



Field Guides Tour Report

HOLIDAY MEXICO: YUCATAN & COZUMEL 2017

Nov 18, 2017 to Nov 27, 2017

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For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).



Our tour to the Yucatan was rich in both amazing birds and amazing Mayan ruins. From up high, the panoramic view of Uxmal was one of soaring hawks, quiet vistas, and rich human history. Photo by guide Cory Gregory.

We had a lot to be thankful for on such a fun tour of Cozumel and the Yucatan Peninsula. We enjoyed an array of colorful and fascinating birds, awesome Mayan cultural sites, gorgeous scenery, and even some good Mexican cuisine. The weather was great, the birding was superb (~230 species worth!), and the group was downright fun.

We got started in Cozumel where our hotel could hardly be closer to the scenic beachside vista. Magnificent Frigatebirds glided overhead and the gardens were full of gnatcatchers and warblers! The birding on our first day led us south of town where it didn't take long at all to start seeing Black Catbirds, a gorgeous male Western Spindalis, Rufous-browed Peppershrikes, Cozumel and Yucatan vireos, and a variety of warblers like Swainson's, Worm-eating, and even an Ovenbird taking a stroll. Later in the day, we tracked down more specialties like the island endemic Cozumel Emerald and some Rose-throated Tanagers.

Our second day found us birding Cozumel for one more morning and so we made the best of it by exploring the north side of the island where we found the critically endangered (and cute!) Pygmy Raccoons. But wait, there were birds to see too! We stalked a skulky Ruddy Crake, enjoyed a couple of subspecies of Yellow Warblers, and enjoyed a few shorebirds on the beach. After taking the ferry across to the mainland, we continued where we left off and birded our way south towards Felipe Carrillo Puerto. New birds came fast and furious like the colorful Gray-throated Chat, a perched Crane Hawk, Yucatan Jays, and our first Barred Antshrikes.

We got started the next morning at some very birdy stops south of town where we were submersed in hummingbirds, 5 species of woodcreepers, and even some cool flycatchers like the Stub-tailed Spadebill. Overhead, we caught glimpses of a calling Ornate Hawk-Eagle, a pair of Collared Aracaris swooped into a nearby tree, and we found flocks of Brown and Green jays.

The next morning, we drove to the little town of Cobá where we had breakfast in town, walked down to the lake, and continued to add on to our list. Yellow-winged Tanagers were common, both Black-headed and Grayish saltators were found, a few Limpkins looked on, and we even caught a glimpse of a Least Bittern. We birded our way to our hotel at Chichén Itzá where we found the gaudy Lesson's and Turquoise-browed motmots, Yellow-lored Parrots, and lots of the vividly-orange Altamira Orioles.

This tour had the added bonus of being in a part of the world with a very fascinating human history aspect. We were lucky to visit the world-famous Mayan ruins at Chichén Itzá and the quieter ruins of Uxmal. Overhead, Bat Falcons and a Zone-tailed Hawk kept an eye on us while we enjoyed repeat views of Masked Tityras and Yellow-lored Parrots. Some of us even witnessed the light show, after dark, where the ruins were shrouded in a variety of lights, music, and story-telling.

The birding the next day continued to be outstanding. We found ourselves at the Campeche Road where we saw a Gartered Trogon overhead, a Canivet's Emerald nicely perched, our first Yucatan Flycatcher swooped in, and White-bellied Wrens skulked through the thick brush. Even the ruins at Uxmal gave us a few firsts like Yellow-rumped Warbler, Cave Swallows, and a Great Black Hawk.

It was time to make our way towards Celestún but we birded a few spots nearby first including an excellent morning outing where we were face-to-face with a perched Collared Forest-Falcon, multiple Lesser Roadrunners came out of the woodwork, we played tag with a male Blue Bunting, and the Boat-billed Flycatchers harassed a Roadside Hawk. Closer to Celestún, we even found a flock of Ocellated Turkeys foraging in a roadside pasture! That

evening, we spent a scenic hour or two birding in the coastal scrub and enjoying our first White-lored Gnatcatchers and the Mexican endemic Yucatan Wrens and Mexican Sheartails. We even found Lesser Nighthawks and a Common Pauraque as we approached our hotel in the fading light.

Birding in Celestún for our final day was yet again filled with brand new sights and sounds, beachside meals, and different habitats. We heard a sneaky Black-throated Bobwhite calling, a Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture swooped past, and even some Common Tody-Flycatchers darted back and forth through the scrub. One of the highlights of the tour was a boat ride we took on the Ría Celestún where a flock of 100+ American Flamingos materialized right front of us! What's more, it was awesome learning more about these colorful giants from our own flamingo expert, Alex! The boat trip gave us access to a whole new variety of birds too including American Pygmy Kingfisher, Bare-throated Tiger-Heron, and an island full of perched Magnificent Frigatebirds, cormorants, and herons. Even as we departed Celestún, one final birding stop aligned us with the mangrove specialist Rufous-necked Wood-Rail and the mostly-nocturnal Boat-billed Heron! What a way to end a fun week of birding!

Chris and I want to thank you for helping to make this trip a lot of fun! We certainly enjoyed sharing the fun birding with all of you and we sincerely hope to see you on another tour in the future! A major shout out goes to Alex, expert birder and driver, for his hard work and excellent job in all things logistics. Also thanks to Juan for his great driving, willingness to help out, and his behind-the-scenes assistance. On behalf of us with Field Guides, we thank you again.

Until next time, good birding!

- 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

Tinamidae (Tinamous)

THICKET TINAMOU (*Crypturellus cinnamomeus*) – Tinamous are tricky to see! We heard this species a couple of times on our 3rd day of the tour, mostly along the Camino Laguna Ocom and Camino Vigia Chico. [*]

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – These big and distinctive ducks flew by us as we were birding the Campeche Road one afternoon. We would go on to see more flying by the following day along the Camino San Simon.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Anas discors*) – This wintering species was seen a couple of times near Celestún, especially in the roadside marshes that we stopped at.

LESSER SCAUP (*Aythya affinis*) – These diving ducks were first spotted on Laguna Cobá and some of us saw another flock during our boat trip out of Celestún.

Cracidae (Guans, Chachalacas, and Curassows)

PLAIN CHACHALACA (*Ortalis vetula*) – In the end, I think we all had good looks at this denizen of thick brush (and we certainly all heard them!). A couple were seen nicely near Celestún including one perched up high in the full morning light.

Odontophoridae (New World Quail)

BLACK-THROATED BOBWHITE (*Colinus nigrogularis*) – This secretive species was heard near Celestún but we never managed to see one. [*]

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

OCELLATED TURKEY (*Meleagris ocellata*) – We got really lucky when we found a flock of these on a roadside en route to Celestún! This Yucatan specialty is considered near-threatened due to hunting and habitat alterations.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

LEAST GREBE (*Tachybaptus dominicus*) – A family group of these was making a racket in a mangrove wetland on Cozumel.

PIED-BILLED GREBE (*Podilymbus podiceps*) – This familiar grebe was seen well at Laguna Cobá.

Phoenicopteridae (Flamingos)

AMERICAN FLAMINGO (*Phoenicopterus ruber*) – Wow, what a show! We took a boat trip in Celestún and managed to see a flock of 100+ of these vibrant and fascinating birds. It was an added treat learning more about these from Alex, a veritable flamingo expert!

Ciconiidae (Storks)

WOOD STORK (*Mycteria americana*) – It was a quick look as one of these flew over at the Ocellated Turkey spot near Celestún.

Fregatidae (Frigatebirds)

MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD (*Fregata magnificens*) – Fairly common in coastal regions throughout the trip, although we especially enjoyed seeing all ages near the colony during our boat trip in Celestún.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – Although seen several times on the tour, the first looks came from Laguna Cobá where one was drying off.

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) – We had good looks at this familiar cormorant during our boat trip out of Celestún.

Anhingaidae (Anhingas)

ANHINGA (*Anhinga anhinga*) – Laguna Cobá was hosting one of these on our 4th day of the tour.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) – Our only sighting came from the boat trip out of Celestún where a couple were seen swimming on the Ria Celestún.

BROWN PELICAN (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) – Abundant in coastal habitats.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

LEAST BITTERN (*Ixobrychus exilis*) – One of the more secretive herons, this diminutive species was seen skulking in the reeds below us at Laguna Cobá.

BARE-THROATED TIGER-HERON (*Tigrisoma mexicanum*) – During our boat trip out of Celestún, we stopped at a freshwater spring area. Along the boardwalk there, a couple of tiger-heron youngsters posed nicely!

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – Tall and regal-looking, they were a common scene in wetland habitats throughout the trip.

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – Our first one was a flyby at our lunch spot on Cozumel. They remained common in wetland habitats throughout the trip.

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*) – Although less numerous than the previous species, this yellow-footed heron was fairly common in marshy and wetland habitats.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*) – The all-white youngsters and dark adults were seen on our boat trip out of Celestún.

TRICOLORED HERON (*Egretta tricolor*) – This slender heron was another we saw in the Celestún area.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Staying true to their name, this little egret was seen around cattle (and horses) several times.

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*) – We spotted this small heron a couple of times including at Laguna Cobá where it kept company of some Limpkins.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – Good spotting by Judy! One of these was tucked way back in a tree at the Boat-billed Heron spot.

BOAT-BILLED HERON (*Cochlearius cochlearius*) – What an odd-looking bird! We had scope views of this big-eyed (mostly nocturnal) heron at a mangrove-loaded roadside near Celestún.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

WHITE IBIS (*Eudocimus albus*) – A couple of these were sprinkled throughout our roadside marsh stops in Celestún as well as on our boat trip.

ROSEATE SPOONBILL (*Platalea ajaja*) – If it has "roseate" in the name, it's probably an attractive bird! We saw a few of these, including some from the boat ride in Celestún.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*) – A very common species overhead. It was eerie seeing them perched atop some of the ruins as well.

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*) – Abundant throughout the trip.

LESSER YELLOW-HEADED VULTURE (*Cathartes burrovianus*) – It wasn't until we reached the Celestún area that we saw a couple of these.

Compared to the previous species, they are said to be darker in plumage, show more white in the primary shafts (from above), and they tend to fly closer to the ground. Either way, we had some nice looks once or twice!

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – This fish-eating specialist was seen on half of our days, often around water. We even got to see one diving after a fish during our boat trip in Celestún.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

GRAY-HEADED KITE (*Leptodon cayanensis*) – A few folks got a quick glimpse of one of these flying over the road at Camino San Simon. However, it didn't stick around for long.

ORNATE HAWK-EAGLE (*Spizaetus ornatus*) – We tracked down the call notes to this very high, soaring raptor at Camino Laguna Ocom.

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK (*Accipiter striatus*) – A high-soaring accipiter near Celestún turned out to be this species.

CRANE HAWK (*Geranospiza caerulescens*) – We got lucky with one perched along the Camino Faro Vigia Chico. This was en route to Felipe Carrillo Puerto on our 2nd day of birding.

COMMON BLACK HAWK (*Buteogallus anthracinus*) – It wasn't until we started birding the mangroves around Celestún that we found this species. One was seen from the boat trip and another above the Boat-billed Heron spot.

GREAT BLACK HAWK (*Buteogallus urubitinga*) – One was seen soaring high above the ruins at Uxmal.

ROADSIDE HAWK (*Rupornis magnirostris*) – Remember the macho bird with the dainty whistle/scream? One of these hawks flew across the road a couple of times (and even got harassed by some flycatchers).

GRAY HAWK (*Buteo plagiatus*) – The far-carrying calls of this species was as close as we got. [*]

SHORT-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo brachyurus*) – Judy spotted our first one at the Camino Vigia Chico as we approached Felipe Carrillo Puerto. All the birds we saw were light-morphs.

ZONE-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo albonotatus*) – This vulture look-alike was seen soaring over a couple of times on tour. Our first sighting was of one above a cenote at Chichén Itzá.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

RUDDY CRAKE (*Laterallus ruber*) – We played hide-and-seek with this secretive species in the roadside marshes at the north end of Cozumel.

RUFOS-NECKED WOOD-RAIL (*Aramides axillaris*) – At one of our last stops on the tour, we managed to get glimpses of this species darting back and forth through the mangroves. Of all the wood-rails, this one is especially known to be a mangrove specialist.

RUSSET-NAPED WOOD-RAIL (*Aramides albibentris*) – Who can forget seeing this wood-rail perched on a wood rail! Our only sighting came from the hike at Camino Laguna Ocom south of Felipe Carrillo Puerto.

SORA (*Porzana carolina*) – We heard one of these rails at the north end of Cozumel while trying to see the Ruddy Crake. [*]

COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*) – We had this species on our first day of the tour on Cozumel but none after.

AMERICAN COOT (*Fulica americana*) – This familiar species was spotted on our final day of the tour near Celestún.

Aramidae (Limpkin)

LIMPKIN (*Aramus guarauna*) – Laguna Cobá had at least 3 of these posing point-blank.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-NECKED STILT (*Himantopus mexicanus*) – The Celestún area was a good place to find these lanky waders; we saw some in the roadside marshes just right in town.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – Although they didn't have any black on their bellies at this season, it didn't stop us from taking a look at this large, migrant plover. We had them on Cozumel as well as Celestún.

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*) – One of these noisy plovers flew past us at Laguna Cobá.

Jacaniidae (Jacanas)

NORTHERN JACANA (*Jacana spinosa*) – The bird at Laguna Cobá gave us the best looks although there was a brief one on Cozumel as well.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*) – A fairly common shorebird during our time on Cozumel. Once or twice, we even saw one on the sidewalk near the beach!

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*) – There were a few of these tiny peeps working some flooded mangroves near the north tip of Cozumel. Turns out, those were our only ones of the trip.

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER (*Limnodromus griseus*) – Tucked way in the back of a roadside wetland in Celestún, a few of these chunky shorebirds were foraging. Although a fairly long-billed shorebird, the "short" in the name is relative to other dowitchers.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*) – We had a few in the Celestún area including one that gave us a great look at its distinctive flight behavior as it darted away.

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – We chanced into a few of these in some of the lagoons near Celestún but they were never abundant.

WILLET (*Tringa semipalmata*) – A large relative of the yellowlegs, this shorebird was seen taking a snooze on a boat at the north end of Cozumel.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*) – The dainty cousin of the Greater Yellowlegs, this slender shorebird was seen once near Celestún in a lagoon north of town.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

LAUGHING GULL (*Leucophaeus atricilla*) – Abundant in seashore habitats on Cozumel and again in Celestún.

ROYAL TERN (*Thalasseus maximus*) – We saw our first ones on Cozumel and even from our lunch table!

SANDWICH TERN (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) – First seen on Cozumel at lunch on Day 1. We'd go on to see more in the Celestún area as well.

BLACK SKIMMER (*Rynchops niger*) – We were cutting it close, but we had one fly by during lunch on our final day of tour!

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

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

SCALED PIGEON (*Patagioenas speciosa*) – A quick flyby was all we managed at the Camino Laguna Ocom. This species, found more to the south, isn't one we often see on this tour.

WHITE-CROWNED PIGEON (*Patagioenas leucocephala*) – We had amazing scope views of this sometimes-secretive species on our first morning outing on Cozumel.

RED-BILLED PIGEON (*Patagioenas flavirostris*) – Fairly common in the inland regions of the Yucatan. We had good looks at this large and dark pigeon near Chichén Itzá and Uxmal.

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE (*Streptopelia decaocto*) – Quite common throughout the tour. [II]

COMMON GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina passerina*) – Ironically, this species was not as common as the following ground-dove. We spotted a few of these tiny guys at Camino San Simon towards the end of our tour.

RUDDY GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina talpacoti*) – A common and widespread species in urban areas throughout the tour.

WHITE-TIPPED DOVE (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – Heard much more often than seen, it wasn't uncommon to hear the soft, low whistles of this sometimes-secretive species.

CARIBBEAN DOVE (*Leptotila jamaicensis*) – We heard this species along the road to Roberto's on our first morning in Cozumel. However, it remained unseen. [*]

WHITE-WINGED DOVE (*Zenaida asiatica*) – Common and widespread during much of the tour. Interestingly, we didn't see this species until our 4th day of birding.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

SMOOTH-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga ani*) – Our best looks came from the north end of Cozumel on our 2nd day of birding.

GROOVE-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*) – We saw this species of ani far more than the previous one. In fact, we tallied Groove-billed Anis on all but one day.

LESSER ROADRUNNER (*Geococcyx velox*) – Wow, we were truly lucky to see this cuckoo so well! It wasn't until we were leaving Camino San Simon that they started coming out of the woodwork. We ended up finding 3 of these including some that posed point-blank next to the van. For good reason, this species was chosen as a tour favorite by several folks!

SQUIRREL CUCKOO (*Piaya cayana*) – We had good luck with this large and flashy cuckoo in the lush forests near Felipe Carrillo Puerto. Camino Laguna Ocom and Camino Vigia Chico were both good spots as well.

MANGROVE CUCKOO (*Coccyzus minor*) – This mangrove specialist was spotted on Day 1 on Cozumel, near the road to El Cedral.

Strigidae (Owls)

VERMICULATED SCREECH-OWL (GUATEMALAN) (*Megascops guatemalae thompsoni*) – We came SO close to seeing this ghost of a bird but it slipped away at the last second. In fact, we heard at least two of these along the Camino San Simon. [*]

GREAT HORNED OWL (*Bubo virginianus*) – This huge owl was heard hooting in the late afternoon (and the next morning) near the hotel at Chichén Itzá. [*]

FERRUGINOUS PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium brasilianum*) – This widespread tropical species was seen well many times during the 2nd half of the tour.

MOTTLED OWL (*Ciccaba virgata*) – We had given up for the evening, but right as we were getting back into the vans, one of these starting hooting! We ended up seeing another the following day roosting in a cave.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

LESSER NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles acutipennis*) – A few of these were flying around at dusk as we approached the Hotel Xixim.

COMMON PAURAUQUE (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) – One of these large nightjars was perched motionless in the road as we approached Hotel Xixim north of Celestún.

Apodidae (Swifts)

VAUX'S SWIFT (*Chaetura vauxi*) – It didn't take long to see this small species once we arrived in Cozumel; there were many overhead on a daily basis.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

MEXICAN SHEARTAIL (*Doricha eliza*) – We had good luck with this Mexican endemic once we arrived in Celestún including several close looks at females. [E]

COZUMEL EMERALD (*Chlorostilbon forficatus*) – They were quick and often didn't stay in view for long, but these island endemics were eventually seen pretty well on our first morning of birding Cozumel. We even saw a male perched a couple of times near the road to Roberto's. [E]

CANIVET'S EMERALD (*Chlorostilbon canivetii*) – This emerald is closely related to the previous species (and they were once treated as the same species). We had several nice looks at Canivet's including at the Campeche Road and Camino San Simon.

WEDGE-TAILED SABREWING (*Campylopterus curvipennis*) – Only a few were seen but most of us caught up with them at Camino Laguna Ocom, Camino Vigia Chico, and the Spider Monkey Sanctuary.

WHITE-BELLIED EMERALD (*Amazilia candida*) – Like the previous species, we saw this hummer only a few times at places like Camino Vigia Chico and the Spider Monkey Sanctuary. The red bill really stood out, even from directly below the bird.

BUFF-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia yucatanensis*) – This was a fairly common hummingbird once we were on mainland. And yes, this is the same species that reaches south Texas.

CINNAMON HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia rutila*) – Sporting a very distinctive cinnamon breast, this hummer was seen mostly on the second half of the trip. We had very good looks in the scrubby countryside near Celestún, for example.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

BLACK-HEADED TROGON (*Trogon melanocephalus*) – This attractive trogon was seen well, even through scopes, at Punta Laguna (the Spider Monkey Sanctuary).

GARTERED TROGON (*Trogon caligatus*) – Smaller than the previous species, this trogon was once in a complex under the name Violaceous Trogon. We saw (and heard) these along the Campeche Road.

Momotidae (Motmots)

LESSON'S MOTMOT (*Momotus lessonii exiguus*) – It's hard to go wrong with motmots and we had awesome looks at this species outside of our hotel at Chichén Itzá. This is one of the 6 resulting species from the Blue-crowned Motmot split.

TURQUOISE-BROWED MOTMOT (*Eumomota superciliosa*) – This gorgeous species, even in comparison to other motmots, was seen well on several days including at Chichén Itzá and Celestún. This species is only found between the Yucatan and northern Costa Rica.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

RINGED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle torquata*) – We were surprised to find one of these flying over Laguna Cobá.

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle alcyon*) – This was our most common kingfisher on tour and we saw one at Laguna Cobá and a few other places as well.

AMERICAN PYGMY KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle aenea*) – Truly, a very small bird! This cute, tropical kingfisher was seen at the freshwater spring area on our Celestún boat trip.

Ramphastidae (Toucans)

COLLARED ARACARI (*Pteroglossus torquatus*) – We were at Camino Laguna Ocom south of Felipe Carrillo Puerto when we saw 2 of these small toucans fly into a treetop. Turns out, those would be our only ones of the trip.

KEEL-BILLED TOUCAN (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*) – Although we distantly heard this species calling at Camino Laguna Ocom, it never came out into view. [*]

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

YUCATAN WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes pygmaeus*) – This small woodpecker was a specialty species that we saw quite well on our first morning birding Cozumel Island. The subspecies on Cozumel is darker in the face than the birds on mainland.

GOLDEN-FRONTED WOODPECKER (VELASQUEZ'S) (*Melanerpes aurifrons dubius*) – A common species once we left Cozumel and found ourselves on mainland. The subspecies we saw (*M. a. dubius*) looks very different from other Golden-fronted Woodpeckers.

LADDER-BACKED WOODPECKER (*Picoides scalaris*) – This species is fond of the dry scrub around Celestún and it wasn't until late in the tour that we found this small, barred-backed woodpecker.

LINEATED WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus lineatus*) – We were at the ruins of Uxmal when we briefly saw one of these large woodpeckers swoop through. We also saw at pair at Camino Laguna Ocom earlier in the trip.

PALE-BILLED WOODPECKER (*Campephilus guatemalensis*) – This is a large and attractive woodpecker that we got to see perched while birding along the Camino Vigia Chico.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

COLLARED FOREST-FALCON (*Micrastur semitorquatus*) – After only hearing this secretive species several times, we were beginning to lose hope in seeing one. And then, along the Camino San Simon, lightning struck as one of these swooped out right in front of us and proceeded to land IN VIEW. Scope views were had by all!

CRESTED CARACARA (*Caracara cheriway*) – One of these actually found us as we birded along the coast north of Celestún.

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*) – We didn't see many of these little falcons but we did pause for one on a power line late in the tour.

MERLIN (*Falco columbarius*) – One of these zoomed overhead while we were at the ballcourts of the Chichén Itzá ruins.

BAT FALCON (*Falco ruficularis*) – At times, we couldn't decide between looking at the Chichén Itzá ruins vs. watching the Bat Falcons darting overhead! We even got to see one peeking out of a hole in one of the buildings.

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – Although they're one of the fastest birds on the planet, I don't think we saw ours move a muscle! One was perched high on a radio tower near Celestún.

Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots)

WHITE-FRONTED PARROT (*Amazona albifrons*) – We had gorgeous looks at these one morning outside of the Chichén Itzá ruins where they were perched on treetops in the morning sun.

YELLOW-LORED PARROT (*Amazona xantholora*) – This species, sometimes called Yucatan Parrot, was seen in flight many times including in Cobá. Although similar to the previous species, this parrot has a diagnostic narrow, red leading edge to the inner wing that can be seen in flight.

OLIVE-THROATED PARAKEET (*Eupsittula nana*) – Although we first heard them as they screeched overhead, we eventually saw some perched nicely from the road to Roberto's on Cozumel.

Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)

BARRED ANTSHRIKE (*Thamnophilus doliatus*) – It was fairly easy to hear this species but a lot harder to see! Still, we all managed looks at both males and females several times including a nice male near Celestún.

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)

OLIVACEOUS WOODCREEPER (GRAYISH) (*Sittasomus griseicapillus gracileus*) – Remember to keep notes on where you see this species, there may actually be several yet-to-be-described species involved. We had nice looks at this short-billed woodcreeper at Camino Laguna Ocom and the Campeche Road.

RUDDY WOODCREEPER (*Dendrocincla homochroa*) – This woodcreeper, seen at Camino Laguna Ocom, was fairly distinctive for having bare skin in the lores.

TAWNY-WINGED WOODCREEPER (*Dendrocincla anabatina*) – We saw this species also at Camino Laguna Ocom near one of the ant swarms.

IVORY-BILLED WOODCREEPER (*Xiphorhynchus flavigaster*) – This slender-billed woodcreeper was our most common and we had views at Camino Laguna Ocom and the Campeche Road.

STREAK-HEADED WOODCREEPER (*Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*) – A great bird for this far north, this surprise find showed up near the antswarm at Camino Laguna Ocom.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

NORTHERN BEARDLESS-TYRANULET (*Camptostoma imberbe*) – The distinctive calls of this species often gave its presence away. We eventually pulled one into view on the road to Roberto's on Cozumel. We went on to see a few more later in the trip too.

CARIBBEAN ELAENIA (*Elaenia martinica*) – This somewhat-drab flycatcher put on a great show from the road to Alberto's on Cozumel.

SEPIA-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Leptopogon amaurocephalus*) – A few folks got a quick look at Punta Laguna, the Spider Monkey Sanctuary. Most of us managed to at least hear it. Turns out, that would be our only one.

NORTHERN BENTBILL (*Oncostoma cinereigulare*) – Camino Laguna Ocom was the only spot we came across this bird. However, we never could quite get a glimpse of it. [*]

COMMON TODY-FLYCATCHER (*Todirostrum cinereum*) – A nice surprise find in the scrubby habitat near Celestún.

YELLOW-OLIVE FLYCATCHER (GRAY-HEADED) (*Tolmomyias sulphurescens cinereiceps*) – This is another species to pay attention to where you saw them; there might be several species involved. We found them a few times near Felipe Carrillo Puerto and then again outside of our hotel at Chichén Itzá.

STUB-TAILED SPADEBILL (*Platyrinchus cancrominus*) – This tiny and short-tailed flycatcher came into view, finally, after much work. Our sightings at Camino Laguna Ocom were our only ones of the trip.

EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE (*Contopus virens*) – This late migrant was spotted on our second day of birding at Camino Faro Vigia Chico. In fact, it was singing some soft song segments as well.

TROPICAL PEWEE (*Contopus cinereus*) – Fairly common, this pewee was heard and seen several times once we got to the mainland.

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax flaviventris*) – We bumped into this wintering species just a few times but it was never abundant.

LEAST FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax minimus*) – This empid was the most-commonly seen of the trip, especially in brushy habitats.

VERMILION FLYCATCHER (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) – It was hard to miss these fireballs in the Celestún area!

BRIGHT-RUMPED ATTILA (*Attila spadiceus*) – We chanced into this fierce-looking flycatcher several times on our first morning on Cozumel including nice looks in the abandoned subdivision.

YUCATAN FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus yucatanensis*) – It took a few days to track one down but we eventually had excellent looks at this myiarchus along the Campeche Road.

DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) – The mournful call notes were usually what gave this species away. We finally got looks at one in the freshwater spring area on our boat ride.

GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus crinitus*) – "Wheep!" This call note rang out from Camino Laguna Ocom but we never saw the culprit. [*]

GREAT KISKADEE (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) – A classic species of the American tropics, this vocal flycatcher was seen nearly every day.

BOAT-BILLED FLYCATCHER (*Megarynchus pitangua*) – Once you learn the calls of this species, they become a lot more common! We heard or saw this large flycatcher nearly every day including some that were harassing a Roadside Hawk.

SOCIAL FLYCATCHER (*Myiozetetes similis*) – This "miniature kiskadee" turned out to be abundant and we tallied them nearly every day.

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – A common and widespread species throughout the tour.

COUCH'S KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus couchii*) – Once we made it to the mainland, this species became more and more common. Although this species is quite similar to Tropical Kingbird, the calls are very different.

Tityridae (Tityras and Allies)

MASKED TITYRA (*Tityra semifasciata*) – Although never abundant, these mostly-white treetop-dwellers were spotted a few times on tour.

NORTHERN SCHIFFORNIS (*Schiffornis veraepacis*) – One of these dull-plumaged birds did a few laps around us at Camino Laguna Ocom. This species, along with 4 others, was once considered to be one species known as the Thrush-like Schiffornis.

ROSE-THROATED BECARD (*Pachyramphus aglaiae*) – Spotted just a couple of times on the mainland, some of the views we had were of males sporting their rose-colored throats.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

RUFIOUS-BROWED PEPPERSHRIKE (*Cyclarhis gujanensis*) – We had decent luck with this large vireo and we managed looks several times on the mainland. Still, it's a tough bird to see and we heard it more often than we saw it.

RUFIOUS-BROWED PEPPERSHRIKE (COZUMEL I.) (*Cyclarhis gujanensis insularis*) – Although we saw this species on the mainland as well, the subspecies we saw on our first day on the road to Alberto's is endemic to the island of Cozumel.

LESSER GREENLET (*Pachysylvia decurtata*) – A plainly-patterned bird in the vireo family, these were spotted in the canopy on two of our days near Felipe Carrillo Puerto.

WHITE-EYED VIREO (*Vireo griseus*) – A common and widespread species on tour.

MANGROVE VIREO (*Vireo pallens*) – Although always outnumbered by the previous species, this yellow-lored vireo showed up a couple of times including near Celestún.

COZUMEL VIREO (*Vireo bairdi*) – This distinctive endemic was seen nicely on our very first morning as we birded the road to Alberto's. This vireo is very nicely colored with a rich brown blush to the head and neck. [E]

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO (*Vireo flavifrons*) – Our first sighting came from Day 1 as we birded a mixed flock near the road to Alberto's.

YUCATAN VIREO (*Vireo magister*) – This large and fairly distinctive vireo was spotted on our first morning along the road to Alberto's. It has a monster bill and very broad supercilium that meet over the bill.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

BROWN JAY (*Psilorhinus morio*) – Large and loud, these jays were conspicuous a few times on the mainland.

GREEN JAY (*Cyanocorax yncas*) – This colorful species stayed high in the trees but we all ended up with views from Camino Laguna Ocom and especially around the hotel at Chichén Itzá.

YUCATAN JAY (*Cyanocorax yucatanicus*) – This is a bold and attractive Yucatan specialty that we had great luck with. We even had a group of 20+ along the Campeche Road.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (RIDGWAY'S) (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis ridgwayi*) – This is a largely resident subspecies unlike the migrants that breed farther north. We saw these overhead several times around Chichén Itzá and the Campeche Road.

MANGROVE SWALLOW (*Tachycineta albilinea*) – Although in the same genus as our Tree Swallow, these have white rumps. We spotted this species a few times including twice near Celestún.

CAVE SWALLOW (*Petrochelidon fulva*) – A few of these were flying high over the ruins at Uxmal and again at the Campeche Road.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

HOUSE WREN (COZUMEL I.) (*Troglodytes aedon beani*) – We had very brief looks of this endemic subspecies in the abandoned subdivision on our first day.

CAROLINA WREN (WHITE-BROWED) (*Thryothorus ludovicianus albinucha*) – This subspecies of Carolina Wren is a Yucatan endemic. Although sneaky, these were seen briefly along the Campeche Road and Camino Laguna Ocom.

YUCATAN WREN (*Campylorhynchus yucatanicus*) – Once we made it to Celestún, this large, striped wren was quite common. This species was once considered a subspecies of Cactus Wren but was eventually given full species status. [E]

SPOT-BREASTED WREN (*Pheugopedius maculipectus*) – Goodness, this wren was a skulker! We ended up having good looks at the Spider Monkey Sanctuary as a pair climbed up through the vines.

WHITE-BELLIED WREN (*Uropsila leucogastra*) – This tiny-tailed skulker is mostly a Mexican species. We played hide-and-seek with a couple along the Camino San Simon and Campeche Road late in the tour.

Poliophtidae (Gnatcatchers)

LONG-BILLED GNATWREN (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) – Like the Spot-breasted Wren, this species loves thick clumps of vines to forage in. Also, the bill on this species is truly spectacular! We had nice looks at the Spider Monkey Sanctuary.

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila caerulea*) – The non-Cozumel gnatcatchers, such as the ones we saw at Camino San Simon and Campeche Road, had paler upperparts.

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER (COZUMEL) (*Poliophtila caerulea cozumelae*) – Much darker than mainland birds, this Cozumel endemic subspecies was seen very well early on our tour. Sometimes they were even flitting around the hotel grounds!

WHITE-LORED GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila albiloris albiventris*) – We found ourselves in range of this attractive gnatcatcher in the Celestún area. Interestingly, this population is completely isolated from the other populations elsewhere in Mexico.

TROPICAL GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila plumbea*) – These were never common and our only sightings came from Camino Laguna Ocom.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

WOOD THRUSH (*Hylocichla mustelina*) – Although we heard these more often than we saw them, we had a couple of glimpses in the understory of mature forest habitats.

CLAY-COLORED THRUSH (*Turdus grayi*) – Camino San Simon was one of just a couple of places that we glimpsed this plainly-colored thrush.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

BLACK CATBIRD (*Melanoptila glabrirostris*) – Our time on Cozumel Island was filled with a lot of glossy black shadows darting this way and that thanks to this abundant species.

GRAY CATBIRD (*Dumetella carolinensis*) – A few of these wintering catbirds were seen on Day 1 in Cozumel where they were outnumbered by Black Catbirds.

TROPICAL MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus gilvus*) – This was one of the most conspicuous species of the entire trip.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

- OVENBIRD** (*Seiurus aurocapilla*) – This wood-warbler was walking down the road to Alberto's, as we were, poking in and out of the forest edge.
- WORM-EATING WARBLER** (*Helmitheros vermivorum*) – One of these was seen foraging in dead leaf clusters along the road to Alberto's. This is behavior that they're known to exhibit on the breeding grounds as well.
- NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH** (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – Although we certainly heard this species more than we saw it, we did get glimpses here and there on Cozumel.
- BLUE-WINGED WARBLER** (*Vermivora cyanoptera*) – We had 2 sightings of this uncommon wintering species: one at Camino Faro Vigia Chico and then another the following day at Camino Laguna Ocom.
- BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER** (*Mniotilta varia*) – A fairly common warbler; these were seen creeping along tree trunks on a majority of our days.
- SWAINSON'S WARBLER** (*Limnothlypis swainsonii*) – It was odd to hear this wintering species in song! This sneaky warbler was eventually seen by most as it darted back and forth through the shadows off the road to Alberto's.
- TENNESSEE WARBLER** (*Oreothlypis peregrina*) – This surprise sighting occurred near Alberto's Restaurant on our first day on Cozumel.
- COMMON YELLOWTHROAT** (*Geothlypis trichas*) – Heard more often than seen, this species prefers wet and marshy habitats. We had one of these at Laguna Cobá along the edge of the lake.
- HOODED WARBLER** (*Setophaga citrina*) – Although we heard the loud chip notes of this species several times, we only caught a glimpse once or twice.
- AMERICAN REDSTART** (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – These were mighty friendly on the hotel grounds in Cozumel!
- NORTHERN PARULA** (*Setophaga americana*) – This little, compact warbler was seen on about half of our birding days.
- MAGNOLIA WARBLER** (*Setophaga magnolia*) – A common wintering species, this was the only warbler that we saw every single day.
- YELLOW WARBLER** (*Setophaga petechia*) – We saw a variety of Yellow Warblers but the majority were the "Northern" variety which is a migrant and wintering species in the Yucatan.
- YELLOW WARBLER (MANGROVE)** (*Setophaga petechia bryanti*) – This subspecies is the variety with a rust-colored head. We had nice looks at the northern end of Cozumel.
- YELLOW WARBLER (GOLDEN)** (*Setophaga petechia rufivertex*) – Cozumel Island is the only place within Mexico to see this Caribbean subspecies.
- PALM WARBLER** (*Setophaga palmarum*) – We found this species a few times during our first two days of tour, mostly on Cozumel. This species habitually bobs its rear up and down.
- YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (MYRTLE)** (*Setophaga coronata coronata*) – Although they might be abundant for us in the US, this warbler wasn't very common on tour. Our first one was at the ruins of Uxmal.
- YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER** (*Setophaga dominica*) – This friendly species was common at our hotel on Cozumel, sometimes even coming down and landing on patio chairs!
- BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER** (*Setophaga virens*) – Only a few were spotted on tour including some at Camino Laguna Ocom, Camino Vigia Chico, and the Campeche Road.
- YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT** (*Icteria virens*) – Just recently elevated to its own family, this migrant was seen only once and rather briefly.

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

- BLUE-GRAY TANAGER** (*Thraupis episcopus*) – We had only one sighting and that occurred at Laguna Cobá.
- YELLOW-WINGED TANAGER** (*Thraupis abbas*) – This tanager ranges from Mexico south to Costa Rica. We caught up to several in the town of Cobá and they remained common through our visit to Chichén Itzá.
- BLUE-BLACK GRASSQUIT** (*Volatinia jacarina*) – Camino San Simon provided us with our only looks at this small species. They were in the tall grass mixing with Indigo Buntings and Blue Grosbeaks.
- WHITE-COLLARED SEEDEATER** (*Sporophila torqueola*) – Our first two days of birding on Cozumel turned out to be the best for this little tanager; we saw one on the road to Alberto's and then another couple in a wet area near some horse pastures.
- BANANAQUIT (COZUMEL I.)** (*Coereba flaveola caboti*) – This widespread tropical species was seen well on Cozumel Island. The subspecies there, *C. f. caboti*, is essentially endemic to the island.
- YELLOW-FACED GRASSQUIT** (*Tiaris olivaceus*) – Turns out, we had pretty good luck with this species right on the grounds of our hotel in Cozumel! We had a few more at the end of the road to Alberto's.
- WESTERN SPINDALIS (COZUMEL I.)** (*Spindalis zena benedicti*) – Truly a spectacular bird! We saw these a few times during our time on Cozumel including some on our first morning. The subspecies we saw there is endemic to the island.
- BLACK-HEADED SALTATOR** (*Saltator atriceps*) – This big and noisy saltator surfaced a few times including a flock in the town of Cobá.
- GRAYISH SALTATOR** (*Saltator coerulescens*) – Our first look at this attractive saltator was in Cobá but we would go on to see a couple more near Celestún.

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

- OLIVE SPARROW** (*Arremonops rufivirgatus*) – Our only one was along the Campeche Road and it didn't stick around for long.
- GREEN-BACKED SPARROW** (*Arremonops chloronotus*) – Closely related to the previous species, this retiring sparrow was seen well in the understory of Punta Laguna (Spider Monkey Sanctuary).

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

- ROSE-THROATED TANAGER** (*Piranga roseogularis*) – Our first sighting was of a female in the abandoned subdivision on Cozumel Island. We would go on to see a couple of males later in the tour as well.
- SUMMER TANAGER** (*Piranga rubra*) – This widespread species was seen almost every day.
- RED-CROWNED ANT-TANAGER** (*Habia rubica*) – A duo of these were spotted at Camino Laguna Ocom, first detected by their calls.
- RED-THROATED ANT-TANAGER** (*Habia fuscicauda*) – We had a nice flock of about 5 near the ant swarm at Camino Laguna Ocom.
- NORTHERN CARDINAL** (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) – This familiar, crested species was spotted a few times especially late in the tour near Celestún.
- ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK** (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) – It wasn't until we were birding in Celestún that we caught up to this heavy-billed species. Even then, they weren't common.

GRAY-THROATED CHAT (*Granatellus sallaiei*) – This colorful Yucatan specialty was high on wish lists and for good reason! This beauty was first spotted at Camino Faro Vigia Chico as we made our way south to Felipe Carrillo Puerto. We would see them again the following day at Camino Laguna Ocom as well.

BLUE BUNTING (MIDDLE AMERICA) (*Cyanocompsa parellina parellina*) – Yikes, what a sneaky bird this was! We played hike-and-peek with a male on the roadside edge of Camino San Simon.

BLUE GROSBEAK (*Passerina caerulea*) – About half a dozen of these were perched up in tall grass along the Campeche Road one afternoon.

INDIGO BUNTING (*Passerina cyanea*) – We tallied 7 of these along the Camino San Simon mixed with grassquits early one morning before breakfast.

PAINTED BUNTING (*Passerina ciris*) – It was a quick glimpse but one of these, a female type, popped up briefly near Celestún.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) – About a dozen of these were in a wet, roadside area near Celestún on our second to last day.

MELODIOUS BLACKBIRD (*Dives dives*) – This widespread species was tallied every day after we left Cozumel.

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) – Widespread and ubiquitous.

BRONZED COWBIRD (*Molothrus aeneus*) – A few of these were in a bare treetop in the town of Cobá. Turns out, those would be our only ones of the trip.

BLACK-COWLED ORIOLE (*Icterus prothemelas*) – This attractive oriole has a completely black head which helped to separate it from other species we saw.

ORCHARD ORIOLE (*Icterus spurius*) – Only one of these surfaced on tour and it happened to be on our last day of birding near Celestún. Overall, this is a very small species of oriole.

HOODED ORIOLE (*Icterus cucullatus*) – One of these was spotted in a palm tree near Roberto's Restaurant on Cozumel Island on our first morning. They would continue to be fairly common throughout the tour.

ORANGE ORIOLE (*Icterus auratus*) – This is a Yucatan specialty that is almost endemic to Mexico. We managed to tally this attractive species on about half of our days.

ALTAMIRA ORIOLE (*Icterus gularis*) – Big, bold, and gorgeous. This was the oriole that we saw the most of. They seemed to be especially thick around our Chichén Itzá hotel.

YELLOW-BILLED CACIQUE (*Amblycercus holosericeus*) – These stayed well-hidden most of the time which is typical. Still, we managed looks several times at places like Camino Faro Vigia Chico, Camino Laguna Ocom, and the Campeche Road.

MAMMALS

CENTRAL AMERICAN SPIDER MONKEY (*Ateles geoffroyi*) – What a show we had at the aptly-named Santuario de Mono Araña! Not only did we get to see these lanky New World monkeys, we had amazing looks as they moved directly overhead.

YUCATAN SQUIRREL (*Sciurus yucatanensis*) – We saw one of these tree squirrels near Chichén Itzá.

CENTRAL AMERICAN AGOUTI (*Dasyprocta punctata*) – We got a few glimpses of one as it strolled down the road near the abandoned subdivision on Cozumel Island.

PYGMY RACCOON (*Procyon pygmaeus*) – This is a critically endangered species found primarily at the north end of Cozumel Island. We found this island endemic to be rather tame! One even seemed to know karate.

WHITE-NOSED COATI (*Nasua narica*) – One of the highlights from our first morning was watching one of these scamper across the road. This subspecies is believed by some to be a full species that's endemic to Cozumel, the "Cozumel Island Coati".

Herps

GREEN IGUANA (*Iguana iguana*) – This has a very elaborate scientific name of Iguana iguana. We had a few of these at our hotel on Cozumel.

BLACK SPINY-TAILED IGUANA (*Ctenosaura similis*) – A fairly common species that we saw at ruins like Chichén Itzá and Uxmal.

SPECKLED RACER (*Drymobius margaritiferus*) – Wow, this was a really attractive snake! We got good looks at this small species under a rock and then another slithered by later on.

MORELET'S CROCODILE (*Crocodylus moreleti*) – This is a relatively small, freshwater species that we saw at Laguna Cobá.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 229 bird taxa and 5 mammal taxa