

Cuba - A Birdwatching Tour

Naturetrek Tour Report

8 - 19 March 2008



Report compiled by Andy Mitchell
Images of Havana with kind permission of John Raby



Naturetrek Cheriton Mill Cheriton Alresford Hampshire SO24 0NG England

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

F: +44 (0)1962 736426

E: info@naturetrek.co.uk

W: www.naturetrek.co.uk

Tour Leaders: Andy Mitchell (Naturetrek leader)
 Rturo Kirkconnell (local guide)

Tour Participants: Alan Whatley
 Carlos Davies
 Chris Newbold
 Sheila Alliez
 Mike Davies
 Bente Davies
 Matt Prince
 Nicola Bacciu
 Robert Murphy
 Anne Murphy
 Trevor Rackstraw
 Lynne Rackstraw
 John Raby
 Stephen Culley
 Barry Shaw
 Trevor Davies

Day 1

Saturday 8th March

Various members of the group had different itineraries in order to reach our destination and everything went very well. Suffice it to say that most of us reached Jose Marti airport in Havana at the same time, and with all our luggage. After meeting up with our Cuban bird guide, Arturo Kirkconnell, as well as our driver Walfredo and local tour guide Marlon, we drove to the Hotel Mirador in San Diego de los Baños (about an hour and half west of Havana) to find the remaining three members safely tucked up in bed.

Day 2

Sunday 9th March

A fairly leisurely start for the first day with breakfast at 7.00, and then the short drive to Cabanas los Pinos in La Güira. There were plenty of birds around and we soon saw the first target for this area, Olive-capped Warbler, as well as some endemics such as Cuban Tody, Yellow-headed Warbler and the national bird, Cuban Trogon. At the top of the hill under the limestone cliffs we could hear Cuban Solitaires singing their amazing song and soon one obliged the whole group by sitting on top of a bare tree and singing his heart out – great stuff! We then drove a little further up the road to Cueva los Portales, the site of Che Guevara's headquarters during the Cuban Missile Crisis in the 1960's. It was a rather quiet here and we soon returned to our hotel for lunch and siesta.

In the late afternoon we drove down to the motorway and ranged ourselves along the hard shoulder to study the fishponds and rice fields. There was plenty to look at with Osprey, Snail Kite, Limpkin, Gull-billed Tern as well as a variety of herons and egrets. After the log and dinner, we went hunting for Stygian Owl in the hotel grounds. Two flew over us, but they were proving hard to pin down in a tree. Some members retired but the intrepid few stuck with the task (and Arturo) and eventually got one glaring down from a tall tree.

Various group members were then roused (by agreement!) to come and take a look. This was a successful first day with our two target species seen by everyone, and a total of 70 species seen altogether.

Day 3

Monday 10th March

This was the day for the long drive from San Diego to our next stop on Cayo Coco. We did various stops in the course of the day on the coach and managed to clock up a respectable 58 species, of which six Anhinga, Northern Harrier, Black Tern, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup and Ruddy Duck, were not to be seen elsewhere on the trip. After checking in at Hotel Krystal Laguna and eating, everyone went to bed eager for the morning.

Day 4

Tuesday 11th March

An early look at the lagoon between our hotel and the sea produced stunning close-up views of two very different species; West Indian Whistling Duck and Yellow Warbler (the resident subspecies). We then set off in the coach for Cayo Paredon Grande, with Walfredo expertly navigating the decaying bridge on the way. We soon caught up with three of the target species, Thick-billed Vireo, Oriente Warbler and the delightful Cuban Gnatcatcher which got the cameras clicking, as did a confiding Cuban Black Hawk (a recent split).

For the afternoon session we drove in the opposite direction and on to Cayo Guillermo to search for Bahama Mockingbird. We found this remarkably easily compared to recent years and had three in a small area. Looking at these produced the non-avian highlight of the trip with a juvenile jutía, or tree-rat in an agave flower spike sipping nectar. According to Arturo, this behaviour had never been recorded before. On the way back, we stopped near and on the bridge for some waterbird therapy and clocked up a good number of species including Reddish Egret, White Ibis and Roseate Spoonbill, plus a selection of waders such as Semi-palmated Plover, Stilt, Least, Semipalmated and Western Sandpipers and Short-billed Dowitcher. The log showed that we had seen an impressive 84 species for the day.

Day 5

Wednesday 12th March

Just a short drive from the hotel was our first stop, principally for the local race of Cuban Sparrow. To start with there were just frustratingly brief views for a few of the group (amongst an onslaught of mosquitos!) but then they decided to behave and sat obligingly in a bare tree to be admired and photographed. We followed this with a walk in the area around Cueva de Jabali where we added Cuban Vireo and Black-throated Green Warbler to the list before heading back for lunch and lotions on bites. After lunch we began our journey to the next stop in the provincial capital of Camagüey. We made a number of stops along the way, seeing a long line of brilliant Caribbean Flamingos from the causeway across to the cay, as well as Sandwich Tern and Black Skimmer. We arrived at Hotel Plaza in the early evening and retired after dinner and the log (86 species for the day) to be ready for an early start the next day.

Day 6

Thursday 13th March

Away from the hotel at 5 am after breakfast! The sacrifice was well worth it with a several stops on the way to the reserve at La Belen, Najasa producing Cuban Palm Crow, Cuban Crow, Plain Pigeon, Cuban Parakeet and Giant Kingbird – a real handful of top species.

Another stop – at a farm – was specifically for Cuban Grassquit and after a little while, we all got great views of this stunning little seedeater. At the reserve, we took a gentle birding stroll along the track, picking up things like Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Yellow-throated Vireo, Magnolia Warbler and Summer Tanager before heading off into the scrub from where we could view a partially-completed Gundlach's Hawk nest. Despite a long a patient wait, the bird didn't oblige. On the way out of the reserve, we had a brief stop for great views of Rose-throated Parrot before driving back to Camagüey for lunch.

The afternoon was given over to looking at a slice of Cuban life, past and present. We hired bicitaxis (nine of them) to take us around the town to various spots where Marlon gave interesting and informative talks about the city and various buildings and other landmarks. This included a 'warehouse' where Cubans buy goods on ration and Marlon's explanation of the idea behind this and its current shortcomings was excellent. After a little over an hour, we said goodbye to our bicitaxi drivers and made good use of the bar El Cambio – which just happened to be nearby. Everyone walked back to the hotel in their own time for log and dinner. We saw 62 species of which 14 were new for the trip.

Day 7

Friday 14th March

We left Hotel Plaza for our final stay in the Zapata Swamp at 9 am and en route visited the pasta de guyaba factory on the outskirts of Florida (no, not that one). This delicious jelly is made just with guyaba fruit and sugar and is perfect with cheese. Walfredo the driver bought a boxful and a number of people decided to take some home. A coffee stop at El Oasis didn't produce any birds of note and we reached our lunch stop at Aguada de Pasajeros rather late. To make up for this, we went to Playa Giron in Zapata the "back" way and had a good stop looking across the eastern swamp – ostensibly for Gundlach's Hawk which didn't appear, but there were plenty of birds to entertain us although the only new species for the trip were Black-crowned Night-heron and a rather distant flock of Glossy Ibis. After checking in to our rooms and eating at Hotel Playa Giron, the log gave a total of 52 species for the day.

Day 8

Saturday 15th March

We got away at a respectable 7 am for the short drive to the reserve within the National Park at Bermejas where the warden, Orlando, met us. The Zapata Swamp has the reputation for the best birdwatching in Cuba and this morning showed why. Within a relatively short space of time we had seen Bee Hummingbird, three Blue-headed Quail-doves, several Gray-fronted Quail-doves, Cuban Screech Owl and Fernandina's Flicker, ending the morning with three Broad-winged Hawks circling above us. Excellent stuff and special thanks to Orlando for "seeding" one of the trails with rice which has finally made the absolutely stunning Blue-headed Quail-dove (almost!) guaranteed. We returned to Bermejas after lunch with our local guide Angel and caught up with the other two quail-doves, Key West and Ruddy and also saw two full-plumaged male Bee Hummingbirds feeding just yards away – unforgettable. We stayed out until dusk for Cuban Nightjar but only got one fleeting glimpse. It was a pleasure to remind ourselves of such superb birds at the log and the total for the day was 61 species.

Day 9

Sunday 16th March

Another early start was required to drive to La Turba in search of Zapata Wren. This proved to be a frustrating morning.

One bird sang its heart out just a few yards from us but only a few people saw a tail and not much more. A second bird didn't want to come close enough and then the first bird showed tantalisingly briefly for just four five people. In addition to this, there was no sign of the Red-shouldered Blackbird.

We had a brief stop at La Boca to try for a new warbler or two and then one or two saw the back end of Gundlach's Hawk from the bus. Not the best morning of the trip, so we had a consolation beer at Cueva los Peces on the way back to the hotel for lunch. After lunch we returned to the eastern part of the swamp to look again for Gundlach's Hawk, again with no luck but we did add Yellow-rumped Warbler, Wood Stork and Sharp-shinned Hawk to our list in this excellent spot. We had another try at Bermejas where some opted to stay at the Bee Hummingbird site, either for photography or the sheer pleasure of watching such a beautiful creature. Not only that, they were rewarded with Scaly-naped Pigeon. The log recorded 83 species

Day 10

Monday 17th March

This time a really early start (4.30) for Peralta, to try for the Cuban Nightjar and then Zapata Wren. We were frustrated by thick fog and so drove on to Rio Hatiguanico. No luck with the wren here but we did get excellent views of the Red-shouldered Blackbird and the nominate race of Cuban Sparrow. We returned to Peralta once the sun had cleared the fog to try for Gundlach's Hawk just one more time but it was not to be.

The afternoon was spent pleasantly enough by the river but no new species were added. As the clocks had now changed by an hour, we returned for dinner before driving back to Bermejas for another try for Cuban Nightjar. This time we were successful with two birds seen well. A nice end to the birding part of the tour and the last log recorded 80 species for the day.

Day 11

Tuesday 18th March

We left Playa Giron at the very sedate 9 am for the drive to Havana, saying goodbye to Arturo at his house before visiting the Plaza de la Revolución. Marlon came into his own with an encyclopaedic knowledge of Cuba and its history. We then went to the historic Hotel Nacional for lunch in the garden grill, Las Barracas, after looking at some of the photos of the famous (and infamous) who have stayed there. We then drove along the well-known seafront, the Malecon, before taking a walking tour led by the excellent Marlon. We took in parts of the whole range of Cuba's history, from the first Spanish conquest through a brief British interlude up to the present-day superb restoration work on the buildings via, of course, Ernest Hemingway.

It was then time to take three to the airport for an earlier flight so the remainder did some more walking before opting for a beer stop at the excellent bar in Plaza Vieja. One more stop near the Natural History Museum for coffee (and more beer) and it was time to catch the flight home.....

Receive our e-newsletter

Join the Naturetrek e-mailing list and be the first to hear about new tours, additional departures and new dates, tour reports and special offers. Visit www.naturetrek.co.uk to sign up.

Species Lists

Birds

	Scientific name	Common name	March									
			9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
1	West Indian Whistling-Duck	<i>Dendrocygna arborea</i>			X	X					X	
2	Blue-winged Teal	<i>Anas discors</i>	X	X	X							X
3	Ring-necked Duck	<i>Aythya collaris</i>		X								
4	Lesser Scaup	<i>Aythya affinis</i>		X								
5	Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>		X		X						X
6	Ruddy Duck	<i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>		X								
7	Pied-billed Grebe	<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>		X		X						
8	Brown Pelican	<i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>	X	X	X	X				X	X	
9	Double-crested Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>			X	X						
10	Neotropic Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax brasilianus</i>	X			X						X
11	Anhinga	<i>Anhinga anhinga</i>		X								
12	Magnificent Frigatebird	<i>Fregata magnificens</i>			X	X				X	X	X
13	Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>		X	X	X			X		X	X
14	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
15	Snowy Egret	<i>Egretta thula</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	
16	Little Blue Heron	<i>Egretta caerulea</i>	X	X	X	X		X			X	X
17	Tricolored Heron	<i>Egretta tricolor</i>	X		X	X	X	X			X	X
18	Reddish Egret	<i>Egretta rufescens</i>			X	X				X		X
19	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
20	Green Heron	<i>Butorides virescens</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X
21	Black-crowned Night-Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>						X				
22	Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	<i>Nyctanassa violacea</i>		X	X			X	X	X		
23	White Ibis	<i>Eudocimus albus</i>			X							X
24	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>						X				
25	Roseate Spoonbill	<i>Ajaia ajaja</i>			X	X						
26	Wood Stork	<i>Mycteria americana</i>									X	
27	Caribbean Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>			X	X						
28	Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
29	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	X		X	X		X			X	X
30	Snail Kite	<i>Rostrhamus sociabilis</i>	X	X				X			X	
31	Northern Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>		X		X		X			X	
32	Sharp-shinned Hawk	<i>Accipiter striatus</i>									X	
33	Gundlach's Hawk	<i>Accipiter gundlachi</i>						X			X	
34	Cuban Black-Hawk	<i>Buteogallus gundlachii</i>			X	X						
35	Broad-winged Hawk	<i>Buteo platypterus</i>								X	X	X
36	Red-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	X	X	X							X
37	Crested Caracara	<i>Caracara plancus</i>		X	X	X		X			X	
38	American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
39	Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>				X				X		X
40	Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>			X			X				
41	Helmeted Guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>					X					
42	Clapper Rail	<i>Rallus longirostris</i>			H							
43	Sora	<i>Porzana carolina</i>				H						
44	Purple Gallinule	<i>Porphyrio martinicus</i>	X			X					X	
45	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	X	X	X		X	X			X	X
46	American Coot	<i>Fulica americana</i>		X	X			X			X	
47	Limpkin	<i>Aramus guarauna</i>	X	X		X	X	X			X	X

	Scientific name	Common name	March									
			9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
48	Black-bellied Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>			X	X						
49	Wilson's Plover	<i>Charadrius wilsonia</i>							X	X		
50	Semi-palmated Plover	<i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>			X							
51	Killdeer	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
52	Black-necked Stilt	<i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>	X		X							X
53	Northern Jacana	<i>Jacana spinosa</i>	X	X			X	X		X		
54	Greater Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>			X			X				X
55	Lesser Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa flavipes</i>			X							
56	Solitary Sandpiper	<i>Tringa solitaria</i>					X					
57	Willet	<i>Catoptrophorus semipalmatus</i>			X							
58	Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Tringa macularia</i>	X	X	X						X	X
59	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>			X	X			X	X		
60	Least Sandpiper	<i>Calidris minutilla</i>	X		X							X
61	Red Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>			X							
62	Semi-palmated Sandpiper	<i>Calidris pusilla</i>			X							
63	Western Sandpiper	<i>Calidris mauri</i>			X							
64	Stilt Sandpiper	<i>Micropalama himantopus</i>			X							
65	Short-billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus griseus</i>			X							
66	Laughing Gull	<i>Larus atricilla</i>		X	X	X						
67	Ring-billed Gull	<i>Larus delawarensis</i>			X	X						
68	American Herring Gull	<i>Larus smithsonianus</i>			X	X						
69	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>			X	X						
70	Gull-billed Tern	<i>Sterna nilotica</i>	X									
71	Caspian Tern	<i>Sterna caspia</i>	X		X	X						
72	Royal Tern	<i>Sterna maxima</i>		X	X	X						
73	Sandwich Tern	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>				X						
74	Bridled Tern	<i>Sterna anaethetus</i>										H
75	Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>		X								
76	Black Skimmer	<i>Rynchops niger</i>				X						
77	Rock Dove (feral)	<i>Columba livia</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
78	Scaly-naped Pigeon	<i>Columba squamosa</i>									X	
79	White-crowned Pigeon	<i>Columba leucocephala</i>				X			X	X	X	
80	Plain Pigeon	<i>Columba inornata</i>					X					
81	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	X		X	X						
82	White-winged Dove	<i>Zenaida asiatica</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
83	Zenaida Dove	<i>Zenaida aurita</i>	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
84	Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
85	Common Ground-Dove	<i>Columbina passerina</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
86	Key West Quail-Dove	<i>Geotrygon chrysis</i>							X	X	X	
87	Gray-fronted Quail-Dove	<i>Geotrygon caniceps</i>							X	X		
88	Blue-headed Quail-Dove	<i>Starnoenas cyanocephala</i>							X			
89	Ruddy Quail-Dove	<i>Geotrygon</i>							X			
90	Cuban Parakeet	<i>Aratinga euops</i>					X		X	X		
91	Rose-throated Parrot	<i>Amazona leucocephala</i>					X		X	X		
92	Great Lizard-Cuckoo	<i>Saurothera merlini</i>	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
93	Smooth-billed Ani	<i>Crotophaga ani</i>	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
94	Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	X									
95	Bare-legged Owl	<i>Otus lawrencii</i>							X			X
96	Cuban Pygmy-Owl	<i>Glaucidium siju</i>					X		X	X	X	
97	Stygian Owl	<i>Asio stygius</i>	X					X				
98	Cuban Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus cubensis</i>							x			x

	Scientific name	Common name	March									
			9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
99	Antillean Palm-Swift	<i>Tachornis phoenicobia</i>	X	X		X						X
100	Cuban Emerald	<i>Chlorostilbon ricardii</i>	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X
101	Bee Hummingbird	<i>Mellisuga helenae</i>								X	X	
102	Cuban Trogon	<i>Priotelus temnurus</i>	X				X			X	X	X
103	Cuban Tody	<i>Todus multicolor</i>	X			X	X			X	X	X
104	Belted Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle alcyon</i>	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
105	West Indian Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes supercilialis</i>	X				X	X	X	X	X	X
106	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	<i>Sphyrapicus varius</i>					X				X	
107	Cuban Green Woodpecker	<i>Xiphidiopicus percussus</i>	X		X	X	X			X	X	X
108	Northern Flicker	<i>Colaptes auratus</i>	X									X
109	Fernandina's Flicker	<i>Colaptes fernandinae</i>								X	X	X
110	Cuban Pewee	<i>Contopus caribaeus</i>	X		X	X	X			X	X	X
111	La Sagra's Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus sagrae</i>	X			X	X			X	X	X
112	Grey Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus dominicensis</i>					X				X	X
113	Loggerhead Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus caudifasciatus</i>	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
114	Giant Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus cubensis</i>					X					
115	Cuban Martin	<i>Progne cryptoleuca</i>		X		X					X	X
116	Tree Swallow	<i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>			X						X	X
117	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>	X									X
118	Bank Swallow	<i>Riparia riparia</i>										
119	American Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo erythrogaster</i>	X						X			
120	Cave Swallow	<i>Petrochelidon fulva</i>			X		X	X				X
121	Zapata Wren	<i>Ferminia cerverai</i>									X	
122	Cuban Gnatcatcher	<i>Poliotilta lembeyei</i>			X	X						
123	Cuban Solitaire	<i>Myadestes elisabeth</i>	X									
124	Red-legged Thrush	<i>Turdus plumbeus</i>	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
125	Gray Catbird	<i>Dumetella carolinensis</i>		X		X	X			X	X	X
126	Northern Mockingbird	<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
127	Bahama Mockingbird	<i>Mimus gundlachii</i>			X							
128	Cuban Palm Crow	<i>Corvus palmarum</i>					X					
129	Cuban Crow	<i>Corvus nasicus</i>					X	X			X	
130	White-eyed Vireo	<i>Vireo griseus</i>				X						
131	Thick-billed Vireo	<i>Vireo crassirostris</i>			X							
132	Cuban Vireo	<i>Vireo gundlachii</i>				X				X	X	X
133	Yellow-throated Vireo	<i>Vireo flavifrons</i>					X					
134	Black-whiskered Vireo	<i>Vireo altiloquus</i>	X									X
135	Blue-winged Warbler	<i>Vermivora pinus</i>				X						
136	Tennessee Warbler	<i>Vermivora peregrina</i>	X									
137	Northern Parula	<i>Parula americana</i>	X	X	X	X	X					X
138	Yellow Warbler	<i>Dendroica petechia</i>			X	X						
139	Magnolia Warbler	<i>Dendroica magnolia</i>					X			X	X	
140	Cape May Warbler	<i>Dendroica tigrina</i>		X	X	X	X	X			X	
141	Black-throated Blue Warbler	<i>Dendroica caerulescens</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
142	Yellow-rumped Warbler	<i>Dendroica coronata</i>									X	
143	Black-throated Green Warbler	<i>Dendroica virens</i>				X	X			X	X	X
144	Yellow-throated Warbler	<i>Dendroica dominica</i>			X	X	X			X	X	X
145	Olive-capped Warbler	<i>Dendroica pityophila</i>	X									
146	Prairie Warbler	<i>Dendroica discolor</i>		X	X	X				X		
147	Palm Warbler	<i>Dendroica palmarum</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
148	Black-and-white Warbler	<i>Mniotilta varia</i>	X			X		X			X	X
149	American Redstart	<i>Setophaga ruticilla</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

	Scientific name	Common name	March									
			9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
150	Swainson's Warbler	<i>Limnothlypis swainsonii</i>								X		
151	Ovenbird	<i>Seiurus aurocapillus</i>		X	X	X				X	X	
152	Northern Waterthrush	<i>Seiurus noveboracensis</i>			X	X					X	X
153	Louisiana Waterthrush	<i>Seiurus motacilla</i>	X	X								
154	Common Yellowthroat	<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>	X	X					X		X	X
155	Yellow-headed Warbler	<i>Teretistris fernandinae</i>	X							X	X	X
156	Oriente Warbler	<i>Teretistris fornsi</i>			X	X						
157	Summer Tanager	<i>Piranga rubra</i>					X			X		
158	Red-legged Honeycreeper	<i>Cyanerpes cyaneus</i>	X									X
159	Western Stripe-headed Tanager	<i>Spindalis zena</i>	X	X	X	X	X			X		X
160	Indigo Bunting	<i>Passerina cyanea</i>					X					
161	Painted Bunting	<i>Passerina ciris</i>				X						
162	Cuban Bullfinch	<i>Melopyrrha nigra</i>	X		X	X	X					
163	Cuban Grassquit	<i>Tiaris canora</i>					X					
164	Yellow-faced Grassquit	<i>Tiaris olivacea</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
165	Cuban Sparrow	<i>Torreornis inexpectata</i>				X						X
166	Red-shouldered Blackbird	<i>Agelaius assimilis</i>										X
167	Tawny-shouldered Blackbird	<i>Agelaius humeralis</i>	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X
168	Eastern Meadowlark	<i>Sturnella magna</i>				X	X	X				
169	Cuban Blackbird	<i>Dives atrovioleacea</i>	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X
170	Greater Antillean Grackle	<i>Quiscalus niger</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
171	Shiny Cowbird	<i>Molothrus bonariensis</i>	X		X		X					X
172	Black-cowled Oriole	<i>Icterus dominicensis</i>	X		X	X	X				X	
173	Baltimore Oriole	<i>Icterus galbula</i>				X	X					
174	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	X	X		X	X	X				X

Lepidoptera

The most commonly seen species were The Zebra *Heliconius charitonia ramsdeni*, White Peacock *Anartia jatrophae* Guantanamo, The Flambeau *Dryas iulia nudeola* and Gulf Fritillary *Agraulis vanillae insularis*. We also saw Hübner's *Anartia Anartia chrysopelea*, and on Cayo Guillermo we got excellent views of Atala Hairstreak *Eumaes atala*. The other insect at the same place, a "clearwing" was not, in fact, a butterfly but a day-flying moth, *Phoenicoprocta capistrata* (no English name). We also saw numerous 'yellows' (*Pieridae*) and 'blues' (*Lycaenidae*) which I cannot reliably name without having had a closer look. There was also the occasional 'skipper' (*Hesperiidae*) and 'swallowtail' (*Papilionidae*).

Mammals

Terrestrial mammals are rare in Cuba for geological reasons, so it was exciting to see the juvenile jutía, or tree-rat, on Cayo Guillermo quite apart from the unique behaviour we witnessed. The species is *Capromys pilorides*, called variously Conga Hutia, Desmarest's Hutia or Cuban Hutia in English and Jutía Conga in Cuban Spanish.

Reptiles and Amphibians

The snake seen at Bermejas was identified as 'Cuban Black Snake' by Angel but I cannot find a reliable link to a scientific name. We saw many lizards in the genus *Anolis* and several gekkos – the common ones on the island are in the genus *Hemidactylus*. A large toad was found and seen by some at Bermejas – there are eight species in Cuba – and there were a number of frogs around.