

Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula – Maya, Monkeys & Turtles

Naturetrek Tour Report

9 - 19 November 2019



Spider Monkey by Andrew Lapworth



Turquoise-browed Motmot by Ed Drewitt



White-nosed Coati by Ed Drewitt



Spiny-tailed Iguana by Ed Drewitt

Report compiled by Ed Drewitt
Images courtesy of Andrew Lapworth & Ed Drewitt



Naturetrek

Mingledown Barn

Wolf's Lane

Chawton

Alton

Hampshire

GU34 3HJ

UK

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

E: info@naturetrek.co.uk

W: www.naturetrek.co.uk

Tour participants: Ed Drewitt (leader) and Fernando Roma (Local Guide) with 11 Naturetrek clients

Introduction:

Exploring the land of the Mayans provided the opportunity to explore archaeological sites including Tulum, Coba and one of the Seven Wonders of the World, Chichen Itza. Here on the Yucatan Peninsula, the nearby habitats such as woodland and mangrove allowed us to both combine wildlife watching and history, as well as swim in the characteristic underground limestone caves filled with water known as cenotes, and float down a beautiful mangrove channel at Sian Ka'an Biosphere Nature Reserve. We saw or heard 171 species of bird including hundreds of American Flamingos and Yucatan's unique endemics such as the Yucatan Woodpecker, the Yucatan Jay and the Rose-throated Tanager. Spider monkeys were a highlight at Punta Laguna, large Spiny-tailed Iguanas lounged on top of the ancient buildings at Tulum and five Green Turtles were seen while snorkeling at Akumal. We finished our tour in the fishing town of Rio Lagartos, enjoying both sunrise and sunset boat trips to see the egrets, pelicans, terns and waders living amongst the mangroves. Highlights here also included crocodiles, Boat-billed Heron and an incredible night sky.

Day 1

Saturday 9th November

Flight to Cancun and transfer to Akumal (25°C)

It was a misty, autumn day in West Sussex as we left the runway early afternoon to fly to the Yucatan Peninsula in east Mexico. We spent the 11-hour flight and a little under 5,000 miles heading across the Atlantic, over Cuba and down into a steamy Cancun in Mexico. We arrived just after 7.15pm local time and met our local guide Fernando in arrivals. We split between two vehicles, meeting our driver Antonio in the second vehicle. With snacks and drinks on board, we headed south along the coast for an hour and a half, arriving at our beachside hotel, Las Villas Akumal, around 10pm, in warm, evening heat and the background sound of crickets. Having checked in, we headed off for the night, ready to begin exploring the magnificent Yucatan Peninsula the following day.

Day 2

Sunday 10th November

Tulum (29°C)

We met together for breakfast at 7am taking in the beautiful beach scenery that surrounded us. Breakfast was a selection of fruit, scrambled egg, bacon, yogurt and toast. As the sun was rising down by the beach, some had already been up early and spotted some Western Sandpipers feeding along the tideline, Royal Terns flying past and Great-tailed Grackles coming into the trees. Fiona had also spotted an agouti by the beach with some fruit. A Couch's Kingbird was preening close by to the breakfast balcony while grackles and a Great Kiskadee called in the background.

We met shortly after at 7.50am and, before heading to Tulum, spent some time spotting a variety of wildlife by the car parking area including a pair of Social Flycatchers, several Hooded Orioles and a Yellow-backed Oriole, Tropical Mockingbirds and a roving small group of Yucatan Jays moved through the trees. A Melodious Blackbird was also singing occasionally in the background while a pair of Yucatan Squirrels, which look similar to the Grey Squirrel, were wandering across the road and heading up to the reception area before mating in front of us.

After breakfast we headed to Tulum, a Mayan walled City which served as the major port for Coba, a town that we would be visiting later in the week. Tulum was one of the last cities inhabited and built by the Mayas. Old world disease is thought to have caused the demise of this city, with over 1,000 citizens residing here until the arrival of the Spanish. Tulum is now one of the best-protected Mayan ruins on the Peninsula and due to this, it is a very popular tourist attraction. From our hotel, the ruins are only a short drive away and we were able to get there for 8.30am with Collared Doves and a Whiter-winged Dove around the car park. A yellow and black striped Giant Millipede was resting on the road and put somewhere safe. Walking up to the ruins from the car park, we passed the White Mangroves where the calls of Northern Waterthrushes were common. Fernando caught sight of a Black Catbird, not a common species to see. As it flew off, we stopped to watch two Yucatan Vireos feeding amongst the leaves of the mangroves and were entertained further by a striking Black-and-white Warbler, a Magnolia Warbler and a male Hooded Warbler. A Bright-rumped Attila also put in an appearance. Before we moved on, Jan spotted a Brown Basilisk, known locally as the Jesus Christ Lizard, due to its fast bursts of running both on land and over water. It was superbly camouflaged on its resting branch. Two Yucatan Jays tussled overhead as one had a colourful locust or cricket, which the other was trying to steal. An agouti was also feeding amongst the leaf litter before slipping away through the trees.

Fernando gave us our tickets and we headed into the main site, pausing to see a White-eyed Vireo and a Golden-crowned Warbler. Nearby, on a palm leaf, a small spider had made an exquisite small, round web. We spent the rest of the morning exploring the archaeology of the site, the limestone blocks they are made from, sun-bleached against a blue sky and covered in numerous Spine-tailed Iguanas which adorned the walls and pillars like gargoyles (as described by Fiona). The iguanas were all over the site and we even spotted a young animal, bright green with stripes along its back. As the temperature quickly rose close to 30° C, Turkey Vultures began to soar low overhead alongside the odd Brown Pelican and Magnificent Frigatebird. Northern Rough-winged Swallows were also flying low overhead in small numbers. Two White-nosed Coatis, an adult and a young animal, were busily foraging amongst the grass and leaf litter right by the path; we encountered them again later, still busy nosing around in the grass looking for invertebrates. Large butterflies were flying past super quick and only the large bright yellow Sulphur butterflies were the easiest to identify alongside a Zebra Longwing and a Julia. However, we did manage to spot a very cryptic Cracker Butterfly on a tree. Later, we heard the cracking sound they make with their wings as two males fought above our heads. The area of archaeology was adorned with palm trees, alongside flowering *Cordia* shrubs and smaller Spider Lilies, with their delightful long, white bouquet of flowers. Before finishing our walk, we headed up to the castle area with stunning views of the blue sea and floating booms holding back any aggressive Sargasso weed blooms (which weren't evident). As we headed back, at least three Plain Chachalacas were feeding on the fruits of trees by the roadside. In the hot sunshine, we stopped for a welcome cool drink before driving a short distance into Tulum central where we ate lunch at the authentic Don Cafeto Restaurant, enjoying local music and dishes such as mole, tacos and grilled fish.

We were back at our hotel by 2.45pm, and rested until 4pm when most of the group walked fifteen minutes along the beach towards Akumal to go snorkeling by a small reef. It was breezy as we walked along the bay, whipping up the waves. Several Western and one Spotted Sandpiper were feeding along the shore and flying round as we walked past. At the beach, we headed into the relatively warm water to explore underwater and spot turtles. The bay is split up into sections with ropes and buoys to offer the turtles some peace away from snorkelers. Late afternoon is a good time to see them as they begin to come closer to the beach and people begin to leave for the day. It wasn't long before we were watching Green Turtles, and at different moments, at least five were spotted including several larger individuals. One in particular had large remoras sticking close to it,

while another was tagged on its flipper with a metal tag. They appeared relaxed, feeding in front of us and coming up occasionally for air. During our snorkel, there were various other fishes seen including Sergeant Majors and a large stingray. The bay was covered in mix of Eel Grass, small seaweeds (covered with sea snails), coral and rocks, the latter with spiny sea urchins tucked into crevices. We headed back to the hotel around 5.30pm, against a dark sky and a sunlit bay and buoys. We had almost made it back when the heavy tropical rain shower soaked us, although it was warm rain and many of us jumped back into the outdoor swimming pool at the hotel to finish off the day.

Some of us met to run through the checklist at 7.15pm before everyone met for dinner at 7.30pm, enjoying salsa, guacamole, chicken fajitas and a delicious coconut dessert that was a little like rice pudding but with coconut.

Day 3

Monday 11th November

Tulum and Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve (29°C)

We met at 6.30am, and while we waited for our driver to arrive, we were entertained by various bats overhead including some that had falcon-like wings and were diving down to catch early rising dragonflies. Fernando picked up the call of a Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, and then we heard two. One was finally spotted and flew into a nearby palm tree before we then had two together, twitching their tails above us. Several Plain Chachalacas came out of roost in front of us and a Great Kiskadee and Melodious Blackbird began calling. Our driver Antonio arrived and we headed off, stopping briefly at a shop to buy coffees. We then drove further south to Muyil, meaning 'a group of rocks', where we went to the visitor centre of the very special Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve for a trip out into the lagoons to explore the mangroves. Here, across the vast site that is larger than Mexico City, there are nine different ecosystems with 24 archaeological sites nestled amongst them. Our excellent and passionate guide Manuel came out to chat with us while we ate our breakfast, a mix of fruit, yogurts and sandwiches. He explained more about the area, the geology and why it is so unique and special. After getting changed into our swim gear and over-clothes we paused to give our lunch order and also spotted Yellow-throated Euphonias, a Ruddy Ground Dove and a Social Flycatcher. At 8.50am we drove down to the jetty; Ruth and Mary spotted two Russet-naped Wood Rails by the toilet. We split between three boats where we headed out onto the lagoons where the freshwater is six metres above sea level. Beneath the water of the wide, open lakes freshwater bubbles up through limestone springs and reveals clear pale areas amongst the algae growing on the bedrock. The dominant plants include the rush locally known as Foxtail, the taller rush known as Southern Cattail (*Typha domingensis*) and flowering Dock Potato. Amongst the rushes we spotted a lone American Coot (and another in flight), an immature Northern Jacana and an obliging Neotropic Cormorant. Beneath the beautiful clear water, Peacock Perch (a type of cichlid), were the dominant freshwater fish. Manuel explained how the Red Mangrove trees propagate themselves and spread into new areas by following the water currents, sometimes re-growing in new areas up to a year later.

We headed on through the Mayan-dug channels, peering down into the water to see tiny cichlids, tetras and larger fishes, many of which were marine fishes coming here to spawn. The dominant marine fishes include Needlefish, Grey Snapper and Moray Eels. Mangroves are important nurseries for them, and it is also a good place for them to lose skin parasites. The change from saltwater to freshwater causes any unwanted guests to be shed from their skin.

Out on the next open lake, we slowly motored past a Royal Tern resting on a perch while a Ruddy Crake called in the distance. We heard several more calling during the boat trip. To our surprise an immature American Flamingo was stood on the lake's edge, an unusual place for one as there is no food for them here. The bird was colour-ringed and had no doubt come from further north on the peninsula at Rio Lagartos. Close by, we also saw a Great Blue Heron and a small group of Cattle Egrets. As the temperature rose, several Turkey Vultures began to circle and soar over the wetlands.

We stopped at a jetty where we got ready for entering the water. Manuel showed us a nearby ancient Mayan building which is directly in line with the ancient archaeology at Muyil on the edge of the wetland. Before finishing, a Common Tody Flycatcher was moving around a mangrove tree. We then entered the water and enjoyed thirty minutes gently floating down a mangrove channel. The channel led out into the sea and had a very gentle current which floated us down between mangrove trees and epiphytes growing amongst them. Those with facemasks could see various fishes beneath the clear water. It was an incredible experience just floating along past the mangroves. During our journey, a Green Heron perched a metre from us, perhaps entertained by our antics, and a Green Kingfisher flew over our heads. Several Yellow Warblers were spotted in the mangroves alongside damselflies. We paused in the shallows where Manuel explained more about the rocky formations beneath our feet. These were accretions of limestone formed by cyanobacteria and when one was broken in two we could see the green pigmentation of the 'live' rock. Later, back on the boat Manuel pointed out more obvious layers and undulations beneath the water which were larger stromatolites formed by the bacteria. Back in the channel we stopped at the next jetty where we got out and walked back to the boats along a boardwalk, taking in the extensive bog habitat and the specialist sword grasses and flowering plants growing here. The shallow waters were busy with small fishes, snails and thin layers of sedimentary grains where the cyanobacteria had been busy. Manuel pointed out a Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture soaring overhead, showing paler areas on the top of its wings.

We motored back to the base jetty with a welcome breeze from the speed of the boats and walked back to the vehicles parked further up the track. After changing back into our clothes at the visitor centre, we enjoyed either grilled fish, chicken or vegetable fajita and took our time as heavy rain moved in overhead.

As the rain stopped, we headed outdoors to a flurry of bird activity including a dozen Yellow-throated Euphonias, a pair of Social Flycatchers, a Yucatan Squirrel and to our delight, a Yucatan Woodpecker. It continued to show well and a little later began pecking at a thin branch showing off its stripy back and bright red crown. Other birdlife including a Clay-coloured Thrush, a Hooded Oriole, a Squirrel Cuckoo, Tropical Mockingbirds and a Grey Catbird. We also visited the Mariposario or butterfly pavilion to see a variety of butterflies including Postman, Zebra Longwing and Giant Swallowtail up close. Some caterpillars and chrysalises on the leaves resembled bird poo, an incredible adaptation to avoid being eaten. Steve picked up the calls of distant howler monkeys and it was time for us to move on to where they were residing - the Muyil ruins. While we didn't see the monkeys, we spent time exploring the archaeological site where Giant Swallowtails were common and joined by Zebra Longwings and a single Malachite butterfly. Several warblers were spotted including Magnolia, Yellow-throated and Black-and-white. Along the boardwalk, Fernando's persistence helped us all see a splendid male Black-headed Trogon, admiring his yellow breast, pale-blue eye ring and turquoise-blue back. A Spot-breasted Wren sang at one point and another Squirrel Cuckoo was spotted. Back at the buildings, the open arena formed by the space between the trees allowed us to see lots of bird activity including a small group of foraging Brown Jays, a stunning white and red Masked Tityra (found by Ruth) and a large Pale-billed

Woodpecker (found by Jan). The site kept revealing more birds including Hooded Orioles, an Altamira Oriole, a Cinnamon Hummingbird, a White-bellied Emerald hummingbird and two Collared Aracaris, the first seen preening and showing off its red rump before they flew out of the tree.

We left the location at 4pm, arriving back at just before 5pm with time to relax and chill before meeting again for the checklist at 7.15pm followed by dinner.

Day 4

Tuesday 12th November

Coba (33°C)

We met for breakfast at 7am, enjoying a buffet of toast, cereal and scrambled egg, and left promptly at just before 8am to head an hour west in land to the ruins at Coba. Along the way there were many kingbirds, a Keel-billed Toucan, a Black-headed Trogon, a hawk and vultures seen.

We reached Coba at 9am and met our guide Alfredo. Coba was a large Mayan city 200 years before Christ, located around two lagoons with a series of roads and trails branching off. At its peak, around 50,000 citizens inhabited this city and gradually built across the area which back then was open rather than wooded. It is thought the site became abandoned due to drought. The ruins consist of ballgame courts and various pyramid structures, with the largest being the impressive Lxmoja Pyramid standing 42 metres high; the largest in the Yucatan Peninsula. Alfredo explained more about the immediate ruins, explaining about their history and associations before finishing at the building made for the ballgame pok ta pok, where the ball was hit up through a stone hoop without using hands.

As we walked the two kilometres to the pyramid we encountered lots of birdlife alongside two young Brown Basilisks. Our first flock of birds included a large female Summer Tanager who was a stunning shade of cinnamon. In the same area two bright Yellow-throated Vireos were foraging alongside several White-eyed Vireos, Black-and-white Warbler, American Redstart, Magnolia Warbler, a pair of Yellow-throated Euphonias and two Yellow-green Vireos. Further along we encountered a male Black-throated Green Warbler while a Pygmy Owl called in the background and a Spot-breasted Wren occasionally sang. There were plenty of stunning butterflies around including Postman, Julia, Cracker, Prepona and Blue Morpho. At the second pok ta pok stadium we spent some time trying to see a pair of Olive-throated Parakeets which were incredibly well camouflaged. A female Rose-throated Tanager, with a subtly yellow throat, also put in an appearance – this was a good bird to see and an endemic to the Yucatan Peninsula.

We reached the Lxmoja Pyramid and most of the group took on the challenge of climbing to the top of this impressive structure. The view from the top was well worth the climb, with uninterrupted views of the surrounding forests and the two lagoons of Coba. Vultures were seen circling on the thermals as far as the eye could see. Vaux's Swifts chased around in the blue sky above the pyramid. Meanwhile, at ground level Steve had seen a Philadelphia Vireo, and a Social Flycatcher was being very noisy before chasing another. Most of the group opted to take the tricycle pedicabs back to the entrance and enjoyed a cold beer at a bar nearby while Ed, Fernando and the remaining group took the 15-minute walk back. At 12.30pm we drove the short distance to a restaurant by Lake Coba enjoying a delicious buffet lunch. After lunch we scanned across the lake spotting four Pied-billed Grebes, Great Blue Heron, an Anhinga, a few Neotropic Cormorants and a hovering Belted

Kingfisher. Two Great Egrets flew right in front of us with one landing in a nearby tree. A Limpkin showed briefly and another was seen earlier when we arrived in Coba by everyone in Fernando's vehicle.

The afternoon was a chance for us to visit and enjoy the cenotes which cover the Yucatan Peninsula. These cenotes are large underground sinkholes, formed by the collapse of the limestone bedrock above. They were used in the past by the Mayan civilization as one of the main sources of water. Our first visit was the Choo-ha cenote, an intimate, stunning cave pool. As we went down the steps a single bat hung from a rocky ceiling by one foot, cloaked in its wings. We walked down into a breathtaking open space with awe and wonder before entering into the cold, crystal clear water and admiring the stunning stalactites hanging from above (and the odd tree root). Beneath the water small black catfish swam feeling their way with their long barbules. We had the experience to ourselves and some of us swam around the cenote to see all its incredible natural architecture and textures.

We dried off quickly outdoors in the hot air and drove a short distance down the road to the Multan-ha cenote. This was a much deeper, colder pool with fine tree roots hanging from the ceiling giving it a furry look in places. Most of us went in for a quick dip before heading back out again. Once changed we did a spot of birding in the car park and finally saw a bird that had been singing on arrival, a very well hidden Rufous-browed Peppershrike. Melodious Blackbirds were foraging around the site and a White-bellied Emerald hummingbird was feeding on red-orange flowers near the peppershrike. We were also entertained by a huge grasshopper that was resting on one of Antonio's tyres.

We boarded the vehicles and headed back to the hotel arriving back just after 5pm for a rest and in good time before heavy rain came down for the rest of the afternoon as it got dark. Birds of note on the way back included Turkey and Black Vultures and a flock of 50 Vaux's Swifts feeding around a tall telecommunications structure.

Day 5

Wednesday 13th November

Punta Laguna, Otoch Ma'ax Yetel Kooh (25°C)

We packed the minibus by 6am and headed off to Punta Laguna to see Spider Monkeys. We arrived just before 8am and had a packed breakfast before putting our clocks back one hour to Yucatan time.

Punta Laguna is a 5,000 hectare Ramsar reserve protected by the government but run by the local communities. It's known locally as Ma'ax Yetel Kooh, which in Mayan means 'House of the spider monkey and the jaguar'. The primary forest grows over ancient limestone boulders. We met with our local guide Mariano, who would lead us around the trails of Punta Laguna in search of Spider Monkeys; his nine-year old son Sebastian also joined us. Earlier we had headed into heavy rain which continued while we started our walk into the forest, first encountering a small group of Black-headed Saltators feeding on a fruiting tree and a tiny, leaf-size baby mud turtle that was only spotted as it was in the middle of the path. Put to one side it just looked like another leaf!

It wasn't long before we had our first Spider Monkeys, an adult female with a not so young baby – they stay close with their mother until they are five years old. They were busily foraging above us, coming in and out of view. Throughout the next few hours we encountered more spider monkeys, in particular two or three mother monkeys with two one-year olds and an older youngster between them. The two younger animals were playing together at one point, although they were usually following in the footsteps of their mother through the

branches. We watched as the adults made their way through the foliage, often stretching out to reach fruits while holding on with their prehensile tail. In the sunshine we could make out their black and russet hair. As we ended our walk, the group were being very vocal, almost bird-like with their calls.

As the rain stopped and the leaves continued to drip water, birds became more active. The sad, mournful calls of two White-tipped Doves could be heard above. Steve and Fernando spotted a Squirrel Cuckoo, a Black-throated Green Warbler and a Magnolia Warbler while the rest of the group were watching the monkeys. Several Green Jays and an Ivory-billed Woodcreeper showed for some too. As we moved on as a group a Collared Trogon began calling and showed for some, looking like a red leaf where it was part hidden. Meanwhile, the others were watching two Collared Aracaris. A Turquoise-browed Motmot called although remained elusive. Mary spotted a White-eyed Vireo and a Black-and-white Warbler was foraging along the branches, a little like a Treecreeper. The sound of tapping was made by a large woodpecker, probably a Pale-billed Woodpecker, seen briefly by Ed. A few at the back of the group heard a Tropical Pewee and saw a close Worm-eating Warbler. We paused by the lake under shelter for a rest seeing two Pied-billed Grebes and a Neotropic Cormorant. In the distance a Bright-rumped Attila was singing. We headed back to the entrance via a quick look at the small entrance to a deep cenote where people can abseil down. Back near the vehicles three or four Black-headed Saltators were still busy feeding alongside a pair of Rosy-throated Becards, a Greyish Saltator and a Blue-grey Tanager.

We headed into Valladolid, a 45-minute journey, and stopped in the centre to give everyone half an hour to explore the square, shops and the San Servacio Church, originally built in 1545 before being demolished in 1705 and then restored in 1706. A Mayan pyramid was also demolished to give way for the square and the church back then.

The trees in the park were busy with Blue-grey Tanagers, Yellow-winged Tanagers, two Golden-fronted Woodpeckers, two Blue-grey Gnatcatchers, a Tropical Mockingbird, Social Flycatchers, Feral Pigeons and a Hooded Oriole. We stopped for lunch in Valladolid at the Zaci Restaurant by a large, open cenote, either enjoying a big mix of Yucatan food on one huge plate or choosing our own individual dishes. We then headed on to our next hotel, the Villas Arqueologicas Hotel. After we had unloaded the bus and got settled into our rooms we had several hours before we met again for the checklist at 7.15pm and dinner at 7.30pm.

Day 6

Thursday 14th November

Chichen Itza (25°C)

A Great Kiskadee and Melodious Blackbird were the first birds to sing at dawn, quickly followed by the more raucous calls of White-fronted Parrots which could be seen at breakfast. We met at 7am for fruit followed by scrambled or fried egg, with or without bacon, and then gathered outside at just after 8am. A tree full of small yellow-orange fruits was attracting five or more Golden-fronted Woodpeckers clinging to the outer leaves and branches to feed on them. Nearby a troop of Groove-billed Anis were hanging out in the trees.

We met with our guide Juan and headed ten minutes down the road to Chichen Itza, one of the Seven Wonders of the World. After stopping by an open cenote, Xtoloc, we entered into the 47-acre archeological site where Juan told stories of the many different restored original architecture including the spectacular main pyramid (The Castle) alongside the observatory, the market, the ball court and the 90, 000 people who once lived here. We spent some time by The Castle where Juan demonstrated the call of the quetzal by clapping. The sound echoed

off the stone structure replicating the bird's call. The quetzal was associated with a serpent bird or snake-god, that was able to fly to the underworld. This temple, representing the Mayan calendar, is 25 metres high and is built over a similar one that lies beneath, and an even smaller one beneath this, like Russian Dolls – all are built over a cenote below. At the Great Ball Court we saw straight, vertical walls that lead to a stone ring for a ball to be hit through (instead of sloping walls found at Coba). Archeologists were busy conserving some of the fine architecture found on the stone blocks. Those on our side of the court had already been conserved and Juan was able to describe more about the characters carved into the stone and what different parts of their bodies or clothing represented. Close by a Bat Falcon flew in with a large insect which it began to dismember, with a large wing floating to the ground. It flew into a tree where it joined its mate and gave stunning views above us. In the humid, overcast climate the birdlife was relatively quiet and Melodious Blackbirds, Great-tailed Grackles and some Bronzed Cowbirds were the main birds we saw alongside White-winged and White-tipped Doves. Several vultures began to circle nearby later in the morning.

We had a Mexican-themed buffet lunch in a nearby hotel and then met together at 3.00pm for a stroll back to Chichen Itza to spot some birds. Outside the hotel in the fruiting tree a few Yellow-winged Tanagers, a Yellow-throated Euphonia and a stunning Collared Aracari were feeding on the fruits alongside the woodpeckers. Further up the road a small group of Groove-billed Anis were hanging out. Not long after entering we watched two Hooded Orioles feeding amongst seed pods, a female Rose-throated Becard and a Rufous-browed Peppershrike which was keeping hidden in a nearby tree. Grackles and Melodious Blackbirds were foraging all over the site and a stunning male Bronzed Cowbird was glinting in the sunshine. We headed over to the main cenote, passing by the stalls selling wooden carvings and whistle-type wooden gifts that growled like a leopard or tweeted like a bird when blown. The birds seemed used to this and in an open spot we watched two Yucatan Jays and three Masked Tityras in a dead tree. Down by the open cenote a Boat-billed Flycatcher flew across and remained largely hidden. During a light shower we walked back to the main arena, photographing The Castle and other buildings in beautiful afternoon light. We then headed back out of the site to the hotel where Vaux's Bats were flying overhead. As we arrived back at 5pm the first bats appeared low in front of us, flying with the swifts and the odd swallow. The bats appeared to be coming out of the tree by the hotel entrance.

We had a few hours to relax and several of the group went straight into the outdoor pool for a swim before we met again at 7.15pm, eating this time outside by the pool.

Day 7

Friday 15th November

Chichen Itza and transfer to Rio Lagartos (25°C)

We met at 6am with large bats flying low in front of the hotel entrance and foraging around the nearby palms. In the background, a White-tipped Dove and a distant Collared Forest Falcon were calling. As the bats went to roost for the day a whole myriad of birds appeared, attracted by two fruiting trees. They included at least five Black-headed Saltators, two Greyish Saltators, Yellow-winged Tanagers, two Blue-grey Gnatcatchers, two Rufous-browed Peppershrikes, over half a dozen Groove-billed Anis, several Altamira Orioles and Green Jays, alongside the ubiquitous Great-tailed Grackles, Melodious Blackbirds, a few Great Kiskadees, a Social Flycatcher, a Bronzed Cowbird and a Boat-billed Flycatcher. Pip also spotted a Ferruginous Pygmy Owl. As we walked along the road Ed spotted a Turquoise-browed Motmot who throughout the walk was very obliging and perched in various trees giving incredible views; its iridescent electric blue brow and chin feathers were incredible against its olive-green and brown plumage. Before we headed in for breakfast several pairs of white-fronted

Parrots began appearing noisily in the trees close by, giving us views of their red and white faces against their green bodies. One further treat was a second pygmy owl, a rich orange-brown individual, sitting out in the open for us to see. When it was turned away it still appeared to be looking at us with very convincing colour patches on the back of the head that resembled eyes.

We enjoyed fruit and cooked breakfasts before packing and relaxing. We met again at 10am and headed to our final destination, Rio Lagartos. As we travelled north the forest and scrub changed to more open grassland and agriculture, with cows and horses. As a result we began to see American Kestrels, eight in total and a pair of Laughing Falcons, all perched on the telegraph poles or wires. Other birds included Tropical Mockingbirds, Tropical Kingbirds, Turkey and Black Vultures, Ruddy Ground Doves a flock of Cattle Egrets on cows and a smelly roadkill skunk. As we arrived in Rio Lagartos around 1pm, we saw our first flamingoes on briny pools behind the back gardens of houses while a few White Ibises flew overhead. Several Mangrove Swallows were on the overhead wires and on arrival at the hotel, Villa Pescadores, two flying White Pelicans, Brown Pelicans and Laughing Gulls were along the seafront. A female Mexican Sheartail was sipping sugar water from the hummingbird feeder at the hotel. After unloading our luggage and seeing our rooms, we headed straight to the restaurant next door for lunch enjoying fresh fish, chicken, shrimp and other dishes. After unpacking we met at 4pm and drove down to the end of the promenade to look for hummingbirds. It was very windy and apart from a superb Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture soaring low in the wind there was little else to see. We headed back along the promenade to a hotel where feeders were hanging and full of sugar water. We stopped here at some feeder and watched up to four females and one male Mexican Sheartail, endemic to Mexico, and a Cinnamon Hummingbird. The sky was moody and overcast and we held on to see the hummingbirds despite the poor light, enjoying some coffee and a tea from the hotel owner who was happy for us to watch. We were back at the hotel by 5.30pm with the power back on after a power cut (and before losing it again for a short while) and met again at 7pm to drive to our restaurant.

Day 8

Saturday 16th November

Rio Lagartos and Rio Coloradas (25°C)

We gathered at 6:00am and headed out on two boats into the Rio Lagartos and its mangroves. Mexico is one of six countries with the most mangroves in the world. Egrets were flying in large groups over the water spreading out to forage for the day. We motored close to the edge of the mangroves where Great Blue Herons, Great Egrets and smaller numbers of Snowy Egrets, Little Blue Herons and Reddish Egrets were loitering. In amongst them we saw small numbers of Willets, Whimbrels, Short-billed Dowitchers, a few Spotted Sandpipers and a single Grey Plover. White Ibises were parading along, foraging on the edge of the mangroves in small numbers. It was high tide and we were treated to several roosting flocks of Laughing Gulls, Black Skimmers, Royal Terns, small numbers of Gull-billed Terns, two Caspian Terns and a Cabot's Tern. Waders were packed together and included Marbled Godwits, Short-billed Dowitchers, American Oystercatchers, Willets and the occasional smaller wader. Steve spotted a Semipalmated Plover. Wood Storks were hanging out on the shore of one island, standing over the nearby egrets and resting in the early morning shade. On the sea wall terns, Brown Pelicans and Double Crested Cormorants were resting. We saw both Neotropic and Double Crested Cormorants, with both side by side in some places. The final treat was seeing American Flamingos feeding in the shallow waters, including several very close as their snake-like necks were dangling down to a submerged head that was busily filtering the water. Other birds included American White Pelicans, Turnstones and Ospreys. One obliging Osprey, a two-year old bird, sat on a mangrove branch giving us superb views in the morning sunshine. We

passed by a flock of Red-winged Blackbirds nosily chattering away in the mangroves before stopping to see an amazingly tame American Crocodile that came to see us. We had incredible views and could see it had been in a tiff with another crocodile, showing some cuts to its skin.

We arrived back at just after 8am and went to breakfast enjoying Mexican-style scrambled eggs, toast and some fruit with yoghurt and muesli. We then met again at 9.15am and headed out on the road towards Rio Coloradas where we explored the grasslands, mangroves and pools. A White-tailed Hawk soared overhead showing its white chest and rump, and vultures, mainly Lesser Yellow-headed, gave superb views as they drifted by. A stunning crimson-red Vermillion Flycatcher stood out on a bush, with a Tropical Mockingbird and a Tropical Kingbird nearby. The pools, full with water, were home to eight roosting and cryptic Black-necked Stilts. Four flamingos flew in and began feeding, including a colour-ringed bird. The bushes were busy with Groove-billed Anis, a Yellow Warbler, the call of a Yellow-breasted Chat, a Hooded Oriole, Social Flycatcher and a Belted Kingfisher, seen by Fiona. A Pygmy Owl was also calling. We managed to see a large Yucatan Wren or two in a bush, and two Olive-throated Parakeets flew overhead.

Before lunch, we headed back into town and then to the end of the promenade where we entered a mangrove boardwalk, the Peten Mae trail. The shapes, patterns and textures of the mangrove trees and their roots were impressive. We walked along to an opening where a beautiful vegetated pool was home to a sleeping Morelet's Crocodile which was sunning itself with its mouth wide open (and had very clean teeth). Small fish were plentiful including Peacock Perch and small cichlids. Giant Neotropical Grasshoppers were dotted around the plant life, some bright green and one orange. Northern Waterthrush and Green Jays could be heard, and before we left, Fernando spotted a Squirrel Cuckoo. As we looked closer we could see it had a large orb-web spider in its beak. It then flew to a nest and fed a hungry chick. Another adult was nearby with a green bug in its beak. After a short while it also flew up to feed the chick, its wings fluttering as it was fed.

We stopped for lunch down the road at a restaurant, Elpulpo Maya, where we had some delicious local cuisine before resting until 3pm. We then headed to extensive saltpans and salt-water lagoons at Rio Coloradas, passing huge mountains of salt that had been collected from the lagoons and was waiting to be loaded onto ships for processing. Just outside the town over 30 Mangrove Swallows were perched on the overhead wires; later we also spotted a Barn Swallow and at least one Tree Swallow. We drove down the sandy, salty track which was full of large puddles after all the recent rain. We paused briefly to look at some American Avocets and, in the distance, beyond reach, we could see thousands of small wading birds and hundreds of flamingos. We carried on along the track, however, the mosquitos were so bad that we retreated and went back to the start of the track where the open lagoons were busy with flamingos and wading birds. A Peregrine and a caracara had put the waders up on our way back past, revealing just what was out there! We spent the remaining half an hour or more enjoying the flamingos, and amongst them in the distance, tens of Black-necked Stilts. Nearby a channel of water was completely pink from the brine shrimps living here. Some waders were very tame and feeding on flies of another nearby channel. They included Least, Semipalmated and Western Sandpipers alongside a few Lesser Yellowlegs and a Black-necked Stilt. In the distance more Western Sandpipers, a Semipalmated Plover and at least three Sanderlings were feeding. A flock of Killdeer flew overhead as the sun began to set. Several warblers were feeding on the insects amongst the vegetation and by the channel including a rare (for here) Pine Warbler and a Yellow-rumped Warbler. Earlier we had seen a Palm Warbler in a bush and a Mexican Sheartail also popped by. As the sun set, the sky became a radiant yellow and orange. We left the flamingos feeding and headed back to the

hotel for a break before meeting again at 7pm. After devouring some tasty seafood dishes and drinks we headed back for 9pm ready for an early start.

Day 9

Sunday 17th November

San Juan de Rio, Rio Lagartos and Rio Colorados (26°C)

Today would be our last full day wildlife watching in the Yucatan Peninsula. Half the group left the hotel at 5.30am and headed out of town to a small village, San Juan de Rio, and area of grass and scrubland. Along the way we saw two Northern Crested Caracaras and a Common Pauraque sat on the road. It was refreshingly cool and in the middle of the village. A Turquoise-browed Motmot was perched on a children's climbing frame. Several hundred Bronze-winged Cowbirds flew overhead coming out of roost, with some dropping down into the village. A hummingbird perching in a nearby tree was a winter migrant, a female Ruby-throated Hummingbird, while a Cinnamon Hummingbird was also flying nearby. Common birds in the open area included Social Flycatchers, Great Kiskadees, a Golden-fronted Woodpecker, a White-winged Dove, Ruddy Ground Doves, Melodious Blackbirds, an Altamira Oriole and a singing Great-tailed Grackle on the wires above us. A Yellow-throated Warbler and a White-eyed Vireo were foraging in large tree in front of us. Throughout the morning Vermillion Flycatchers were common and striking with their bright red breasts.

We continued along the track hearing Plain Chachalacas and three were perched high in a dead tree. A male Blue-black Grassquit was busy jumping up and down a vertical grass stem trying to attract a mate. Numerous others were calling or display across the grasslands. We spotted a bright-red Northern Cardinal, followed by others in trees further along. Two different Acadian Flycatchers were perched on the edge of bushes. A tree stump next to a palm tree revealed a large Lineated Woodpecker with a broad, red shaggy crest. As we drove along, a male Northern Harrier, pale grey with a white rump, quartered the grasslands before chasing something with quick twists and turns. At least two White-collared Seedeaters, bullfinch-like, were feeding on grasses and a male Blue Grosbeak flew from a bush to vegetation where he was more obvious. In the same bush three dusky-brown Orchard Orioles, two males and a female, were perched. We finished our morning trip by a beautiful pool full of different water plants, the tallest of which had Purple Gallinules grasping their tops, feeding in the seed heads. The adults were brightly coloured with yellow legs, bright blue wings and a multi-coloured beak. Meanwhile, Fernando got stuck in the vegetation while turning the vehicle and we helped push him out. We returned to the pool to see a parent and chick Least Grebe, an American Coot feeding on weed and a superbly hidden Morelet's Crocodile, just its nostrils and eyes visible. A large Zigzag spider had made distinctive thickened white zig-zag threads on its web between the grasses. Two more Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were perching on the sedges and a White Peacock butterfly and dragonflies were all around. A female Yellowthroat was foraging through the rushes like a Reed Warbler and a few Vermillion Flycatchers were adding a flash of red colour to the verdant green area. In the background several Orange Orioles were perched next to an Altamira Oriole, which was much larger. Other birdlife included Common Ground Doves, Tropical Mockingbirds, a Red-winged Blackbird, Cattle Egrets, a Yucatan Woodpecker, several groups of Groove-billed Anis and the calls of Green Jays. On our way back to the main road, three Crane Hawks flew low over the grassland revealing their red legs and barred, long tail. On the main road back to Ria Lagartos, the raptors were all out including an adult and juvenile Grey Hawk, a Common Black Hawk perched in a bush being harassed by the adult Grey Hawk and a perched Laughing Falcon. By the end of this one day we had seen or heard 100 species of bird.

We had breakfast at 8.45am, entertained by Brown Pelicans, Laughing Gulls, several American White Pelicans and an Osprey outside the breakfast room. We left at 10.30am and headed back to Rio Colorados where we spent an hour watching the birdlife. Least, Western and Semipalmated Sandpipers were chasing the small flies resting in their thousands on the shallow water of the channel we were looking over or on the wet sand. On other areas two separate Snowy Plovers were taking this to the extreme and running really fast along the sand to catch flies. Meanwhile, Mangrove Swallows and a Barn Swallow were passing low over the channel to catch flies while many more Mangrove Swallows were preening on the overhead wires. The flamingos were resting further away today although as we were leaving one decided to walk around on the sandy road. Another was feeding close by, moving its legs back and forth to stir up the sediment as it fed. In the vegetation several Yellow-rumped Warblers and a Palm Warbler were feeding. Low flying Lesser Yellow-headed Vultures gave close views and one landed on a post nearby. Other birds included Killdeer, Sanderlings and a Mexican Sheartail. As we left two different Monarch butterflies were flying around.

We headed off at 12.30pm and drove over to San Filipe, a small tidy fishing town just west of Rio Lagartos where we had some lunch at Restaurant Vaselina. As we passed the refuse tip, tens of Black Vultures were hanging around. The heavy rains meant nearby scrub and grasslands were flooded with some cacti surrounded by water. One area was rich with Northern Jacanas, three American Coots, Great Egrets, Snowy Egrets, a Little Blue Heron and a Reddish Egret.

We were back at our hotel by 2.30pm in time for a rest and packing before leaving for our dusk boat trip in the mangroves at 5pm. As the sun began to drop, flocks of White Ibises were already heading to roost followed by smaller groups of Tricoloured Herons and Snowy Egrets. The front boat spotted a Lesser Nighthawk flying close to a pair of perched Common Black Hawks and an Osprey. Ed and few others spotted a fast, medium-size falcon flying fast low in front of the mangroves and on perching Ed could make it out as an Aplomado Falcon. As the light faded, the odd Great Egret and Great Blue Heron were perched for the night in the trees. Two Belted Kingfishers were also seen. We spent lots of time exploring the mangroves in the dark with the help of high-powered torches by the boat captains. We happened upon a single Boat-billed Heron, perched high showing its pinkish underparts, large eye and broad bill. We made it to the road bridge that leads to Rio Colorados where many people were fishing for shrimps in their boats. Heading back, some groups of egrets were seen roosting in the trees and the occasional pair of crocodile's eye shone back. Small fish were plentiful and continually jumping out of the water appearing like glitter. The night sky was remarkable with so many stars and constellations, and planets such as Venus and Mars.

We arrived back at 7.15pm and found the restaurant we had booked closed, so we headed to one by our hotel which was open and served us our last delicious meals and celebratory drinks here in Rio Lagartos.

Day 10

Monday 18th November

Transfer to Cancun (24°C - 29°C)

Overnight the tide had covered the road outside our hotel and was beginning to drain away with Turnstones happy feeding on what was left behind. At dawn we woke to the cries of Laughing Gulls as they fed on scraps that the fishermen were leaving for them as they processed their morning catch. A very obliging Snowy Egret and Yellow-crowned Night Heron came and stood right by the men. Egrets, ibises, cormorants and White Pelicans flew past in flocks heading out to feed for the day. Gull-billed Terns, the Bonaparte's Gull, Royal Terns,

a Cabot's Tern and a flamingo flew past before breakfast at 7.30am. As we left for Cancun at 8.30am an Osprey was circling around over the mangroves. The journey to Tizimín was busy with birds of prey perched on telegraph poles and wires; along the way there were six American Kestrels, A White-tailed Hawk, three Grey Hawks and a Laughing Falcon. There were numerous Tropical Kingbirds and Tropical Mockingbirds, plus several Vermillion Flycatchers. We stopped at 1.15pm in Puerto Morelos at La Playita, a beach restaurant where we enjoyed our last lunch together with beautiful sunshine and heat, a sandy beach and bright blue sea. We continued 20 minutes on to the airport where we got dropped off at Terminal 3 and said our goodbyes and thanked Fernando and Antonio. Some were staying on in Cancun and Akumal till the end of the week. Those of us heading back to the UK arrived back at Gatwick Airport to a chilly start, minus two degrees Celsius in fact, with the countryside covered in frost. We said our farewells before departing to our different parts of the country.

Day 11

Tuesday 19th November

Those of us heading back to the UK arrived back at Gatwick Airport to a chilly start, minus two degrees Celsius in fact, with the countryside covered in frost. We said our farewells before departing to our different parts of the country.

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.

Social Media

We're social! Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and be the first to hear about the launch of new tours, offers and exciting sightings and photos from our recently returned holidays.



www.facebook.com/naturetrekwildlifeholidays



www.twitter.com/naturetrektours



www.instagram.com/naturetrek_wildlife_holidays

Species Lists

Birds (✓=recorded but not counted; H = heard only)

	Common name	Scientific name	November									
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
1	Least Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus dominicus</i>									2	
2	Pied-billed Grebe	<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>			4	2						
3	Brown Booby	<i>Sula leucogaster</i>										
4	Neotropic Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax brasilianus</i>	1	2	4+	1				✓	✓	✓
5	Double-crested Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>								✓	✓	✓
6	Anhinga	<i>Anhinga anhinga</i>			1				2	2	1	
7	American White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>							2	✓	✓	✓
8	Brown Pelican	<i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>	5+	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
9	Magnificent Frigatebird	<i>Fregata magnificens</i>	2+	1					✓	✓	6+	
10	Reddish Egret	<i>Egretta rufescens</i>								3	✓	
11	Tricolored Heron	<i>Egretta tricolor</i>		1					1	2	✓	
12	Little Blue Heron	<i>Egretta caerulea</i>								✓	✓	
13	Snowy Egret	<i>Egretta thula</i>	3							✓	✓	✓
14	Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>		1	2					✓	✓	
15	Great White Egret	<i>Egretta alba</i>			4					✓	✓	
16	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>		4					20+		✓	
17	Green Heron	<i>Butorides virescens</i>		2								
18	Yellow-crowned Night-heron	<i>Nyctanassa violacea</i>	1						1	1	2	1
19	Boat-billed Heron	<i>Cochlearius cochlearia</i>									1	
20	Wood Stork	<i>Mycteria americana</i>		5					1	20+	✓	1
21	White Ibis	<i>Eudocimus albus</i>							✓	50+	✓	✓
22	American Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>		1					20+	20+		1
23	Black-bellied Whistling-duck	<i>Dendrocygna autumnalis</i>									H	
24	Blue-winged Teal	<i>Anas discors</i>		20						✓	3	
25	American Black Vulture	<i>Coragyps atratus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
26	Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
27	Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture	<i>Cathartes burrovianus</i>		1	1					4+	6+	
28	Northern Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>									1	
29	Crane Hawk	<i>Geranospiza caerulescens</i>									3	

	Common name	Scientific name	November									
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
30	Common Black-hawk	<i>Buteogallus anthracinus</i>									1	1
31	Gray Hawk	<i>Asturina plagiata</i>									2	3
32	White-tailed Hawk	<i>Geranoaetus albicaudatus</i>								1		1
33	Roadside Hawk	<i>Buteo magnirostris</i>						1				1
34	Short-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo brachyurus</i>									1	
35	Northern Crested Caracara	<i>Caracara cheriway</i>									5+	2
36	Collared Forest Falcon	<i>Micrastur semitorquatus</i>							H			
37	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	1	H						2+	1	1
38	Laughing Falcon	<i>Herpetotheres cachinnans</i>							2		1	1
39	American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>							8			6
40	Bat Falcon	<i>Falco ruficularis</i>					2	2				
41	Aplomado Falcon	<i>Falco femoralis</i>									1	
42	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>								1		
43	Plain Chachalaca	<i>Ortalis vetula</i>	3	3							3+	
44	Common Gallinule	<i>Gallinula galeata</i>										1
45	Purple Gallinule	<i>Porphyrio martinicus</i>									6+	
46	American Coot	<i>Fulica americana</i>		2							4	
47	Limpkin	<i>Aramus guarauna</i>			2							
48	Northern Jacana	<i>Jacana spinosa</i>		1							6+	
49	American Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus palliatus</i>								4+		
50	Black-necked Stilt	<i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>								100+	100+	
51	American Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra americana</i>								8		
52	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>								1		
53	Semipalmated Plover	<i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>								1	1	
54	Killdeer	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>								✓	✓	
55	Snowy Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus</i>									2	
56	Marbled Godwit	<i>Limosa fedoa</i>								✓		
57	Lesser Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa flavipes</i>								2+	2+	
58	Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularia</i>	1							2		
59	Willet	<i>Tringa semipalmatus</i>								✓		
60	Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>								✓	✓	✓
61	Short-billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus griseus</i>								✓	1	

	Common name	Scientific name	November									
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
62	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>								3	3	
63	Western Sandpiper	<i>Calidris mauri</i>	6							✓	✓	
64	Semipalmated Sandpiper	<i>Calidris pusilla</i>								✓	✓	
65	Least Sandpiper	<i>Calidris minutilla</i>								✓	✓	
66	Bonaparte's Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus philadelphia</i>								1	1	1
67	Laughing Gull	<i>Leucophaeus atricilla</i>							✓	✓	✓	✓
68	Ring-billed Gull	<i>Larus delawarensis</i>									1	
69	Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>								2	1	
70	Royal Tern	<i>Thalasseus maxima</i>	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
71	Cabot's Tern	<i>Thalasseus acuflavidus</i>								1	1	1
72	Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>								6+	6+	2+
73	Black Skimmer	<i>Rynchops niger</i>								10+		
74	Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia 'feral'</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
75	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
76	White-winged Dove	<i>Zenaida asiaticus</i>	1					2+	2+		2+	✓
77	Common Ground-dove	<i>Columbina passerina</i>								2	4+	
78	Ruddy Ground-dove	<i>Columbina talpacoti</i>		2		2			✓		6+	✓
79	White-tipped Dove	<i>Leptotila verreauxi</i>				H	1		H	1	H	
80	Olive-throated Parakeet	<i>Aratinga nana</i>	✓		4					2	6+	
81	White-fronted Parrot	<i>Amazona albifrons</i>					4+	6+				
82	Squirrel Cuckoo	<i>Piaya cayana</i>		2		1				3		
83	Groove-billed Ani	<i>Crotophaga sulcirostris</i>				5	8+			4	10+	✓
84	Ferruginous Pygmy-owl	<i>Glaucidium brasilianum</i>		2	H				2	H	H	
85	Lesser Nighthawk	<i>Chordeiles acutipennis</i>									1	
86	Pauraque	<i>Nyctidromus albicollis</i>									1	
87	Vaux's Swift	<i>Chaetura vauxi</i>			50+	6	6+					
88	White-bellied Emerald	<i>Amazilia candida</i>		1	1							
89	Cinnamon Hummingbird	<i>Amazilia rutila</i>		1					1		2+	
90	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	<i>Archilochus colubris</i>									3	
91	Mexican Sheartail	<i>Doricha eliza</i>							5	5	1+	
92	Black-headed Trogon	<i>Trogon melanocephalus</i>		1	1	H						
93	Collared Trogon	<i>Trogon collaris</i>				1						

	Common name	Scientific name	November									
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
94	Belted Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle alcyon</i>	1		1					2	2	
95	Green Kingfisher	<i>Chloroceryle americana</i>		1								
96	Turquoise-browed Motmot	<i>Eumomota superciliosa</i>				H		1			1	
97	Keel-billed Toucan	<i>Ramphastos sulfuratus</i>			1							
98	Collared Aracari	<i>Pteroglossus torquatus</i>		2		2	1					
99	Pale-billed Woodpecker	<i>Campephilus guatemalensis</i>		1		1						
100	Yucatan Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes pygmaeus</i>		1							1	
101	Golden-fronted Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes aurifrons</i>				4	6+	6+			2	
102	Lineated Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus lineatus</i>									1	
103	Ivory-billed Woodcreeper	<i>Xiphorhynchus flavigaster</i>				1						
104	Tropical Pewee	<i>Contopus cinereus</i>				H						
105	Acadian Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax virescens</i>									2	
106	Vermilion Flycatcher	<i>Pyrocephalus rubinus</i>							2			
107	Rose-throated Becard	<i>Pachyramphus aglaiae</i>				2	1					
108	Brown-crested Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus tyrannulus</i>		1								
109	Bright-rumped Attila	<i>Attila spadiceus</i>	1			H						
110	Common Tody Flycatcher	<i>Todirostrum cinereum</i>		1								
111	Tropical Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus melancholicus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
112	Couch's Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus couchii</i>	✓	✓	✓							
113	Boat-billed Flycatcher	<i>Megarynchus pitangua</i>					1	1				
114	Social Flycatcher	<i>Myiozetetes similis</i>	4	2	2	✓	H	H	1	2+		
115	Great Kiskadee	<i>Pitangus sulphuratus</i>	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
116	Masked Tityra	<i>Tityra semifasciata</i>		1			3					
117	Tree Swallow	<i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>							1			
118	Mangrove Swallow	<i>Tachycineta albilinea</i>	✓	✓				2	✓	✓	4	
119	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>	6+		✓	1	2+					
120	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica erythrogaster</i>							1	1		
121	Yucatan Wren	<i>Campylorhynchus yucatanicus</i>							2			
122	Spot-breasted Wren	<i>Thryothorus maculipectus</i>		H	H							
123	Black Catbird	<i>Dumetella glabrirostris</i>	1									
124	Grey Catbird	<i>Dumetella carolinensis</i>		1								
125	Tropical Mockingbird	<i>Mimus gilvus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

	Common name	Scientific name	November								
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
126	Clay-coloured Thrush	<i>Turdus grayi</i>		1		H					
127	Blue-grey Gnatcatcher	<i>Poliophtila caerulea</i>				2		2			
128	Yucatan Jay	<i>Cyanocorax yucatanicus</i>	6+	2	1		2				1
129	Green Jay	<i>Cyanocorax luxuosus</i>				2+	H	3+	H	H	
130	Brown Jay	<i>Psilorhinus morio</i>		4							
131	White-eyed Vireo	<i>Vireo griseus</i>	1		4	2	1			1	
132	Yellow-throated Vireo	<i>Vireo flavifrons</i>			3+	1					
133	Yellow-green Vireo	<i>Vireo flaviviridis</i>			2						
134	Philadelphia Vireo	<i>Vireo philadelphicus</i>			1						
135	Yucatan Vireo	<i>Vireo magister</i>	3								
136	Worm-eating Warbler	<i>Helmitheros vermivorus</i>				1					
137	Yellow Warbler	<i>Setophaga aestiva brewsteri</i>		4			1	H	✓		
138	Yellow-rumped Warbler	<i>Setophaga coronata</i>							1	2	
139	Magnolia Warbler	<i>Setophaga magnolia</i>	1	1	3+	1					
140	Black-throated Green Warbler	<i>Setophaga virens</i>			1	1		1			
141	Yellow-throated Warbler	<i>Setophaga dominica</i>		1	1		1			1	
142	Palm Warbler	<i>Setophaga palmarum</i>							1	1	
143	Pine Warbler	<i>Setophaga pinus</i>							1		
144	Black-and-white Warbler	<i>Mniotilta varia</i>	1	1	2+	2+					
145	American Redstart	<i>Setophaga ruticilla</i>			2+						
146	Golden-crowned Warbler	<i>Basileuterus culicivorus</i>	1								
147	Yellow-breasted Chat	<i>Icteria virens</i>							H	H	
148	Northern Waterthrush	<i>Seiurus noveboracensis</i>	1		1				H	H	
149	Common Yellowthroat	<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>								1	
150	Hooded Warbler	<i>Wilsonia citrina</i>	1								
151	Red-throated Ant-tanager	<i>Habia fuscicauda</i>		4							
152	Rose-throated Tanager	<i>Piranga roseogularis</i>			1						
153	Summer Tanager	<i>Piranga rubra</i>		1	2	2+	1	1			
154	Yellow-winged Tanager	<i>Thraupis abbas</i>				4+	2+	2+			
155	Blue-grey Tanager	<i>Thraupis episcopus</i>				4+	2+				
156	Yellow-throated Euphonia	<i>Euphonia hirundinacea</i>		12	12	1	1	1			
157	Blue-black Grassquit	<i>Volatinia jacarina</i>								6+	

	Common name	Scientific name	November									
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
158	White-collared Seedeater	<i>Sporophila torquela moreletii</i>									2+	
159	Northern Cardinal	<i>Cardinalis cardinalis</i>									6+	
160	Black-headed Saltator	<i>Saltator atriceps</i>				4+			5+			
161	Greyish Saltator	<i>Saltator coerulescens</i>				1			2			
162	Blue Grosbeak	<i>Passerina caerulea</i>									2+	
163	Orchard Oriole	<i>Icterus spurius</i>									5+	
164	Orange Oriole	<i>Icterus auratus</i>									3+	
165	Yellow-backed Oriole	<i>Icterus chrysater</i>	1									
166	Altamira Oriole	<i>Icterus gularis</i>		1					2		2	
167	Hooded Oriole	<i>Icterus cucullatus</i>	6+	4+		✓	✓	✓	1		3+	
168	Red-winged Blackbird	<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>							12+		3+	
169	Melodious Blackbird	<i>Dives dives</i>	H	1	2+	✓	✓	✓			✓	
170	Great-tailed Grackle	<i>Quiscalus mexicanus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
171	Bronzed Cowbird	<i>Molothrus aeneus</i>					✓		2		200+	✓

Mammals

1	Yucatan Black Howler Monkey	<i>Alouatta pigra</i>		H								
2	Central American Spider Monkey	<i>Ateles geoffroyi</i>				7+						
3	White-nosed Coati	<i>Nasua narica</i>	2									
4	Yucatan Squirrel	<i>Sciurus yucatanensis</i>	2	2		2	2	1	1	1		
5	Central American Agouti	<i>Dasyprocta punctata</i>	2	1								

Reptiles

1	Green Turtle	<i>Chelonia mydas</i>	5									
2	Morelet's Crocodile	<i>Crocodylus moreletii</i>							1	1		
3	American Crocodile	<i>Crocodylus acutus</i>							1	1+		
4	Black (Spine-tailed) Iguana	<i>Ctenosaura similes</i>	30+				✓				1	
5	House Gecko	<i>Hemidactylus frenatus</i>	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓			
6	Brown Basilisk	<i>Basiliscus vittatus</i>	1		2					1		
7	Mud Turtle	<i>Kinosternon sp.</i>				1						
8	Anole sp.	<i>Norops sp.</i>	✓	✓								
9	Yucatan Whiptail	<i>Cnemidophorus angusticeps</i>			1		1					

	Common name	Scientific name	November								
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18

Invertebrates

1	Zebra Longwing	<i>Heliconius charithonia</i>	✓	✓							
2	Postman	<i>Heliconius erato</i>	✓	✓	✓	1					
3	Malachite	<i>Siproeta stelenes</i>		1							
4	Common Morpho	<i>Morpho helenor</i>			2	2					
5	Julia	<i>Dryas julia</i>	✓	✓	✓				1	1	
6	Mexican Sister	<i>Adelpha</i>									
7	Sulphur sp.	<i>Phoebis sp.</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	White Peacock	<i>Anartia jatrophae</i>	✓	1				✓	✓	✓	
9	Great Southern White	<i>Ascia monuste</i>	✓	✓							
10	Gold Rim Swallowtail	<i>Battus polydamus</i>		1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
11	Giant Swallowtail	<i>Papilio cresphontes</i>		✓							
12	Grey Cracker	<i>Hamadryas februa</i>	✓		1						
13	Prepona	<i>Prepona sp.</i>			1						
14	Swallowtail Cattleheart	<i>Parides childrenae</i>				✓					
15	Monarch	<i>Danaus plexippus</i>								2	
16	Giant Neotropical Grasshopper	<i>Tropidacris sp.</i>			2				4		
17	Giant Millipede	<i>Orthoporus ornatus</i>	1								
18	Zigzag Spider	<i>Argiope aurantia</i>								1	
19	Long-spined Urchin	<i>Diadema antillarum</i>	✓								
20	Scorpion				1						

Fishes

1	Sergeant Major	<i>Abudefduf saxatilis</i>	✓								
2	Foureye Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon capistratus</i>	✓								
3	Apotfin Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon ocellatus</i>	✓								
4	Houndfish	<i>Tylosurus crocodilus</i>	✓								
5	Doctorfish	<i>Acanthurus chirurgus</i>	✓								
6	Blue-headed Wrasse	<i>Thalassoma bifasciatum</i>	✓								
7	Southern Stingray	<i>Dasyatis americana</i>	1								
8	Spotlight Parrotfish	<i>Sparisoma viride</i>	✓								

	Common name	Scientific name	November											
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18			
9	Striped Parrotfish	<i>Scarus croicensis</i>	✓											
10	Queen Parrotfish	<i>Scarus vetula</i>	✓											
11	Grunt sp.	<i>Haemulon sp.</i>	✓											
12	Remora sp.	Family: <i>Echeneidae</i>	✓											
13	Grey Snapper	<i>Lutjanus griseus</i>		✓										
14	Peacock Perch	<i>Cichla sp.</i>		✓						✓				



American Crocodile by Ed Drewitt



Group together at Chichen Itza by Ed Drewitt



American Flamingo by Ed Drewitt



Yucatan Woodpecker by Ed Drewitt



Osprey by Ed Drewitt



Royal Tern by Ed Drewitt