

# Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico

3<sup>rd</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Gilles DELFORGE

## Summary

The objective of the two of us (Gilles Delforge and Benoît Forget) was to see all the endemics of the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico and as much as possible of the other Caribbeans specialties as we had never been to Cuba, Jamaica or the Lesser Antilles.

With 2.5 days in Puerto Rico and 5.5 days in the Dominican Republic our planning was tight but we almost succeeded: we saw all the Puerto Rican endemics, bar Puerto Rican Parrot which was heard only (we had to leave to the airport and the rain didn't help but we had probably seen it had we had more time). We barely had the time to stop for Green-throated Carib in San Juan, and hadn't the time to try for Antillean Crested Hummingbird. 3 full days (or more) would have probably permitted to get the Parrot and the Hummingbird.

Due to the fact that we lost 1 day in the Dominican Republic because of a car breakdown ( more about that latter), we couldn't go along Alcoa Road as planned and didn't saw Hispaniolan palm Crow as a consequence (we tried without luck along Lake Enriquillo when at Villa Barrancoli).

The last endemic we didn't see was White-fronted Quail-Dove, which isn't present anymore at his stakeout of Rabo de Gato trail (at least for the last 6 months) because of severe drought in the area ( it hadn't rained since April 2021). A luck encounter is thus needed along the Zapoten trail to see this bird.

## Itinerary

### Day 0 (2<sup>nd</sup> February)

Arrived Punta Cana airport 4 p.m. and left for **Cano Hondo** at 6 p.m. arriving at Alto de Cano Hondo at 8.30 pm in torrential rain. Night birding aborted due to rain. Night at Alto de Cano Hondo

### Day 1 (3<sup>th</sup> February)

Birded **Cano Hondo** area between 7 and 10 am but all area flooded after the night's rains and Ridgway's Hawk area inaccessible. Drive back to Punta Cana 10.30 am – 1 pm. Flight to San Juan international airport, arriving 5 pm. Drive to Guanica 7 pm – 9 pm. Night at Parador Guanica 1929.

### Day 2 (4<sup>th</sup> February)

Birding **Maricao** between km 16.2 and 16.8 from 06.30 am – 11 am. Drive to **Cabo Rojo** and birded the last 2 kms of the road along the flats to Playa Sucia between 12.30 pm and 2 pm. Drive to **Laguna Cartagena** arriving at 3 pm but were rained out and left for **Bosque Estetal de Guanica** at 3.30 pm, arriving 4.15 pm. Birded the first 2 kms of PR 334 after park gate until 7.30 pm for Puerto Rican Nightjar. Night at Parador Guanica 1929.

### Day 3 (5<sup>th</sup> February)

Birding **Maricao** between km 16.2 and 16.8 from 06.00 am – 10:30 am. On the way down, 15 min stop at Monte del Estado, stake out for Hispaniolan Oriole. Birded **Bosque Estetal de Guanica** along

PR 334 to the guard station 12.00 pm – 02.15 pm, then **Laguna Cartagena** 3 pm – 7 pm. Night at Parador Guanica 1929.

#### **Day 4** (6<sup>th</sup> February)

5 am – 7 am drive to **Bosque Estetal de Rio Abajo**. Walked from first gate to second gate 7am – 10 am for Puerto Rican Parrot, only hearing them when the light rain stopped. Had then to leave to catch our flight to Punta Cana. Drive to San Juan International Airport 10.00 am – 12 pm, short stop en route in **Parque Central San Juan** for Green-throated Carib. Flight San Juan – Punta Cana 3 pm – 4 pm. Drive Punta Cana – Barahona 5 pm – 10:30 pm. Night Hotel Loro Tuerto

#### **Day 5** (7<sup>th</sup> February)

Drive Barahona – end of road up **Cachote** ( 5 am – 06.45 am). Birding Cachote 06.45 – 10:45 am. Drive to Pedernales 12 am – 2 pm. Afternoon around hotel Villas del Mar in Pedernales after mechanical problems with car.

#### **Day 6** (8<sup>th</sup> February)

Morning at hotel Villas del Mar until 3 pm when new car arrived from Santo Domingo. Drive to Villa Barrancoli 3.30 pm – 7.30 pm. Night birding up to 5 kms up **Rabo de Gato trail** (with our 4x4 ). Night Villa Barrancoli.

#### **Day 7** (9<sup>th</sup> February)

**Rabo de Gato trail** (06.45 am – 11.30 am). Drive along first part of **Lago Enrequillo** from Duvergé for Palm Crow without success ( 12.30 pm – 2 pm). **Rabo de Gato trail** 3 pm – 6 pm. Night birding between Puerto Escondido and La Placa along avocado plantation ( 08.30 pm – 10 pm). Night Villa Barancoli.

## **Day 8 (10<sup>th</sup> February)**

Drive Villa Barrancoli – Zapoten ( 4 am – 6 am). Birding up to 4 kms up **Zapoten** station 6 am – 12.30 pm. Drive back to Villa Barancoli stopping at **Agua Cate** station en route for Loggerhead Kingbird. Drive along **Lago Enrequillo** from Duvergé to El Limon for Palm Crow without success ( 3.30 pm – 5 pm). **Rabo de Gato trail** (5 pm – 6 pm). Night birding between Puerto Escondido and La Placa along avocado plantation ( 08.30 pm – 10 pm). Night Villa Barrancoli.

## **Day 9 ( 11<sup>th</sup> February)**

Drive Villa Barancoli – Cano Hondo ( 7 am – 2 pm). Birding Alto de Cano Hondo area ( 3 pm – 7 pm). Night birding between Alto de Cano Hondo and Sabana de la Mar ( 08:30 pm – 10 pm).

## **Day 10 ( 12<sup>th</sup> February)**

Birding Cano Hondo area ( 7 am – 10 am). Drive back to Punta Cana airport and flight back home at 4 pm.

# **Logistics**

## **Flights**

We had a direct flight from Brussels with Air Belgium to Punta Cana.

A flight to Santo Domingo is probably more convenient (2h drive closer to most of the south-west birding sites, and more flight choices to other destinations like Puerto Rico), but from Belgium it was the only direct flight option which for us was a real plus.

We had some problems with our flights between Punta Cana and San Juan, as we had first booked with Frontier airlines which cancelled one of our flight 2 weeks before travel, and the second one one week before ! We were very lucky as Jetblue airlines had flights roughly at the same time and for the same price which were still available.

The go and return price pp for the ticket was around 300 € with luggage.

## Car rental

We needed 3 different rentals:

- 1 day in Dominican Republic as we arrived the 2<sup>nd</sup> at Punta Cana and left the 3<sup>rd</sup> to Puerto Rico;
- 3 days in Puerto Rico;
- 6 days in Dominican Republic as we flew back from Puerto Rico.

We needed a 4x4 only for the last 6 days in Dominican Republic, to access Cachote for the **Eastern Chat Tanager** and for Zapoten ( it was also very useful for night birding along Rabo de Gato). A trip with a 2 wheel drive and arranging a 4x4 and driver/guide via Kate Wallace for example is also possible, but because of our tight schedule and to give us more flexibility, we preferred the 4x4 option.

We booked a high-clearance 4x4 pickup through expedia without pre-payment ( not recommended, see later) with Alamo. To be sure to get it, we booked with the same method our 1 day rental of a 2 wheel drive for our first day, also with Alamo, to already have a contact with them and be sure to get our 4x4 when returning 3 days later, as we had heard that it was a common practice for car rental companies to announce 4x4 that they couldn't deliver.

It started not so well as when we arrived, Alamo had not the 2 wheel drive we had booked...

The representative of Alamo was quite helpful however, and she helped us to find a (slightly more expensive) deal with another rental company for our 1 day rental ( all the car rentals companies are in the same building next to Punta Cana airport).

She promised us that she would do her best to get us a 4x4 when we would get back 3 days later but that that was a difficult task....

Our expectations weren't particularly high when we get back 3 days later, but the promised 4x4 materialized in the form of a quite new Nissan

Frontier pickup. The price was the best we got online, but quite high at 930 \$ for 6 days (insurance and road assistance included).

We had however a big issue with the car the next day, when the reverse gear broke at the top of Cachote ( 17 kms from the first village !). We were extremely lucky to be able to push the car back (the 2 of us, without anyone on the driver's seat !) and jump back in it before it fell in a ditch. We then could make a U-turn as the other speeds where ok.

We then drove to Pedernales, 2 hour drive away, hoping that our driving capabilities were the problem and not the gearbox. A quick visit to a mechanic proved unfortunately that there was a big issue with the gearbox, and that it was not reparable...

Long discussions followed with the car rental company, who in first instance was more concerned by getting their car back than giving us a new one.

They first wanted us to get back to the closest agency 5 hours driving away in Santo Domingo by public transport (!!), but finally agreed to send us another car to our hotel in Pedernales.

We lost 24h in the process and had to skip the planned visit to Alcoa Road ( missing Hispaniolan Palm Crow, which we didn't find at the alternative but less reliable site of Lake Enriquillo).

In Puerto Rico, we booked a 2 wheel drive via a broker with Payless, quite expensive at 230 € for 3 days ( insurance and toll roads included). As they aren't located at the airport, a shuttle is needed. As some of the rental companies are situated at the airport ( probably more expensive), it probably save some time to contract with one of them.

## **Covid**

As we were fully vaccinated, we didn't need ( February 2022) any covid test before boarding the plane to Dominican Republic.

A 24h old antigen test was needed to go to Puerto Rico. We had one easily done the day before at Punta Cana, 1 km from the airport at Referencia Laboratorio at 18.555473, - 68.372296 (no test available at the airport).

# Resources

## Trip reports

As usual, we used the excellent [cloudbirders.com](http://cloudbirders.com) to find relevant trip reports. We mostly relied on the (as usual) excellent report by Ross and Melissa Gallardy – Birding the Caribbean on a budget - March 8-21 2017.

## Apps

We used [maps.me](http://maps.me) and offline [googlemaps](http://googlemaps.com) as gps ( [googlemaps](http://googlemaps.com) more reliable than [maps.me](http://maps.me)).

I used the Merlin Bird ID app for the first time and downloaded the Caribbean guide (free) before departure. To have photos of birds can be useful to support identification but, more importantly, I found the sound recordings to be of pretty high quality ( systematically better than the one I had found on [xeno-canto](http://xeno-canto.com)) and I used them on daily basis.

## Sounds

I downloaded a lot of sounds from [xeno-canto](http://xeno-canto.com) but mostly used the Merlin Bird ID app's sounds ( see apps).

## Ebird

As usual, [ebird](http://ebird.org) was useful to plan the itinerary and to find recent observations of our targets (It would be a big plus if it was possible to get the specific observations registered at the exact location and not in a much too broad hotspot, like with [observado.org](http://observado.org) for example).

## **Accommodations Dominican Republic ( price for double room)**

### **Alto de Cano Hondo**

Via booking. 81€ the first time, 77€ the second time. With breakfast. Quite expensive but with Ridgway's Hawk stakeout inside the hotel's grounds.

1<sup>st</sup> and last night ( we had to go back because of torrential rain the first day which made Ridgway's Hawk's stakeout impossible to reach).

### **Hotel Loro Tuerto ( Barahona)**

Via booking. 27€. In central Barahona. As we arrived late at night from Punta Cana, we chose to stop in Barahona before going up to Cachote the next day. There are some hotels closer to the Cachote turnoff, but It doesn't make a big difference as Barahona is 15kms away from the turnoff.

### **Hotel Villas del Mar (Pedernales)**

Via booking. 29€ with breakfast. Good value for money. There are other options in Pedernales.

### **Villa Barrancoli**

Kate Wallace's place. Perfectly situated 2 kms of Puerto Escondido, the gateway to Zapoten, and next to Rabo de Gato. The cabins are basic but adequate, with shared bathroom. Kate can organize your visit to Zapoten or to Dominican Republic in general ( contact: +1 8492050882 - [todytours.com](http://todytours.com) ).

50\$ per person with dinner, which is very expensive for what you get. Other birders stayed recently at the Ramada restaurant in Duvergé ( 12 kms away) and paid 35\$ a night for a 3 persons room.



## Accommodations Puerto Rico (price for double room)

Accommodations are quite expensive in Puerto Rico in comparison with Dominican Republic. There was much more choice on Airbnb than with Booking (at the end we booked with Booking however).

As we had only three nights in Puerto Rico and as much of the sites are situated in the southwest, we chose to sleep in Guanica, which is perfectly situated for most of the sites.

### Parador Guanica 1929

Via booking. 238 € for 3 nights ( it was a last minute deal, earlier quote where much higher at around 110€ a night). A little bit rundown, but perfectly adequate.

## Sites visited Puerto Rico

### Bosque Estatal de Maricao

Mountain forest. The best site for **Elfin Woods Warbler**, **Puerto-Rican Tanager** and **Green Mango**. Best accessed from Sabana Grande and the road 120. We mostly birded along the road branching off the 120 at km 16.2 ( at 18.152731, -66.993591). We also birded the road 120 (more traffic) to the trails ( overgrown) starting at km 16.8.

We saw **Puerto Rican Owl** at the junction (18.152731, -66.993591) early morning ( even after sunrise !). It responded to the tape but moved systematically away so wasn't easy to spot.

We had **Elfin Woods Warbler** along the side road at 18.152122, -66.993767. **Puerto Rican Vireo** was taped in at the same place the next day.

We saw **Puerto Rican Bullfinch**, **Puerto Rican Woodpecker**, **Puerto Rican Emerald** and **Puerto Rican Spindalis** in the same general area.

**Pearly-eyed Thrasher** and **Loggerhead Kingbird** were present at the power station at 18.149642, -66.993413.

**Puerto Rican Tanager** was common and conspicuous in all the area, as was **Scaly-naped Pigeon**.

We tried hard for **Lesser Antillean Pewee** but without success.

**Green Mango** was only seen once, along the 120 road, when going back to Sabana Grande at 18.148603, -66.98486.

When going down to Sabana Grande, we stopped at the Centro Vacacional Monte del Estado where I had seen recent observations of **Puerto Rican Oriole**.

As soon as we arrived, we played the tape at 18.140146, -66.973062 and 2 birds immediately responded and gave fantastic views down to a few meters. We saw also **Loggerhead Kingbird** there.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S102635446>

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S102649090>

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S102648551>

## **Cabo Rojo**

We parked the car along the road 301 (+- 2 kms before the end of the road) at 17.95677, -67.199128 and walked in the direction of the lighthouse. Despite the fact that it was midday, we easily taped in **Caribbean Elaenia** a few hundred meters from our parking spot. We were also lucky to find 3 **Yellow-shouldered Blackbird** in the small forested area along playa Sucia at 17.935422, -67.190599. It means that we didn't had to try the classic La Parguera site afterwards as we had had perfect views of the birds. We also had 2 **White-crowned Pigeon** in flight in the same area.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S102635992>

## **Laguna Cartagena**

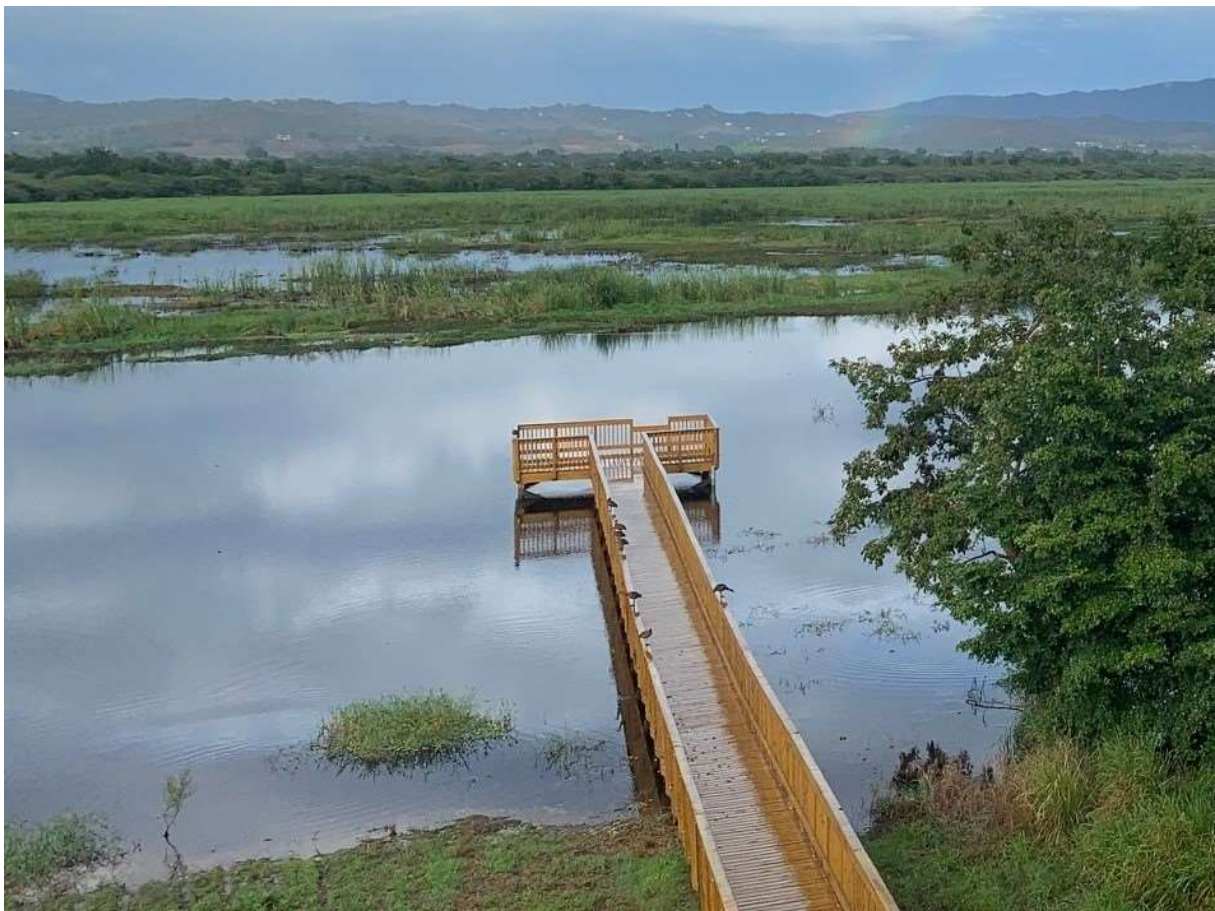
The lake is better accessed from the north from the road 101. Turnoff at 18.029255, -67.109164. Parking area and start of the trail to the observation tower is at 18.010196, -67.108939. The tower is accessible

by foot and is situated a few hundred meters away at 18.010986, - 67.102829.

We saw **Adelaide Warbler** along the access road at 18.013844, - 67.109116.

The main target of the lake is **West Indian Whistling Duck**. Our first attempt was rapidly aborted due to torrential rain. At our second attempt we saw up to 26 birds, mostly quite far away but with a group of 8 coming very close on the boardwalk next to the observation tower. 26 birds seems a quite high number as, at the time of writing, our observation is not yet validated on e-bird ! It seems that early morning or late afternoon is the best time to try for this bird. We were there in the end of the afternoon. We tried hard to find Yellow-breasted Crake but without success.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S102639702>



*Laguna Cartagena from the observation tower, with some West Indian Whistling Ducks on the boardwalk !*

## Bosque Estatal de Guanica



We birded the park from the road 324 entrance (entrance at 17.97955, -66.881088). At our first visit (4 pm), the entrance was already closed for car access, so we walked approximately 1.5 kms up the road. **Puerto Rican Tody** and **Adelaide Warbler** were very common along this stretch. **Puerto Rican Lizard Cuckoo**, **Puerto Rican Flycatcher**, **Puerto Rican Woodpecker**, **Pearly-eyed Thrasher**, **Antillean Mango**, **Caribbean Elaenia** and **Zenaida Dove** were also seen. We waited until dark and saw **Puerto Rican Nightjar** along a trail starting at 17.982027, -66.879175. **Puerto Rican Owl** was also heard but too far away.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S102638491>

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S102671793>



## **Bosque Estetal de Rio Abajo**

We were there on our last morning, with as remaining target Puerto Rican Parrot and Lesser Antillean Pewee. We parked at the first gate at 18.330694, -66.706667 and walked along the road to the second one at 18.332139, -66.717667. We had **Lesser Antillean Pewee** at 18.331381, -66.717577.

Of note, **Puerto Rican Vireo** was also seen and **Puerto Rican Owl** was heard only.

We only had 2 hours in the area because we had to take our flight back to Punta Cana. Unfortunately, it was raining most of the time and we only heard **Puerto Rican Parrot** next to the second gate on the two occasions it stopped to rain but too far away to get a view. Reluctantly we had to leave to be in time in San Juan.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S102634537>

## **Parque Central San Juan**

We stopped 15 min in the park en route to the airport to try for **Green-throated Carib**, which we saw at a flowering tree at 18.440809, -66.080685. **White-crowned Pigeon** and **Zenaida Dove** were also common in the area.

As our itinerary was too tight, it was the only option for us to try for the Carib, as we had no time to go more to the north east to try for **Antillean Crested Hummingbird** and the Carib.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S102634106>

# Sites visited Dominican Republic

## Alto de Cano Hondo

Next to Los Haitises National Park at 19. 057001, -69.455558, and stakeout for **Ridgeway's Hawk** ( there is a reintroduction scheme around Punta Cana, but I don't think they are countable). A few kms from Sabana de la Mar, 2h30 drive from Punta Cana ( good road, only the last kms between Sabana de la Mar and hotel on unsurfaced road, perfectly doable with a 2 wheel drive).

The stake out for the Hawk is a few hundred meters from the hotel at 19.056888, - 69.456884, in a small valley accessed from a trail starting to the right of the building next to the piscinas at 19.056916, - 69.45498 ( lower down from Alto de Cano Hondo). It is also accessible going up from Alto de Cano Hondo and taking the trail starting to the right of the paved way at 19.057243, -69.455792. You will rapidly arrive at a cattle gate. 50m after the gate, the small valley where the hawk is start going down to the left of the main valley.

Because of the torrential rain on our first day, the area was totally flooded and inaccessible.



*The “Ridgway’s Hawk valley” totally flooded on our first visit....*

We went back at the end of our trip and had, at this time, no problem to access the good area. Other interesting birds seen in the vicinity: **Plain Pigeon, White-crowned Pigeon, Antillean Mango, Antillean Piculet, Hispaniolan Woodpecker, Broad-billed Tody, Stolid Flycatcher, Hispaniolan Pewee, Black-whiskered Vireo, White-necked Crow, Palmchat, Black-crowned Tanager.**

We did also some night birding on our second night at the hotel (first night was rained out), up to 3 kilometers between the hotel and Sabana de la Mar. We had no luck with Ashy-faced Owl ( didn’t try too hard as we had seen it at Rabo de Gato) but had a **Chuck will’s Widow** at 19.0552, - 69.449263.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S102648165>

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S102623187>

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S102671875>

## Cachote

The best site for **Eastern Chat Tanager**, also a good site for **Bicknell's Thrush** and other mountain species.

It's a 16 kms drive on a steep and rough road to the entrance of Cachote at 18.09775, -71.188639. A high clearance vehicle is essential ( as it had rained a lot the day before, 4x4 was necessary in some portions (not low gear). It took us 1h30 from the turnoff along the RD 44 at 18.06875, -71.108194 to the top.

See detailed itinerary in Gallardy's report. If you put the following gps points in maps.me, you will be ok as maps.me will get you in the right direction: from the turnoff, go to 18.089306, -71.192333. Keep right there in the direction of the entrance of Cachote at 18.09775, -71.188639.

We mostly birded between the last turnoff and the entrance (we didn't go higher).

We taped in **Eastern Chat Tanager** at 18.096472, -71.189306. We had a **Bicknell's Thrush** at very close range, responding very aggressively at our prospective taping of the call of this species at 18.092235, -71.191448. In the area, we also had: **Hispaniolan Emerald, Narrow-billed Tody, Hispaniolan Trogon, Rufous-throated Solitaire, Black-crowned Tanager**.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S102633921>

## Rabo de Gato trail

Starting next to Villa Barrancoli at 18.316, -71.577833. We walked approximately 2 kms from this point. The area was really dry ( water in the creek only for the first hundred meters) which means that **White-fronted Quail Dove** hadn't been seen in the area for more than 7 month. We dipped also despite searching a lot for it. We had a fruiting tree with **Antillean Siskin, Antillean Euphonia and Hispaniolan Oriole** at 18.310878, -71.581931. We stumbled upon a silent **Bay-breasted Cuckoo** ( fantastic close views) at 18.311903, -71.585053. We taped in a **Key West Quail Dove** ( 2 others heard in the area) at 18.3115, -71.585316. 2 **Flat-billed Vireo** were taped-in at 18.312436, -71.585624. We had also had good flight views of **Hispaniolan Amazon** and



**Hispaniolan Parakeet** in the first portion of the trail. **Hispaniolan Lizard Cuckoo**, **Hispaniolan Woodpecker**, **Broad-billed Tody**, and **Greater Antillean Bullfinch** were reasonably common in the area.

We did some productive night birding along the trail ( which is actually a road, drivable with a 4x4) up to 18.299879, - 71.597461 ( approximately 5 kms from Villa Barrancoli). At this place, the road is wider, and make observation easier for birds like **Least Poorwill**, that we easily saw perched after taping a bird in.

We had 2 **Ashy-faced Owl** calling when coming back at 18.304459, - 71.597483 ( one bird taped in). We heard **Hispaniolan Nightjar** there also, but too far away to get a view.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S102628518>

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S102627977>

### **Road to La Placa – avocado plantation**

We did some night birding along the road between Puerto Escondido and La Placa, going as far as 18.356668, - 71.618283. As we had already seen Least Poorwill and Ashy-faced Owl, we only tried for **Hispaniolan Nightjar** (which we saw at 18.349054, -71.607048) and Northern Potoo (no success, despite trying 2 different nights)

### **Zapoten**

We first bought our ticket for the reserve the day before at the park office at Puerto Escondido ( first building on the right when coming from Duvergé, 100 pesos per person) but nobody actually checked our tickets (despite the fact that you have to pass 3 guarded gates to arrive at Zapoten station).

We left at 4 am from Villa Barrancoli to be in time at La Selle corner ( La Selle Thrush is present on the road at sunrise, 06:45 – 07-15, February hours at least). We were too early as the drive took us a little bit less than 2 hours. A high clearance 4x4 is essential. Zapoten station is at 18.312361, -71.707556. We drove 600m further up and waited at the La Selle Thrush board (see photo)



3 **La Selle's Thrush** and 1 **Bicknell's Thrush** were seen feeding on the road at the spot around 7 am. We saw most of our targets in quick succession the next half an hour along the next 200 m up La Selle corner : **Greater Antillean Elaenia, Western Chat Tanager, White-winged Warbler, Green-tailed Warbler and Hispaniolan Spindalis.**

Of note, we also saw **Hispaniolan Trogon, Rufous-throated Solitaire, Narrow-billed Tody, Hispaniolan Pewee** and **Greater Antillean Bullfinch.**

700m higher up, at a small panorama, we had a lone **Golden Swallow** ( thanks to Yvan Mota for the tip !). We then took the car back and drove up approximately 4 kms to pure pine forest where we had fantastic views of a group of 8 **Hispaniolan Crossbill** with recently fledged juveniles at 18.295534, -71.701204.



*The Crossbill site above Zapoten*

After having lunch at Zapoten station ( and trying without luck at a supposed good spot 200 m higher for White-fronted Quail Dove) we drove back down, stopping at Agua Cate where we saw **Loggerhead Kingbird** in the tree next to the station building at 18.329944, -71.70025.

We didn't try for Bay-breasted Cuckoo along the road as we had seen it at Rabo de Gato.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S102616973>



# Sites of interest not visited Dominican Republic

## Alcoa Road

Due to time constraint after our car breakdown, we had no time to visit Alcoa Road as planned. It is best accessed from Pedernales and reach pine forest on the southern slope of Sierra de Bahoruco. This is the most reliable site for **Hispaniolan palm Crow** ( see ebird for most recent observations). It is also a good site for **Hispaniolan Crossbill** and **Golden Swallow** and other mountain specialties.

## Polo Magnetico

I found some observations around this place on ebird for **Eastern Chat Tanager** which is interesting if you don't have a 4X4 available or don't want to organize a daytrip up Cachote with a tour operator.

After I contacted the observers via ebird, Will Britton (one of them) told me that they heard the bird at Polo Magnetico (location of their observation on ebird is exact and is along the RD533 wich is paved and only 45 min drive from Barahona). One member of their group also saw a bird approximately 2 kms up a road (not drivable with a 2 wheel drive) called camino de la Hoz on googlemap that split from the main road (RD533). The turnoff is at 18.169347, -71.255007.

## Road above San José de Ocoa

I had found another recent observation on ebird for **Eastern Chat Tanager** and **White-fronted Quail Dove** above San Jose de Ocoa at 18.64505, -70.515922, also by Will Britton and his friends. Will told me that the location on ebird is exact and that the spot was accessible with care with a 2 wheel drive.

## Santo Domingo Botanical Gardens

Apparently a good spot for **West Indian Whistling Duck**. As we had seen it in Puerto Rico, we didn't try this location.

# Targets (endemics and Caribbean specialties)

(see sites description for more details about specific observations)

## Puerto Rican endemics

**Puerto Rican Nightjar** *Antrostomus noctitherus* Endangered (EN)

Seen quite easily at Bosque Estatal de Guanica

**Green Mango** *Anthracothorax viridis*

Mountain specie only seen at Maricao

**Puerto Rican Emerald** *Riccordia maugaeus*

Mountain specie seen at Maricao and rio Abajo

**Puerto Rican Lizard Cuckoo** *Coccyzus vieilloti*

Seen at Guanica and heard Maricao

**Puerto Rican Owl** *Gymnasio nudipes*

Seen Maricao and heard Guanica and rio Abajo

**Puerto Rican Tody** *Todus mexicanus*

Only seen at Guanica where numerous

**Puerto Rican Woodpecker** *Melanerpes portoricensis*

Seen Maricao and Guanica

**Puerto Rican Amazon** *Amazona vittata* Critically Endangered (CR)

Only heard at rio Abajo

**Puerto Rican Flycatcher** *Myiarchus antillarum*

Seen Guanica and rio Abajo

**Puerto Rican Vireo** *Vireo latimeri*

Mountain specie seen at Maricao and rio Abajo

**Puerto Rican Tanager** *Nesospingus speculiferus*

Mountain specie commonly seen at Maricao

**Puerto Rican Spindalis** *Spindalis portoricensis*

Only seen at Maricao

**Puerto Rican Oriole** *Icterus portoricensis*

Only seen at Monte del Estado when coming down from Maricao

**Yellow-shouldered Blackbird** *Agelaius xanthomus* Endangered (EN)

3 birds seen at Cabo Rojo

**Elfin Woods Warbler** *Setophaga angelae* Vulnerable (VU)

Mountain specie only seen at Maricao

**Adelaide's Warbler** *Setophaga adelaidae*

Very common at Guanica, also seen at Laguna Cartagena

**Puerto Rican Bullfinch** *Melopyrrha portoricensis*

Only seen at Maricao

## **Hispaniolan endemics**

**Least Poorwill** *Siphonorhis brewsteri* Near-threatened (NT)

Seen along Rabo de Gato trail

**Hispaniolan Nightjar** *Antrostomus ekmani*

Seen along road to La Placa and heard Rabo de Gato

**Hispaniolan Emerald** *Riccordia swainsonii*

Only seen at Cachote

**Bay-breasted Cuckoo** *Coccyzus ruficularis* Endangered (EN)

Seen at Rabo de Gato

**Hispaniolan Lizard Cuckoo** *Coccyzus longirostris*

Seen at our hotel in Pedernales, Rabo de Gato and Zapoten

**Ridgway's Hawk** *Buteo ridgwayi* Critically Endangered (CR)

1 bird seen at stakeout at Cano Hondo

**Ashy-faced Owl** *Tyto glaucops*

Seen at Rabo de Gato trail

**Hispaniolan Trogon** *Priotelus roseigaster* Near-threatened (NT)

Seen Cachote and Zapoten

**Broad-billed Tody** *Todus subulatus*

Seen Cano Hondo and Rabo de Gato trail

**Narrow-billed Tody** *Todus angustirostris*

Seen Cachote and Zapoten

**Antillean Piculet** *Nesocittes micromegas*

Seen at Cano Hondo ( probably heard elsewhere but didn't try)

**Hispaniolan Woodpecker** *Melanerpes striatus*

Seen Cano Hondo, Cachote, Rabo de Gato and Zapoten

**Hispaniolan Amazon** *Amazona ventralis* Vulnerable (VU)

At Rabo de Gato only

**Hispaniolan Parakeet** *Psittacara chloropterus* Vulnerable (VU)

At Rabo de Gato only

**Hispaniolan Pewee** *Contopus hispaniolensis*

Seen Cano Hondo, Rabo de Gato and Zapoten

**Flat-billed Vireo** *Vireo nanus*

At Rabo de Gato only

**White-necked Crow** *Corvus leucognaphalus* Vulnerable (VU)

Seen at Cano Hondo and Rabo de Gato



**Palmchat** *Dulus dominicus* Country endemic

Common throughout

**Golden Swallow** *Tachycineta euchrysea* Vulnerable (VU)

1 bird at Zapoten

**La Selle Thrush** *Turdus swalesi* Endangered (EN)

3 birds at Zapoten

**Hispaniolan Crossbill** *Loxia megaplaga* Endangered (EN)

Zapoten only

**Antillean Siskin** *Spinus dominicensis*

At Rabo de Gato only

**Western Chat-Tanager** *Calyptophilus tertius* Vulnerable (VU)

At Zapoten

**Eastern Chat-Tanager** *Calyptophilus frugivorus* Near-threatened (NT)

Cachote only

**Black-crowned Tanager** *Phaenicophilus palmarum*

Seen at Cano Hondo, Cachote, Pedernales and Rabo de Gato

**Green-tailed Warbler** *Microligea palustris*

Zapoten

**White-winged Warbler** *Xenoligea montana* Vulnerable (VU)

Zapoten

**Hispaniolan Spindalis** *Spindalis dominicensis*

Zapoten

**Hispaniolan Oriole** *Icterus dominicensis*

Rabo de Gato only

## **Caribbean endemics**

**West Indian Whistling Duck** *Dendrocygna arborea* Vulnerable (VU)

26 seen at Laguna Cartagena

**Antillean Palm Swift** *Tachornis phoenicobia*

Common in Dominican Republic

**Antillean Mango** *Anthracothorax dominicus*

Seen at Guanica and Rio Abajo (PR) and Cano Hondo, Pedernales and Rabo de Gato (DR)

**Green-throated Carib** *Eulampis holosericeus*

Seen Parque Central de San Juan (PR)

**Vervain Hummingbird** *Mellisuga minima*

Seen Pedernales, Punta Cana and Rabo de Gato (DR)

**White-crowned Pigeon** *Patagioenas leucocephala* Near-threatened  
Seen Cabo Rojo and Parque Central (PR) and Cano Hondo (DR)

**Scaly-naped Pigeon** *Patagioenas squamosa*

Seen Maricao and Rio Abajo (PR) and Cachote, Rabo de Gato and Zapoten (DR)

**Plain Pigeon** *Patagioenas inornata* Near-threatened (NT)

Cano Hondo and Rabo de Gato (DR)

**Key West Quail-Dove** *Geotrygon chrysis*

Rabo de Gato (DR)

**Zenaida Dove** *Zenaida aurita*

Seen Guanica and Parque Central (PR), Cano Hondo and Zapoten (DR)

**Caribbean Elaenia** *Elaenia martinica*

Cabo Rojo and Guanica (PR)

**Greater Antillean Elaenia** *Elaenia fallax*

Zapoten (DR)

**Lesser Antillean Pewee** *Contopus latirostris*

Rio Abajo (PR)

**Grey Kingbird** *Tyrannus dominicensis*

Common throughout PR and DR

**Loggerhead Kingbird** *Tyrannus caudifasciatus*

- ssp taylori Seen Maricao (PR)

- ssp gabpii seen Agua Cate (Zapoten) (DR)

**Stolid Flycatcher** *Myiarchus stolidus*

Seen Cano Hondo and Rabo de Gato (DR)

**Black-whiskered Vireo** *Vireo altiloquus*

Seen Cano Hondo (DR)

**Caribbean Martin** *Progne dominicensis*

1 bird seen en route between Pedernales and Barahona ( a bit too early for this specie)

**Pearly-eyed Thrasher** *Margarops fuscatus*

Seen Maricao and Guanica (PR)

**Rufous-throated Solitaire** *Myadestes genibarbis*

Cachote and Zapoten (DR)

**Red-legged Thrush** *Turdus plumbeus*

Seen Maricao, Rio Abajo (PR) Cachote, Rabo de Gato and Zapoten (DR)

**Antillean Euphonia** *Chlorophonia musica*

Rabo de Gato (DR)

**Greater Antillean Grackle** *Quiscalus niger*

Common PR, Cano Hondo (DR)

**Greater Antillean Bullfinch** *Melopyrrha violacea*

Pedernales, rabo de Gato and Zapoten (DR)

## **Targets not seen**

**Black-capped Petrel**

When stranded at Pedernales, we did some seawatching early morning and late afternoon without success ( there a few observations during breeding season at sea in the south west)

**White-fronted Quail Dove**

Not present anymore at Rabo de Gato. Not seen at Zapoten.

**Hispaniolan Palm Crow**

Had no time to visit stakeout at Alcoa road and didn't find it along Lago Enrequillo ( less reliable place and area huge).