Mayagüez | Quebradillas | Río Grande | Sabana Grande | Salinas | San Germán

Cory Gregory



For a narrative summary of this tour, including a Field Guides photo gallery and additional media for this trip...



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## Species Observed

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45	<b>White-cheeked Pintail</b> <i>Anas bahamensis</i>	 1
30	<b>Lesser Scaup</b> <i>Aythya affinis</i>	 1
32	<b>Rock Pigeon</b> <i>Columba livia</i> *	 5
44	<b>Scaly-naped Pigeon</b> <i>Patagioenas squamosa</i>	 8
1	<b>White-crowned Pigeon</b> <i>Patagioenas leucocephala</i>	 1
17	<b>Eurasian Collared-Dove</b> <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i> *	 5
1	<b>African Collared-Dove</b> <i>Streptopelia roseogrisea</i> *	 1
15	<b>Common Ground Dove</b> <i>Columbina passerina</i>	 3
1	<b>Key West Quail-Dove</b> <i>Geotrygon chrysis</i>	 1
24	<b>White-winged Dove</b> <i>Zenaida asiatica</i>	 8
12	<b>Zenaida Dove</b> <i>Zenaida aurita</i>	 5
5	<b>Mourning Dove</b> <i>Zenaida macroura</i>	 2
12	<b>Smooth-billed Ani</b> <i>Crotophaga ani</i>	 4
8	<b>Mangrove Cuckoo</b> <i>Coccyzus minor</i>	 4
5	<b>Puerto Rican Lizard-Cuckoo</b> <i>Coccyzus vieilloti</i>	 2
9	<b>Puerto Rican Nightjar</b> <i>Antrostomus noctitherus</i>	 1
4	<b>Puerto Rican Mango</b> <i>Anthracothorax aurulentus</i>	 2
3	<b>Green Mango</b> <i>Anthracothorax viridis</i>	 2
5	<b>Green-throated Carib</b> <i>Eulampis holosericeus</i>	 2
3	<b>Puerto Rican Emerald</b> <i>Riccordia maugaeus</i>	 2
8	<b>Antillean Crested Hummingbird</b> <i>Orthorhyncus cristatus</i>	 1

8	<b>Clapper Rail</b> <i>Rallus crepitans</i>	▶  3
4	<b>Sora</b> <i>Porzana carolina</i>	▶  1
1	<b>Common Gallinule</b> <i>Gallinula galeata</i>	▶  1
4	<b>Purple Gallinule</b> <i>Porphyrio martinica</i>	▶  1
2	<b>Limpkin</b> <i>Aramus guarauna</i>	▶  1
40	<b>Black-necked Stilt</b> <i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>	▶  2
2	<b>American Oystercatcher</b> <i>Haematopus palliatus</i>	▶  1
37	<b>Black-bellied Plover</b> <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	▶  5
2	<b>Killdeer</b> <i>Charadrius vociferus</i>	▶  1
14	<b>Semipalmated Plover</b> <i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>	▶  2
1	<b>Hudsonian Whimbrel</b> <i>Numenius hudsonicus</i>	▶  1
1	<b>Spotted Sandpiper</b> <i>Actitis macularius</i>	▶  1
13	<b>Lesser Yellowlegs</b> <i>Tringa flavipes</i>	▶  2
3	<b>Greater Yellowlegs</b> <i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>	▶  2
5	<b>Ruddy Turnstone</b> <i>Arenaria interpres</i>	▶  2
70	<b>Stilt Sandpiper</b> <i>Calidris himantopus</i>	▶  1
2	<b>Sanderling</b> <i>Calidris alba</i>	▶  1
30	<b>Least Sandpiper</b> <i>Calidris minutilla</i>	▶  1
5	<b>Western Sandpiper</b> <i>Calidris mauri</i>	▶  1
100	<b>Semipalmated Sandpiper</b> <i>Calidris pusilla</i>	▶  1
1	<b>American Herring Gull</b> <i>Larus smithsonianus</i>	▶  1
15	<b>Sandwich Tern</b> <i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>	▶  3
51	<b>Royal Tern</b> <i>Thalasseus maximus</i>	▶  3
2	<b>American Flamingo</b> <i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>	▶  1

5	<b>White-tailed Tropicbird</b> <i>Phaethon lepturus</i>	▶ 1
15	<b>Magnificent Frigatebird</b> <i>Fregata magnificens</i>	▶ 4
1	<b>Brown Booby</b> <i>Sula leucogaster</i>	▶ 1
6	<b>Least Bittern</b> <i>Botaurus exilis</i>	▶ 1
9	<b>Yellow-crowned Night Heron</b> <i>Nyctanassa violacea</i>	▶ 2
1	<b>Little Blue Heron</b> <i>Egretta caerulea</i>	▶ 1
1	<b>Tricolored Heron</b> <i>Egretta tricolor</i>	▶ 1
5	<b>Snowy Egret</b> <i>Egretta thula</i>	▶ 2
1	<b>Green Heron</b> <i>Butorides virescens</i>	▶ 1
8	<b>Western Cattle-Egret</b> <i>Ardea ibis</i>	▶ 2
16	<b>Great Egret</b> <i>Ardea alba</i>	▶ 5
1	<b>Great Blue Heron</b> <i>Ardea herodias</i>	▶ 1
22	<b>Brown Pelican</b> <i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>	▶ 5
29	<b>Turkey Vulture</b> <i>Cathartes aura</i>	▶ 7
1	<b>Osprey</b> <i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	▶ 1
2	<b>Broad-winged Hawk</b> <i>Buteo platypterus</i>	▶ 1
3	<b>Red-tailed Hawk</b> <i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	▶ 2
5	<b>Puerto Rican Owl</b> <i>Gymnasio nudipes</i>	▶ 2
11	<b>Puerto Rican Tody</b> <i>Todus mexicanus</i>	▶ 4
2	<b>Belted Kingfisher</b> <i>Megaceryle alcyon</i>	▶ 2
15	<b>Puerto Rican Woodpecker</b> <i>Melanerpes portoricensis</i>	▶ 10
4	<b>American Kestrel</b> <i>Falco sparverius</i>	▶ 3
1	<b>Merlin</b> <i>Falco columbarius</i>	▶ 1

11	<b>Monk Parakeet</b> <i>Myiopsitta monachus</i> *	▶ 3
20	<b>White-winged Parakeet</b> <i>Brotogeris versicolurus</i> *	▶ 1
7	<b>Caribbean Elaenia</b> <i>Elaenia martinica</i>	▶ 2
2	<b>Lesser Antillean Pewee</b> <i>Contopus latirostris</i>	▶ 1
5	<b>Puerto Rican Flycatcher</b> <i>Myiarchus antillarum</i>	▶ 3
30	<b>Gray Kingbird</b> <i>Tyrannus dominicensis</i>	▶ 10
5	<b>Loggerhead Kingbird</b> <i>Tyrannus caudifasciatus</i>	▶ 3
1	<b>White-eyed Vireo</b> <i>Vireo griseus</i>	▶ 1
6	<b>Puerto Rican Vireo</b> <i>Vireo latimeri</i>	▶ 3
12	<b>Black-whiskered Vireo</b> <i>Vireo altiloquus</i>	▶ 4
3	<b>Caribbean Martin</b> <i>Progne dominicensis</i>	▶ 2
186	<b>Cave Swallow</b> <i>Petrochelidon fulva</i>	▶ 2
8	<b>Pearly-eyed Thrasher</b> <i>Margarops fuscatus</i>	▶ 5
1	<b>Northern Mockingbird</b> <i>Mimus polyglottos</i>	▶ 1
9	<b>Eastern Red-legged Thrush</b> <i>Turdus ardosiaceus</i>	▶ 5
2	<b>Northern Red Bishop</b> <i>Euplectes franciscanus</i> *	▶ 1
8	<b>House Sparrow</b> <i>Passer domesticus</i> *	▶ 3
2	<b>Puerto Rican Euphonia</b> <i>Chlorophonia sclateri</i>	▶ 2
4	<b>Puerto Rican Tanager</b> <i>Nesospingus speculiferus</i>	▶ 3
4	<b>Puerto Rican Spindalis</b> <i>Spindalis portoricensis</i>	▶ 4
5	<b>Puerto Rican Oriole</b> <i>Icterus portoricensis</i>	▶ 3
7	<b>Venezuelan Troupial</b> <i>Icterus icterus</i> *	▶ 4
33	<b>Yellow-shouldered Blackbird</b> <i>Agelaius xanthomus</i>	▶ 3

1	<b>Shiny Cowbird</b> <i>Molothrus bonariensis</i>	▶  1
91	<b>Greater Antillean Grackle</b> <i>Quiscalus niger</i>	▶  9
2	<b>Northern Waterthrush</b> <i>Parkesia noveboracensis</i>	▶  2
2	<b>Black-and-white Warbler</b> <i>Mniotilta varia</i>	▶  2
1	<b>Common Yellowthroat</b> <i>Geothlypis trichas</i>	▶  1
4	<b>Elfin-woods Warbler</b> <i>Setophaga angelae</i>	▶  2
6	<b>Northern Parula</b> <i>Setophaga americana</i>	▶  4
5	<b>Mangrove Yellow Warbler</b> <i>Setophaga petechia</i>	▶  2
1	<b>Black-throated Blue Warbler</b> <i>Setophaga caerulescens</i>	▶  1
6	<b>Prairie Warbler</b> <i>Setophaga discolor</i>	▶  3
10	<b>Adelaide's Warbler</b> <i>Setophaga adelaidae</i>	▶  4
132	<b>Bananaquit</b> <i>Coereba flaveola</i>	▶  13
4	<b>Yellow-faced Grassquit</b> <i>Tiaris olivaceus</i>	▶  1
11	<b>Puerto Rican Bullfinch</b> <i>Melopyrrha portoricensis</i>	▶  4
7	<b>Black-faced Grassquit</b> <i>Melanospiza bicolor</i>	▶  4
<b>ADDITIONAL TAXA</b>		
2	hummingbird sp. <i>Trochilidae</i> sp.	▶  2