

Mexico: Yucatan Peninsula, March 8-22, 2023

Introduction and Overview

My girlfriend Lynda and I spent two weeks exploring the Yucatan peninsula, taking in the food, culture, historical sites, and, of course, the bird life. Our trip was not designed to be a quick mop-up of the key bird species, and our pace allowed us to experience much more of what the Yucatan has to offer. We met interesting people, indulged in much food and drink, swam in some amazing cenotes, were mesmerized by ancient ruins, and still managed to encounter all but one (foiled by the Yucatan Gnatcatcher) of our main target birds. What follows is an account of our time in this wonderful corner of Mexico.

My hope is that anyone who is contemplating an independent birding trip to the Yucatan will find the following information useful. As always, please feel free to email me if I can be of any other assistance.

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Itinerary

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| Wed. March 8 | Flew Air Transat 538 from Montreal at 07 ⁴⁰ , arriving in Cancun at 12 ¹⁵ . Took bus from the airport to Playa del Carmen, walked over to the ferry terminal and took the ferry to Cozumel Island. Night at Caribo Cozumel. |
| Thurs. March 9 | Biked over to and birded the road to the wastewater treatment plant in the morning. Afternoon at Money Bar beach resort for food, drink, snorkelling and relaxing. Night at Caribo Cozumel. |
| Fri. March 10 | Biked over to and birded the abandoned housing complex in the morning. Ferry back to Playa del Carmen and picked up rental car at Hertz. Drove to Cobá. Night at Hotel Sacbe Cobá. |
| Sat. March 11 | Explored Cobá ruins by bike for the morning. Drove to Felipe Carillo Puerto, stopping off at Ruina en Cenote (spectacular!) along the way for a swim. Short nightbirding visit to Vigio Chico Road. Night at Departamento centrico con estacionamiento. |

- Sun. March 12 Morning birding along Vigio Chico Road. Afternoon drive towards Calakmul, with a stop at the Chicanná Archeological Site. Night at Campamento Yaax'Che.
- Mon. March 13 Early morning departure for nightbirding along road to Calakmul ruins, and then drove onwards to the ruins. Explored the ruins in the morning, and drove back to Campamento Yaax'Che. Birded the grounds and the short loop trail at the camp. Night birding back on the short loop trail. Night at Campamento Yaax'Che.
- Tues. March 14 Birding the short loop trail before and just after dawn. Drove to and explored the ruins at Becán. Drove to Uxmal. Night at the Uxmal Resort Maya.
- Wed. March 15 Bit of birding before dawn around the Uxmal Resort Maya, then walked the path over to the ruins at Uxmal. Morning visit to the ruins. Relaxed during the afternoon at the resort. Short attempt at nightbirding along the San Simon Road. Night at Uxmal Resort Maya.
- Thurs. March 16 Birding before dawn at the Uxmal Resort Maya until about 07³⁰. Drove to and swam at two cenotes (X'batun and Dzonbakal). Drove to Mérida. Night at La Casa del Quetzal Guesthouse.
- Fri. March 17 Day to explore Mérida. Night at La Casa del Quetzal Guesthouse.
- Sat. March 18 Drove to Cenote Azul Acancun for a swim, and continued on to the coast at San Felipe. Night at Hotel San Felipe de Jesus Yucatan.
- Sun. March 19 4-hour boat tour with Rio Lagartos Adventures in the morning. Afternoon birding along Rancho San Salvador Road. Night at Hotel San Felipe de Jesus Yucatan.
- Mon. March 20 Early morning birding along Rancho San Salvador Road. Late morning birding around Salinas Las Coloradas. Afternoon rain spoiled the birding. Night at Hotel San Felipe de Jesus Yucatan.
- Tues. March 21 Drove to Ek Balam to visit the ruins and swim in the Cenote Xcanche. Drove south of Valladolid to Eco-Hotel Shalom where we stayed the night.
- Wed. March 22 Early morning departure to the airport in Cancun where we returned the rental car. Flew Air Transat 539 at 12⁵⁵, arriving back in Montreal at 18⁰⁵.

Transportation

We rented a Nissan March, a small, manual transmission car from America Car Rental in Playa del Carmen for 12 days. Size-wise, it suited our needs, and it was easy to drive, but the air conditioning only pumped out a bit of cooling air, even at maximum. We rolled down the windows occasionally to provide a bit of relief when necessary. Our 12-day rental included insurance and a charge of USD 54.40 to drop the car off at the airport in Cancun instead of back in Playa del Carmen. The total came to USD 439.40 which we thought was quite reasonable. The representatives, both in Playa del Carmen and at the Cancun airport were friendly, courteous and efficient. After dropping off the car, the rental agency provided a free shuttle over to departures. The rental office in Playa del Carmen is at Condominio Aldea Thai at the corner of Calle Cozumel and Calle 26 Norte.

The roads throughout our trip were of very good quality, signage was mostly good, and traffic was generally quite light. We didn't encounter any tolls on the roads we took. It's worth mentioning that there is a well-known scam in the Yucatan at gas stations. Attendants have been known not to zero the gauge showing the cost on the pump before adding the gas to the tank, resulting in you paying for more fuel than was actually added to your tank. The other scam is that once you pay the attendant, he switches a smaller bill for one you gave him, and then claims that you made a mistake when he counts the money. Always get out of the car and check to make sure the attendant zeros the gauge, and count out the bills in front of the attendant so he can see them before handing them over. We never ran into any problems.

The ferry to Cozumel Island runs on the hour. There are two companies (Ultramar and Winjet), and they alternate departures from one hour to the next. As you approach the ferry dock, you will find people selling tickets for the ferry at inflated prices. It's best to ignore them and buy your ticket from the official ticket offices for each company.

We rented bikes on Cozumel at Best Bikes Cozumel (bestbikescozumel.com) downtown near the ferry dock. Rentals for 24 hours were USD 20 including helmets and locks, and they rent out snorkelling equipment as well. The bikes were in decent shape, and we used them to bike to the nearby birding areas, giving us the flexibility we wanted. Definitely recommended as a mode of transportation on Cozumel.

Accommodations

What follows is a brief synopsis of each of the places we used as accommodations. All places were booked in advance using booking.com.

Cozumel Island - Caribo Cozumel

This was a great base for our stay on Cozumel. Our room with a double bed was very clean and comfortable, and priced at about USD 47 per night. The hosts were exceptionally friendly, and even helped mail back to us an item we left behind. Access to the building is via a code punched into a key pad which was sent to us in advance via Whatsapp. Their Whatsapp number is +52 987 117 2239.

Cobá - Hotel Sacbe Cobá

The town of Cobá is very small, and accommodation options are limited. Most people likely come in the morning from elsewhere, and move on after visiting the ruins. The hotel was a nice enough place, but a bit overpriced at about USD 60. There is no sign on the road, and we drove right by it before turning around and eventually locating it. There is a small grocery store under the hotel. Only breakfast is served, although there are one or two restaurants nearby. The ruins are a short walk away.

Felipe Carillo Puerto - Departamento centrico con estacionamento

This was a one-bedroom apartment in Felipe Carillo Puerto. It was spotless, and very comfortable. The kitchen allowed us to do some meal prep which was a plus. It's in a quiet part of town, and you can park inside the locked gate. A day prior to arrival, you will be sent a code via Whatsapp. Punch the code into a lockbox at the gate to the apartment, and it opens up to give you the keys to the apartment and gate. Their Whatsapp number is +52 983 105 4382.

Calakmul - Camping/Campamento Yaax'Che

There is nowhere to stay closer to the ruins at Calakmul, and you still have a drive of about 55 km to go! This is a camp, and you stay in pre-constructed tents underneath a canopy. The beds are mattresses on the ground, and you do need to bring your own bedding/sleeping bag. The tents are comfortable enough, but will not be to everyone's liking. There are two blocks of washrooms/showers. There is no running water, so showers consist of pouring water from a bucket over your head using a coconut shell, and there is no electricity in camp. A tent is about USD 42 per night.

There is an on-site restaurant back on the main road serving a limited choice of meals, but the food is quite good, and they have a refrigerator/freezer for cold beverages. There are electrical outlets at the restaurant where you can charge devices.

While we were at the camp, there happened to be a group of rather noisy people one night who talked loudly beyond midnight, and since the tents are all within a small compound, they made it hard to sleep. Also, the owners of the camp have a dog whose sole purpose in life seems to be to bark constantly all through the night. After two nights, it was definitely time to move on, despite the great birding.

Uxmal - Uxmal Resort Maya

Although this resort gives off a bit of an aura of faded glory, it actually is pretty good value with a double room with pool view being USD 55 per night. The rooms were quite nice, and the heated pool is a good touch for those with time to lounge. As there is not really a town at Uxmal, there are no restaurant options, and you are a bit of a captive audience. The food at their restaurant was decent, although not surprisingly, overpriced.

From a birding perspective, there is good habitat on the grounds and it proved to be a good choice in that respect. There is also a 2-km walking path to the ruins, saving you the trouble and cost of paying for parking your car at the ruins.

Mérida - Casa del Quetzal Guesthouse

Although we contemplated staying in the old town in a boutique guesthouse full of atmosphere, such places have no parking, so we decided to stay a bit outside the centre at a place where we could park safely on the street. La Casa del Quetzal itself does have some nice character, with a shared lounge and kitchen for all guests. Rooms were very nice and comfortable, and with a double room at about USD 33 per night, it was a wonderful base for Mérida. Maurizio, the owner was very helpful, and communicated with us in advance via Whatsapp to give us the entry code for the building. Once inside, you'll find a key for your room. Maurizio's Whatsapp number is +52 999 353 0452. It was a bit of a walk to the historic centre, but we enjoy walking and did not find this an inconvenience.

San Felipe - Hotel San Felipe de Jesus Yucatan

While exploring this coastal region, we decided to stay in the quiet fishing village of San Felipe rather than in Rio Lagartos. We splurged a bit and got the top

floor deluxe double room with balcony and sea view for about USD 53 per night. It was a good place and quite comfortable, although the room was a little bit spartan. Lots of excellent seafood restaurants in the town, and the hotel has an attached restaurant as well. It was a good base to explore the birding sites.

Valladolid - Eco Hotel Shalom

For our last night, and after visiting the ruins at Ek Balam, we wanted to get a little closer to Cancun in order to be nearer to the airport. We settled on the Eco Hotel Shalom, a little south of Valladolid, as it was only a couple of hours from the airport, there was a good birding site not too far away (which we ended up not attempting), and because it looked like a really nice place to stay. The owner was very friendly, and helpful in suggesting a route to the airport to avoid the road works along the main highway to Cancun. The room was very comfortable, and the grounds had a wonderful pool to enjoy as we relaxed during our last afternoon. As a surprise, the owner gave us a plate of fresh papaya the next morning as we were getting ready to depart. This place is highly recommended. A night was MXN 804.

Birding Sites

Cozumel Island - road to the wastewater treatment plant

Follow Avenida Rafael E. Melgar out of town heading north. After passing some hotels, there will be an entrance to the island's golf course on the right. Continue along the road as it swings to the right, and good habitat starts roughly at gps: 20.551664, -86.918305 which is about 6.5 km from town. Continue birding along the road for a further 2.9 km until reaching the marsh at the wastewater treatment plant at gps: 20.538079, -86.895118. The road continues another 1.8 km to a pier on the other side of the island.

This is a wonderful birding site, and all of Cozumel's specialties are possible here. We biked out to the site from our accommodations in town, arriving just after sunrise. We then birded along the road as far as about 200 metres beyond the wastewater treatment plant, and then returned. There was no reason to push along the road any further. The road is flat and quiet, with very little traffic.

From a birding perspective, Black Catbird was very common and vocal. Yucatan Vireo was fairly common with 3 or 4 birds seen very well. As expected Cozumel Vireo was less common, and we only had one pretty good sighting within the first 500 metres of the road. Hummingbirds weren't overly common, and we

found just two (one male and one female) Cozumel Emeralds. We also just had one confirmed sighting of Yucatan Woodpecker. We had some luck with other Cozumel targets, with single sightings of the Cozumel Island endemic subspecies of House Wren, Yellow-faced Grassquit and Western Spindalis, while Bananaquit was very common. There were 3 or 4 Ruddy Crakes in the marsh at the wastewater treatment plant, but while rather vocal, they refused to show.

Cozumel Island - abandoned housing complex

Head south out of town on the Carretera Costera Sur and go past the cruise ship terminal. The junction for the road to the abandoned housing complex is at gps: 20.465068, -86.977419, about 6.5 km from town. Turn left (inland) from here, and a birdable road heads for about 2 km before reaching the housing complex. Although perhaps once abandoned, there are signs of life here as it appears some expats have been buying up properties. Nevertheless, there is a relatively small grid of roads to explore here through good habitat, fully worth a morning.

We didn't find this site as birdy as the road to the wastewater treatment plant, although we did find Rose-throated Tanager and a Caribbean Dove which had eluded us the day before. Caribbean Dove was common by voice, and we succeeded in getting a good look at one; the fact it was so common by voice makes me wonder if I overlooked it yesterday. Black Catbird and Yucatan Vireo were again quite common, and we did encounter Yucatan Woodpecker. The Cozumel Island endemic subspecies of Bananaquit and Blue-grey Gnatcatcher were also spotted. We only spent about three hours here as we needed to get back, drop off the bikes, and catch the ferry.

Cobá ruins

The ruins only open at 8:00, so the early morning can be spent birding the scrub on the way from town to the ruins, and the margins of the lake as well. It was pleasant birding for more widespread species on a nice, sunny day. Ruddy Crake was again heard on the edge of Laguna Cobá near the entrance to the ruins, but it refused to show. Supposedly, other spots around the lake were once accessible, but apparently are now off-limits due to development. We didn't explore to find out if this was true. We rented bikes for a couple of hours at the entrance, and used them to get around to explore the ruins and bird the paths. Common dry-forest species were found, but nothing of great significance.

Felipe Carillo Puerto - Vigio Chico Road

The Vigio Chico Road heads northeast from Felipe Carillo Puerto and birding

can begin at about gps: 19.588433, -88.023083. The road continues many, many kilometres towards the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve, although we only birded along the first 5-6 km of the road, not really having any knowledge of particular hotspots. The first part of the road is a bit scrubby, but soon enters better forest. The road is very narrow, and although there were some largish potholes, our car managed fine. Birding was rather slow here. We had sightings of Black Catbird, Yucatan Jay, Mangrove Vireo, Yucatan Vireo and Rose-throated Tanager which were noteworthy, but a number of hoped-for birds (such as Grey-throated Chat and Buff-bellied Hummingbird) went unrecorded. Thicket Tinamou was very common by voice, but was also unseen at this site. A short nightbirding attempt was quiet from a birding perspective, although we did find a very nice Central American Boa crossing the road.

Calakmul Biosphere Reserve

The entrance road to the Calakmul Biosphere Reserve begins at gps: 18.539163, -89.900167, about 55 km west of the town of Xpujil. As you turn south on to this road, you will see a tourist complex on your left where you must purchase your permit for the road, which we did the day before our visit to the ruins. A further 20 km down the road is a gate at which point you must show your permit before being allowed to pass. This gate opened at 7 am on the morning of our visit. A good strategy is to access the road and do some nightbirding on your way down to the gate. Once being allowed through the gate, it's a further 40 km to the parking lot for the ruins. Don't expect a quiet birding ride down to the ruins if your experience is like ours since we were passed by a number of vehicles travelling well beyond the posted speed limit all in the attempt to be "first" to the ruins. Nevertheless, we did find Ocellated Turkey to be numerous along the road, but we failed to find Great Curassow.

The ruins themselves are spectacular, and due to their remoteness, crowds are not an issue. We spent about three hours exploring the ruins and birding the pathways. There are some decent posted maps that can be used to find your way around, and the site isn't overly large. At the end of the morning, we drove back up the road to Campamento Yaax'Che.

As we drove the road to the gate in the dark in the early morning, we stopped several times, managing to hear Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl and Yucatan Nightjar. Once it became light, we spotted Ruddy Quail-Dove, Barred Forest-Falcon and Keel-billed Toucan, amongst others, along the road. At the archeological site, the tropical forest holds some interesting species, and we found Eye-ringed Flatbill, Yucatan Flycatcher and White-bellied Wren.

Campamento Yaax'Che

Located at gps: 18.488290, -89.892794, about 6 km along the road to the Calakmul Biosphere Reserve, the campsite is set in light woodland that can be quite birdy. The best birding here can be had along the loop trails starting at the campground; there is a long loop and a short loop. I only had time for the short loop which was about 2 km in distance, and I birded it several times. My best sightings during the day on the trail were Thicket Tinamou (seen well and remarkably tame), Yucatan Jay, Mayan Antthrush (seen very well in the open undergrowth) and Yucatan Flycatcher. An early morning attempt at nightbirding along the short loop trail before dawn was extremely productive, and I heard Middle-American Screech-Owl, Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, Mottled Owl, Yucatan Poorwill and Yucatan Nightjar. Unfortunately, I couldn't manage a sighting of any of them! Thicket Tinamou was also seen very well while walking from the campground back to the restaurant for dinner early one evening, and a troop of Central American Howler was lounging in the campground one afternoon.

Uxmal ruins

Another spectacular series of ruins; we spent a couple of hours exploring this site one morning. Unlike some other ruins we visited, this site is very open with little forest canopy. Of note was a very nice Yellow-throated Warbler, and a large flock of Cave Swallows foraging overhead.

San Simon Road

To access this road, you must first enter the access road to the Uxmal ruins. You will come to a parking booth at roughly gps: 20.361003, -89.767328. For visitors to the ruins, this is where you pay for parking. Tell the attendant that you are not staying for the ruins, but want to continue along the road, and he will let you through. The road continues on to the small village of San Simon, and at least the first 5 km of the road is supposed to be good for birding. We came out here once at dusk for some nightbirding, but only heard a Collared Forest-Falcon. As the habitat at the Uxmal Resort Maya looked equally good if not better, we didn't return.

Uxmal Resort Maya

The open grounds of the Uxmal Resort Maya were great for Turquoise-browed Motmot which was very common and vocal. What an amazing bird! A pair of Ferruginous Pygmy-Owls were also resident. However, the best birding area was a gravel road, starting at gps: 20.377110, -89.772207, through the back of the

property running through excellent dry forest. There is a gate with a "no trespassing" sign about 200 metres down the road, but I think this was to deter vehicular traffic, and not casual birdwatchers. Looking on google maps, the road continues for many kilometres, but I only walked perhaps the first 1.5 km of the road. Interesting species during the daylight hours here were Yucatan Woodpecker, Yucatan Jay, and both Orange and Yellow-tailed Orioles. At night Middle American Screech-Owl was heard, several Common Pauragues were seen roosting along the road, several Yucatan Nightjars were heard, and I finally was able to get a decent look at one of them.

Rio Lagartos boat tour

We took a four-hour tour amongst the mangroves and offshore channels in the Ria Lagartos Biosphere Reserve with Rio Lagartos Adventures (riamaya.com). Ours was a private tour (just the two of us) as opposed to the larger group tours offered by other agencies, and this allowed us to target what we wanted and go at our own pace. Of course, all tours essentially go to the same areas, but we enjoyed the benefits of a private tour. The birding was great, although the only key target bird and new species that was possible for me was Rufous-necked Wood-Rail which we missed. We did spot a pair of Wood-Rails which caused much initial excitement, only to realize that they were, in fact, the common Russet-naped Wood-Rail. Overall, there was a wide variety of birdlife to admire, with lots of terns, gulls, pelicans, cormorants, herons and waders, with a pair of Long-billed Curlews being noteworthy. At this time of year, the American Flamingoes are much less numerous and found in areas outside the tour route.

Rancho San Salvador Road

The scrub habitat along the roads between San Felipe, Rio Lagartos and over to Las Coloradas harbours a number of Yucatan endemics and other specialities such as Yucatan Wren, Mexican Sheartail, Yucatan Gnatcatcher and Black-throated Bobwhite. Leaving San Felipe heading south, you will soon reach a left turn to a road in the direction of Rio Lagartos. This road passes through good habitat, but we found it a bit busy with traffic and there were few places to pull off to the side as there was not much of a shoulder. Passing the turn to Rio Lagartos and continuing along this road towards Los Coloradas, there is also good habitat, but we had the same issues with the road. Thus, most of our birding in the area was conducted along the quiet Rancho San Salvador Road. To find this road, head along the road in the direction of Los Coloradas, and turn right on to a dirt road at gps: 21.566273, -88.088582. Park your car here and begin walking. The

road continues for about 2 km through good, dry scrub until reaching a gate, presumably blocking access to the ranch beyond. We only walked up to the gate and back a couple of times, managing to find Yucatan Wren and Mexican Sheartail. We failed to find Yucatan Gnatcatcher, which I gather is not overly common here, although the abundant Blue-grey Gnatcatchers frequently gave us hope, which eventually led to much frustration as they were everywhere! Our only encounter with Black-throated Bobwhite was on the morning we left San Felipe. Once turning left south of town in the direction of Rio Lagartos, we quickly heard calls coming from the scrub. We pulled over and tried to get a visual on the birds, but they would not show.

Restaurante Chiquila and Sendero Peten Mac

In the town of Rio Lagartos, take Calle 9 heading east along the water's edge until the road ends at the Restaurante Chiquila and a bit of a tourist complex. I only mention this place as others had commented on the presence of hummingbird feeders which attracted Mexican Sheartail. Despite a thorough look around, no feeders could be seen. There is a short but worthwhile mangrove boardwalk here called Sendero Peten Mac, located at the back of the big open space/parking lot. Not much birdlife was seen, but we did find a couple of Morelet's Crocodiles in a small swamp.

Salinas Los Coloradas

You can navigate your way through the village of Los Coloradas and get on to the road that heads east along the thin stretch of land between the salinas and Gulf of Mexico, but it is apparently not allowed to proceed independently along this route as there was a gate blocking our path. However, guided trips are available. As you enter the village of Los Coloradas at about gps: 21.607695, -87.994409, there will likely be some people on the right side of the road offering guided tours of the salinas. These may include other activities than birding, so we negotiated a cheaper price just to have a fellow go with us for birding. We drove out to the gate we had seen earlier, passed through with our guide, and continued onwards through the hot, dessicated landscape until reaching a few flocks of flamingoes. Other scattered shorebirds were spotted too, the best being a single Western Sandpiper quite close to the road and seen well.

Bird List

TINAMIDAE (Tinamous)

Thicket Tinamou

Crypturellus cinnamomeus

Quite commonly heard along the Vigio Chico road on March 12. A fantastic sighting of one rather tame bird in the undergrowth as we walked back from the campsite to the restaurant for dinner at Campamento Yaax'Che on March 13. An additional bird was seen on the short loop trail at camp the next morning on the 14th.

ANATIDAE (Ducks, Geese and Waterfowl)

Blue-winged Teal

Spatula discors

Two individuals were seen in a small marsh along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 20.

CRACIDAE (Guans, Chachalacas and Currasows)

Plain Chachalaca

Ortalis vetula

Three were found along the road near the entrance gate to the Calakmul ruins on the morning of March 13. On the 14th, birds were heard both along the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che and at the Uxmal Resort Maya later in the day. Also heard at the Uxmal Resort Maya on the 16th.

ODONTOPHORIDAE (New World Quail)

Black-throated Bobwhite

Colinus nigrogularis

Heard only. Heard in the early morning as we drove the tarmac road between San Felipe and Rio Lagartos on March 21.

PHASIANIDAE (Pheasants, Grouse and Allies)

Ocellated Turkey

Meleagris ocellata

Once on the road beyond the entrance gate to the Calakmul ruins, small flocks were very commonly encountered roadside as we drove the 40 kilometres to the parking lot at the ruins on March 13.

PHOENICOPTERIDAE (Flamingos)

American Flamingo

Phoenicopterus ruber

A good number of scattered flocks at Salinas los Coloradas on March 20.

PODICIPEDIDAE (Grebes)

Pied-billed Grebe

Podilymbus podiceps

One was seen on Laguna Cobá in the morning of March 11 as we walked over to the ruins.

COLUMBIDAE (Pigeons and Doves)

Rock Pigeon

Columba livia

Common in Cancun, Playa del Carmen and San Miguel de Cozumel.

White-crowned Pigeon

Patagioenas leucocephala

Two perched birds were seen well at the abandoned housing complex on Cozumel Island on March 10.

Eurasian Collared-Dove

Streptopelia decaocta

Three were seen in San Miguel de Cozumel as we biked to the abandoned housing complex on the morning of March 10. Another three were spotted in the town of Cobá on the 11th. Small numbers were seen in Rio Lagartos on both March 19 and 20.

White-winged Dove

Zenaida asiatica

Widespread and generally very common.

Common Ground Dove

Columbina passerina

Common on the Rancho San Salvador Road on both March 19 and 20.

Ruddy Ground Dove

Columbina talpacoti

Fairly common along the road to the water treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9. Eight birds were seen in the town of Cobá on March 10. Several were seen while driving the highways on March 14 on the way to Uxmal. Fairly common on the Rancho San Salvador Road on both March 19 and 20.

White-tipped Dove

Leptotila verreauxi

On March 13, single birds were seen at the Calakmul ruins, in the campground at the Campamento Yaax'Che, and along the short loop trail at camp.

Caribbean Dove

Leptotila jamaicensis

At the abandoned housing complex on Cozumel Island on March 10, birds were common by voice, and one was spotted and seen fairly well.

Ruddy Quail-Dove

Geotrygon montana

As we drove the road to the entrance gate to the Calakmul ruins in the pre-dawn of March 13, one bird was caught in our headlights, and we managed to stop in time for a good look before it flew off the road.

CUCULIDAE (Cuckoos)

Mangrove Cuckoo

Coccyzus minor

A quick look at one bird along the road to the water treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9. A very co-operative bird was seen very well as we biked around the abandoned housing complex on Cozumel on the 10th.

Squirrel Cuckoo

Piaya cayana

Two birds were seen as we biked around the Cobá ruins on March 11. One was found along the Vigio Chico road on the 12th, and another around camp at Campamento Yaax'Che on the 13th. A final bird was seen at the ruins of Ek Balam on March 21.

Groove-billed Ani

Crotophaga sulcirostris

Three birds were first seen at Cenote X'Batun on March 16, followed by an additional three birds near the town of San Felipe on the 18th. About six individuals were spotted along the Rancho San Salvador Road on the 20th.

CAPRIMULGIDAE (Nightjars and Allies)

Common Pauraque

Nyctidromus albicollis

Heard at the Uxmal Resort Maya along the gravel road into the bush before dawn on March 15, and two birds were seen very well along this same stretch of road before dawn on the 16th.

Yucatan Poorwill

Nyctiphrynus yucatanicus

Heard only. Heard before dawn along the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che on March 14. I managed to get very close but couldn't tease it out of the thick scrub.

Yucatan Nightjar

Antrostomus badius

Heard before dawn along the main road towards the ruins at Calakmul on March 13. Also heard along the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che before dawn on the 14th. Birds were heard at the Uxmal Resort Maya along the gravel road before dawn on March 15, and on a return to the same spot the next morning on the 16th, I managed to tempt one bird out of the forest and it flew out over my head.

APODIDAE (Swifts)

Vaux's Swift

Chaetura vauxi

Several were in flight in Playa del Carmen on March 8. Commonly seen on Cozumel Island on March 9. A small flock was in the town of Felipe Carrillo Puerto on the 11th. Common at the Uxmal Resort Maya during our three-day stay.

TROCHILIDAE (Hummingbirds)

Green-breasted Mango

Anthracothorax prevostii

Two females were seen actively feeding along the road to the water treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9. On the morning of the 10th, we found both a male and a female as we biked around the abandoned housing complex.

Mexican Sheartail

Doricha eliza

A female perched on a wire for a great look along a street in the town of San Felipe on March 18. Another female was seen along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 20.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Archilochus colubris

One female was seen along the gravel road at Uxmal Resort Maya on the morning of March 16.

Wedge-tailed Sabrewing

Pampa curvipennis

A female was found at a flowering tree along the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che on March 14.

Cozumel Emerald

Cyanthus forficatus

One female and one male were found in the morning along the road to the water treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9, and later in the day, one female was seen feeding at a small tree at our accommodations at Caribo Cozumel.

Canivet's Emerald

Cyanthus canivetii

One male was found along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12. Another was seen along the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che on March 14.

Cinnamon Hummingbird

Amazilia rutila

One individual was seen along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12. Another was found at a flowering tree along the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che on March 14. One bird was spotted just outside the town of San Felipe on March 18, and another at the Ria Maya restaurant after we finished our boat tour at Rio Lagartos on March 19. Our walk along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 20 produced one bird.

RALLIDAE (Rails, Gallinules and Coots)

Ruddy Crane

Laterallus ruber

Heard only. Three or four birds were heard in the marsh at the water treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9. One was heard around the margins of Laguna Cobá as we walked over toward the ruins on March 11.

Russet-naped Wood-Rail

Aramides albiventris

A pair was found in the mangroves along our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Common Gallinule

Gallinula galeata

Two were found on a small marsh along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 20.

American Coot

Fulica americana

Three birds were seen at a small marsh along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 20.

ARAMIDAE (Limpkin)

Limpkin

Aramus guarauna

Two were in flight at Laguna Cobá in the town of Cobá on March 11.

RECURVIROSTRIDAE (Stilts and Avocets)

Black-necked Stilt

Himantopus mexicanus

Two were spotted along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 19, and four on the 20th.

CHARADRIIDAE (Plovers and Lapwings)

Black-bellied Plover

Pluvialis squatarola

Five were spotted on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Semipalmated Plover

Charadrius semipalmatus

Three were seen on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19, and three more on the 20th at the Salinas Los Coloradas.

Killdeer

Charadrius vociferus

One was found at the Salinas Los Coloradas on March 20.

JACANIDAE (Jacanas)

Northern Jacana

Jacana spinosa

Three were in the marsh at the water treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9. Two were seen on Laguna Cobá in the town of Cobá on March 11.

One was in a small marshy area along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 19, with three found in the same location on the 20th.

SCOLOPACIDAE (Sandpipers and Allies)

Long-billed Dowitcher

Limnodromus scolopaceus

Three birds were found on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Marbled Godwit***Limosa fedoa***

Seven birds were found on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Long-billed Curlew***Numenius americanus***

A nice surprise was two birds seen on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Spotted Sandpiper***Actitis macularius***

Just one individual was seen on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Greater Yellowlegs***Tringa melanoleuca***

At least one bird was seen at the Salinas Los Coloradas on March 20.

Willet***Tringa semipalmata***

Quite common with eight birds seen on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Lesser Yellowlegs***Tringa flavipes***

At least one bird was seen at the Salinas Los Coloradas on March 20.

Ruddy Turnstone***Arenaria interpres***

Five birds were foraging around the restaurant at the Money Bar Beach Club on Cozumel Island on March 9. Rather common at the waterfront in San Felipe during our stay. Ten birds were found on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19. Five were on the beach at the Salinas Los Coloradas on the 20th.

Sanderling***Calidris alba***

Quite commonly seen on the Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Western Sandpiper***Calidris mauri***

One bird was seen very well on the salt flats at the Salinas Los Coloradas on March 20.

Least Sandpiper***Calidris minutilla***

Three were found on a mudflat on the Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

LARIDAE (Gulls, Terns and Skimmers)**Herring Gull*****Larus argentatus***

Just one was found on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Lesser Black-backed Gull***Larus fuscus***

Two were seen at the Salinas Los Coloradas on March 20.

Laughing Gull***Leucophaeus atricilla***

Quite common at the ferry dock in Playa del Carmen on March 8 and 10, and at the Money Bar Beach Club on Cozumel Island on the 9th. Common at San Felipe as well as on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19. Also common along the coast on the 20th.

Gull-billed Tern

Gelochelidon nilotica

Two birds were seen on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Royal Tern

Thalasseus maximus

About six birds were seen at the ferry dock in Playa del Carmen on March 8.

Two were observed on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Approximately 12 birds were found at the Salinas Los Coloradas on the 20th.

Sandwich Tern

Thalasseus sandvicensis

Four birds were found on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

CICONIIDAE (Storks)

Wood Stork

Mycteria americana

One bird was seen in flight during our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

FREGATIDAE (Frigatebirds)

Magnificent Frigatebird

Fregata magnificens

Three birds were seen at the Money Bar Beach Club on Cozumel Island on March 9. Common at San Felipe as well as during our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19. Also commonly seen along the coast on the 20th.

ANHINGIDAE (Anhinga)

Anhinga

Anhinga anhinga

Two were seen well on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

PHALACROCORACIDAE (Cormorants and Shags)

Double-crested Cormorant

Nannopterum auritum

Common on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Neotropic Cormorant

Nannopterum brasilianum

A few were always present on the sea wall at San Felipe. Common on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

PELECANIDAE (Pelicans)

American White Pelican

Pelecanus erythrorhynchos

Commonly seen on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Brown Pelican

Pelecanus occidentalis

Common around San Felipe as well as during our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19. Also common along the coast on the 20th.

ARDEIDAE (Herons, Egrets and Bitterns)

Great Blue Heron

Ardea herodias

Commonly seen during our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19, with two white morphs being spotted. One was observed at the Salinas Los Coloradas on the 20th.

Great Egret

Ardea alba

One was found at the big lagoon on the Vigio Chico Road on March 12. Two were observed in flight while driving on March 18. Commonly seen during our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19. A few were found at the Salinas Los Coloradas on the 20th.

Reddish Egret

Egretta rufescens

One bird was seen well, and actively foraging, during our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Tricoloured Heron

Egretta tricolor

Two were observed in flight at the Money Bar Beach Club on Cozumel Island on March 9. One was found at San Felipe on March 18. A total of nine birds were seen during our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Little Blue Heron

Egretta caerulea

Commonly seen, including two white morphs, on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Snowy Egret

Egretta thula

Common on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Cattle Egret

Bubulcus ibis

One was in a field attending a few cows in the town of Laguna Coloradas on March 20.

Green Heron

Butorides virescens

Three birds were observed during our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron

Nyctanassa violacea

Two birds were seen during our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Bare-throated Tiger-Heron

Tigrisoma mexicanum

A good look at one bird during our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

THRESKIORNITHIDAE (Ibises and Spoonbills)

White Ibis

Eudocimus albus

Commonly encountered during our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Glossy Ibis

Plegadis falcinellus

Two were seen at a small marsh along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 20.

Roseate Spoonbill***Platalea ajaja***

A total of seven birds were seen on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19, with one more found at a small marsh later in the day along the Rancho San Salvador Road.

CATHARTIDAE (New World Vultures)**Black Vulture*****Coragyps atratus***

Two birds were first spotted along the road to the water treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9. Thereafter, we saw small numbers on most days.

Turkey Vulture***Cathartes aura***

Two birds were first seen circling over the airport in Cancun after our arrival on March 8, and we encountered this species almost daily in small numbers.

PANDIONIDAE (Osprey)**Osprey*****Pandion haliaetus***

One was seen in flight at the Money Bar Beach Club on Cozumel Island on March 9. Two were observed during our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

ACCIPITRIDAE (Hawks, Eagles and Kites)**Swallow-tailed Kite*****Elanoides forficatus***

Three were seen in flight along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12.

Black Hawk-Eagle***Spizaetus tyrannus***

One was soaring at the Becán ruins on March 14.

Crane Hawk***Geranospiza caerulescens***

One was found at the Uxmal ruins on March 15.

Roadside Hawk***Rupornis magnirostris***

One was frequenting a forest patch along the roadside as we walked over to the ruins at Cobá on March 11. Heard along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12. Another was found as we drove along the main road towards the ruins at Calakmul on March 13. Two birds were seen around the Uxmal Resort Maya on March 16.

STRIGIDAE (Owls)**Middle American Screech-Owl*****Megascops guatemalae***

Heard only. Heard before dawn on the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che on March 14. Also heard before dawn at the Uxmal Resort Maya on March 16.

Mottled Owl***Strix virgata***

Heard only. Heard along the short loop trail before dawn at Campamento Yaax'Che on March 14.

Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl***Glaucidium brasilianum***

Heard in the early morning along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12. Also heard before dawn as we drove the main road towards the ruins at Calakmul on March 13 and along the short loop trail before dawn at Campamento Yaax'Che on the 14th. Two birds were seen in daylight on the grounds of the Uxmal Resort Maya on March 15.

TROGONIDAE (Trogon)**Black-headed Trogon*****Trogon melanocephalus***

Three birds were seen well while we biked along the paths at the Cobá ruins on March 11. Two were spotted along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12 and three at the Calakmul ruins on the 14th. One was seen as we walked from the Uxmal Resort Maya over to the Uxmal ruins on the morning of March 15.

MOMOTIDAE (Motmots)**Lesson's Motmot*****Momotus lessonii***

One was found at the Cobá ruins on March 11. Heard along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12. One was spotted along the main road to the ruins at Calakmul on March 13. On March 14, birds were heard both along the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che and at the Uxmal Resort Maya. One was spotted at the Uxmal Resort Maya on the 16th.

Turquoise-browed Motmot***Eumomota superciliosa***

Our first sighting was of a single bird at the Cobá ruins on March 11. Extremely common, vocal and active on the grounds of the Uxmal Resort Maya during our stay from March 14-16 as well as during our visit to the Uxmal ruins on the 15th. Also common at the Ek Balam ruins on March 21.

ALCEDINIDAE (Kingfishers)**Belted Kingfisher*****Megaceryle alcyon***

Four birds were seen during our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

BUCCONIDAE (Puffbirds)**White-necked Puffbird*****Notharchus hyperrhynchus***

Two birds were quietly surveying the scene along the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che on March 14.

RAMPHASTIDAE (Toucans)

Collared Araçari

Pteroglossus torquatus

Our first sighting was of one bird as we arrived at Campamento Yaax'Che on March 12. Three birds were drinking from a watering trough along the short dirt track from the campsite at Campamento Yaax'Che back towards the main highway on March 13. One was seen along the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che on March 14.

Keel-billed Toucan

Ramphastos sulfuratus

A good look at one bird in flight along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12. Two were spotted as they flew off while we drove the main road to the ruins at Calakmul on the 13th. Heard from along the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che on March 14.

PICIDAE (Woodpeckers)

Yucatan Woodpecker

Melanerpes pygmaeus

At least one was seen along the road to the water treatment plant on March 9, and several more were found at the old abandoned housing complex the next day on the 10th. One was spotted at the Uxmal Resort Maya on the 16th.

Golden-fronted Woodpecker

Melanerpes aurifrons

One was found along the road to the water treatment plant on March 9. One was seen in the campsite at Campamento Yaax'Che on March 13. Two were seen at the Uxmal Resort Maya on March 15. One was spotted at the ruins of Ek Balam on March 21.

Pale-billed Woodpecker

Campephilus guatemalensis

One was seen well along the trails at the Calakmul ruins on March 13.

FALCONIDAE (Falcons and Caracaras)

Crested Caracara

Caracara plancus

A single bird was first seen on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19, and another later in the day while driving the roads outside of town.

Barred Forest-Falcon

Micrastur ruficollis

A good look at a perched bird as we drove the main road towards the ruins at Calakmul on March 13.

Collared Forest-Falcon

Micrastur semitorquatus

Heard only. On March 15, single birds were heard before dawn at the Uxmal Resort Maya and at dusk along the San Simon road. Heard again before dawn at the Uxmal Resort Maya on the 16th.

Bat Falcon***Falco ruficularis***

One was seen in flight from atop the main pyramid at the Becán ruins on March 14.

PSITTACIDAE (New World and African Parrots)**Olive-throated Parakeet*****Eupsittula nana***

Two were flying around outside the Cancun airport as we waited around for the bus to Playa del Carmen on March 8. Our visit to the water treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9 produced two more birds. Two birds were seen in flight at the Cobá ruins on March 11. Four more were found along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12. A pair was at the Becán ruins on March 14. One pair was spotted along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 19.

White-fronted Parrot***Amazona albifrons***

A pair was first seen in flight along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12. Another pair was at the Becán ruins on March 14. Two different pairs each perched nicely at the ruins at Uxmal on March 15. One or two pairs were seen on both visits to the Rancho San Salvador Road. A final pair was spotted at the ruins at Ek Balam on March 21.

THAMNOPHILIDAE (Typical Antbirds)**Barred Antshrike*****Thamnophilus doliatus***

A pair was seen well along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12. Heard at the Becán ruins on March 14 and along the Rancho San Salvador Road on the 20th.

FORMICARIIDAE (Antthrushes)**Mayan Anthrush*****Formicarius monileger***

A wonderful view of a single bird walking through the undergrowth along the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che on March 13.

FURNARIIDAE (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)**Plain Xenops*****Xenops minutus***

While walking the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che on March 13, we saw one bird probing a small vine and eating a tiny insect.

Olivaceous Woodcreeper***Sittasomus griseicapillus***

Two were seen well along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12.

Ivory-billed Woodcreeper***Xiphorhynchus flavigaster***

One was found while we biked along the trails at the Cobá ruins on March 11. One or two were seen daily on the grounds at Campamento Yaax'Che and along the short loop trail.

TITYRIDAE (Tityras and Allies)**Masked Tityra*****Tityra semifasciata***

One was found while we biked along the trails at the Cobá ruins on March 11. Two birds were attending a fruiting tree along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12. One was seen at the Calakmul ruins on March 13, two at the Uxmal ruins on the 14th and a final two birds at the Ek Balam ruins on the 21st.

Rose-throated Becard***Pachyramphus aglaiae***

A female was seen well at the abandoned housing complex on Cozumel Island on March 10. Rather common at the Cobá ruins on March 11 with a total of six birds. A pair was spotted as we walked from the Uxmal Resort Maya to the ruins on March 15, and another pair on the grounds of the Uxmal Resort Maya on the morning of the 16th.

TYRANNIDAE (Tyrant Flycatchers)**Greenish Elaenia*****Myiopagis vindicata***

Our only sighting was of one bird at the ruins at Ek Balam on March 21.

Northern Beardless Tyrannulet***Camptostoma imberbe***

One was seen very well as we walked along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 20.

Northern Bentbill***Oncostoma cinereigulare***

Heard only. One was heard along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12. On March 13, vocalizations were heard at the Calakmul ruins and along the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che.

Eye-ringed Flatbill***Rhynchocyclus brevirostris***

A prolonged look at one bird along the walking path not far in from the entrance to the ruins at Calakmul on March 13.

Vermilion Flycatcher***Pyrocephalus rubinus***

A single male along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 20 was the only sighting of the trip.

Social Flycatcher***Myiozetetes similis***

Common in the town of Cobá on the morning of March 11. Common on the grounds at the Uxmal Resort Maya on March 15 and 16. A few were spotted in Mérida on the 18th.

Great Kiskadee***Pitangus sulphuratus***

About three birds were seen on the grounds of the Uxmal Resort Maya on March 15. One was spotted on the boardwalk into the mangroves at San Felipe on March 20.

Boat-billed Flycatcher***Megarynchus pitangua***

Rather common as we biked amongst the ruins at Cobá with sightings of four birds. One bird was spotted along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12.

Tropical Kingbird***Tyrannus melancholicus***

About four birds were spotted while biking to the water treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9. One was found the next day on the 10th as we explored the roads around the abandoned housing complex. Two were in the town of Cobá as we walked over to the ruins in the morning on March 10. One bird was spotted along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12, and another on the grounds of the Uxmal Resort Maya on the 15th. Small numbers were seen daily from March 18-20 in the San Felipe/Rio Lagartos area.

Couch's Kingbird***Tyrannus couchii***

On our short walk from our hotel in Cobá over to the ruins on the morning of March 11, we came across a pair of kingbirds. Suspecting they were Couch's Kingbirds, a quick play of a recorded call resulted in a definite response, enough to clinch the identification.

Yucatan Flycatcher***Myiarchus yucatanensis***

On March 13, single birds were found at the ruins at Calakmul, and along the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che. Birds were generally vocal which aided in the identification. Another one was seen along the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che the next morning on the 14th.

Dusky-capped Flycatcher***Myiarchus tuberculifer***

One bird was spotted along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12. Another was at the ruins of Ek Balam on March 21.

Brown-crested Flycatcher***Myiarchus tyrannulus***

One was spotted at the ruins at Uxmal on March 15.

Bright-rumped Attila***Attila spadiceus***

A good look at one bird at a fruiting tree along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12, and another at the ruins at Calakmul on the 13th.

VIREONIDAE (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers and Erpornis)

White-eyed Vireo

Vireo griseus

One bird was first spotted on March 9 along the road to the water treatment plant on Cozumel Island. Two birds were found while exploring the ruins at Cobá on March 10, with two more along the Vigio Chico Road on the 12th. Two more were spotted at the Calakmul ruins on March 13. On March 14, we had three birds on the walk from the Uxmal Resort Maya to the ruins, and one more at the ruins themselves. Three were found on a morning stroll along the gravel road adjacent to the Uxmal Resort Maya on March 16. A walk along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 20 produced two birds.

Mangrove Vireo

Vireo pallens

One was seen very well along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12. A nice pair was spotted on our walk from the Uxmal Resort Maya to the ruins on March 15. A final sighting was a single bird along the Rancho San Salvador Road on the morning of the 20th.

Cozumel Vireo

Vireo bairdi

Rather scarce with just one bird seen along the road to the water treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9. The bird actively moved through the foliage, proving difficult to see well, and ultimately slipped away.

Yucatan Vireo

Vireo magister

At least three seen while we biked along the road to the water treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9. We had an excellent sighting of one bird calmly eating small fruits. Another three birds were found while exploring the abandoned housing complex on the 10th. One was found along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12.

Rufous-browed Peppershrike

Cyclarhis gujanensis

One bird was seen as we walked from the Uxmal Resort Maya over to the ruins on March 16. Another single individual was spotted along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 20.

CORVIDAE (Crows, Jays and Magpies)

Green Jay

Cyanocorax yncas

A quick look at one bird at the Uxmal ruins on March 15. A better sighting of two birds at the ruins of Ek Balam on March 21.

Brown Jay

Psilorhinus morio

Two birds were found while exploring the ruins at Cobá on March 10. Fairly common at Calakmul and around Campameanto Yaax'Che during our stay.

Yucatan Jay

Cyanocorax yucatanicus

We had sightings of three birds along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12. Two were spotted as we walked the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che on March 13. We encountered a flock of about five birds as we drove towards Uxmal on March 14. A flock of about seven birds was found along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 19. A visit to the ruins of Ek Balam on the morning of March 20 produced sightings of five birds in total.

HIRUNDINIDAE (Swallows)

Mangrove Swallow

Tachycineta albilinea

About 12 birds were seen in San Felipe on March 20.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow

Stelgidopteryx serripennis

A single bird was first seen at Laguna Cobá in the town of Cobá on the morning of March 11. Commonly seen around the Uxmal Resort Maya during our stay, sometimes skimming down to the pool for a drink or a wash. Good numbers were found in San Felipe on March 18.

Barn Swallow

Hirundo rustica

Four birds were seen in San Felipe on March 20.

Cave Swallow

Petrochelidon fulva

Abundant at the Uxmal ruins on March 15.

POLIOPTILIDAE (Gnatcatchers)

Long-billed Gnatwren

Ramphocaenus melanurus

One was found along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12.

Blue-grey Gnatcatcher

Polioptila caerulea

Common in the woodland at the abandoned housing complex on Cozumel Island on March 10. Three birds were seen on our walk from the Uxmal Resort Maya to the ruins on March 15. Two more were on the grounds of the Uxmal Resort Maya the next morning on the 16th. One was seen in the city of Mérida on March 18. Very common along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 20. A final two birds were found at the Ek Balam ruins on March 21.

TROGLODYTIDAE (Wrens)

Yucatan Wren

Campylorhynchus yucatanicus

Good looks at three birds along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 20.

Spot-breasted Wren***Pheugopedius maculipectus***

One was found along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12. On the 13th, we had one bird along the trails at the Calakmul ruins, and another along the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che in the afternoon. An additional bird was found at the Becán ruins on March 14. One more was on our walk from the Uxmal Resort Maya over to the ruins on the morning of the 15th.

House Wren***Troglodytes aedon***

One was seen quite well in the undergrowth along the road to the water treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9.

White-bellied Wren***Uropsila leucogastra***

Good looks at two birds on the trails at the Calakmul ruins on March 13.

MIMIDAE (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)**Grey Catbird*****Dumetella carolinensis***

Single birds were seen as we explored the road to the water treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9, along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12, at the Becán ruins on March 14, at the Uxmal ruins on March 15, at the Uxmal Resort Maya on March 16, and at the Cenote Acancun on March 18.

Black Catbird***Melanoptila glabirostris***

Very common and vocal along the road to the water treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9. About four birds were seen as we explored the abandoned housing complex the next morning on the 10th. Two were seen along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12.

Tropical Mockingbird***Mimus gilvus***

Quite common on Cozumel Island. Also common along the coast in the Rio Lagartos area.

TURDIDAE (Thrushes and Allies)**Clay-coloured Thrush*****Turdus grayi***

A single bird was first seen in Cobá as we made our way from our hotel over to the ruins on the morning of March 11. One more was found at the Calakmul ruins on March 13. Three birds were attending a fruiting tree along the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che on March 14. On the 15th, two were found at the Uxmal ruins and one more on the grounds of the Uxmal Resort Maya. Another bird was seen at the Uxmal Resort Maya the next day on the 16th. A final two birds were found at the Ek Balam ruins on March 21.

Wood Thrush

Hylocichla mustelina

One was calmly foraging on the ground in a picnic area adjacent to the parking lot at the Calakmul ruins just after we arrived on the morning of March 13.

FRINGILLIDAE (Finches, Euphonias and Allies)

Yellow-throated Euphonia

Euphonia hirundinacea

A pair was seen well at a fruiting tree along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12.

PASSERELLIDAE (New World Sparrows)

Green-backed Sparrow

Arremonops chloronotus

A brief look at one bird along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12.

SPINDALIDAE (Spindalises)

Western Spindalis

Spindalis zena

One colourful male was seen singing while perched atop a high, exposed branch along the road to water treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9.

ICTERIDAE (Troupials and Allies)

Melodious Blackbird

Dives dives

A pair was seen in the town of Cobá as we walked from our hotel over to the ruins on the morning of March 11. Another pair was found at the Calakmul ruins on March 13. Small numbers were seen daily around the Uxmal Resort Maya and also at the Uxmal ruins. One was spotted at the Cenote Acancun on March 18.

Great-tailed Grackle

Quiscalus mexicanus

Common and widespread in non-forested environments.

Yellow-backed Oriole

Icterus chrysater

One was spotted at the Ek Balam ruins on March 21.

Orange Oriole

Icterus auratus

Two birds were seen well at the Uxmal Resort Maya on the morning of March 16.

Yellow-tailed Oriole

Icterus mesomelas

A pair was seen well at the Uxmal Resort Maya on the morning of March 16.

Altamira Oriole***Icterus gularis***

Our first sighting was of one bird at the Cancun airport on March 8 as we waited for the bus to Playa del Carmen. A pair was seen at the Cobá ruins on March 11. One was spotted at the Becán ruins on March 14, one on our walk from the Uxmal Resort Maya to the Uxmal ruins on the 15th, and another on the grounds of the Uxmal Resort Maya on the 16th. A last bird was observed at the Ek Balam ruins on March 21.

Hooded Oriole***Icterus cucullatus***

Two pairs were seen on March 12: one in the town of Cobá, and later on, one at the ruins. On March 15, birds were frequently seen on our walk from the Uxmal Resort Maya to the ruins, and at the ruins themselves. A final bird was seen along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 21.

PARULIDAE (New World Warblers)**Ovenbird*****Seiurus aurocapilla***

Common with a total of four birds seen as we explored the abandoned housing complex on Cozumel Island on March 10. One was found along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12. On the 13th, we had two birds at the Calakmul ruins and three on the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che later on.

Northern Waterthrush***Parkesia noveboracensis***

One was seen along the muddy shore of a stretch of mangroves on our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19. Another was spotted on the mangrove boardwalk at San Felipe on March 20.

Blue-winged Warbler***Vermivora cyanoptera***

One bird was seen at the Calakmul ruins on March 13.

Black-and-white Warbler***Mniotilta varia***

Single birds were seen along the road to the water treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9, and at the abandoned housing complex on the 10th. Two birds were found along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12. On March 13, singles were seen at the Calakmul ruins, and at Campamento Yaax'Che, both in the campground and on the short loop trail. On March 14, singles were found on the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che and at the Becán ruins. Singles were spotted on March 20 along the Rancho San Salvador Road and on the 21st at the ruins of Ek Balam.

Common Yellowthroat***Geothlypis trichas***

One individual was spotted lurking in the mangroves during our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19. Rather common with two males and a female seen along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 20.

Northern Parula***Setophaga americana***

One bird was found along the road to the wastewater treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9. One was seen on the walk from the Uxmal Resort Maya to the ruins on March 15, and another on the dirt road at the Uxmal Resort Maya the next morning on the 16th. Rather common with four individuals seen along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 20.

Yellow Warbler***Setophaga petechia***

Rather common along the road to the wastewater treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9. Two birds were also found around the abandoned housing complex on the 10th. Two red-headed individuals (other wise known as Mangrove Warbler), likely of the subspecies *bryanti*, were indeed found amongst the mangroves during our Rio Lagartos boat tour on March 19.

Magnolia Warbler***Setophaga magnolia***

One was found on the grounds of the Uxmal Resort Maya on March 14. Two birds were seen along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 20.

Black-throated Green Warbler***Setophaga virens***

We found two birds while exploring the abandoned housing complex on Cozumel Island on March 10. On March 13, two birds were found each at the Calakmul ruins and also along the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che.

Yellow-throated Warbler***Setophaga dominica***

A great look at one bird in fine colour at the ruins at Uxmal on March 15.

Palm Warbler***Setophaga palmarum***

On March 9, single birds were found along the road to the wastewater treatment plant on Cozumel Island and at the Monkey Bar Beach Club.

American Redstart***Setophaga ruticilla***

A female-plumaged bird was found around the abandoned housing complex on Cozumel Island on March 10. On March 13, singles were seen at the Calakmul ruins and on the short loop trail at Campamento Yaax'Che.

Hooded Warbler***Setophaga citrina***

A brief but good look at one male along the dirt road at the Uxmal Resort Maya on the morning of March 16. Two females were seen along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 20.

CARDINALIDAE (Cardinals and Allies)**Summer Tanager*****Piranga rubra***

A male was spotted along the road to the wastewater treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9. Another male was seen at the Cobá ruins on March 11.

Rose-throated Tanager*Piranga roseogularis*

Three sightings of individual female birds: at the abandoned housing complex on Cozumel Island on March 10, along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12, and at the Ek Balam ruins on March 21.

Red-throated Ant-Tanager*Habia fuscicauda*

A pair was seen extremely well as we rode our bikes from the entrance at the Cobá ruins to the first temple complex on the morning of March 11. Another pair was found at the Calakmul ruins on March 13, followed by one more pair at the Becán ruins on the 14th.

Northern Cardinal*Cardinalis cardinalis*

Both a male and a female were spotted along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 20.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak*Pheucticus ludovicianus*

A female bird was seen as we walked from the Uxmal Resort Maya to the ruins on March 15.

Indigo Bunting*Passerina cyanea*

A flock of six birds was seen as we were floating in the Cenote X'Batun on March 16.

THRAUPIDAE (Tanglers and Allies)**Grey-headed Tanager***Eucometis penicillata*

One was seen at one of our stops along the main road to the Calakmul ruins on March 13.

Blue-grey Tanager*Thraupis episcopus*

A pair was on the grounds of the Uxmal Resort Maya on March 15.

Morelet's Seedeater*Sporophila moreletii*

A small flock of one male and several females was spotted along the Rancho San Salvador Road on March 19.

Bananaquit*Coereba flaveola*

Quite common along the road to the wastewater treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9. Two were also seen on Cozumel at the abandoned housing complex on the 10th.

Yellow-faced Grassquit*Tiaris olivaceus*

One bird was seen well along the road to the wastewater treatment plant on Cozumel Island on March 9. One bird was at the Uxmal ruins on March 15.

Black-headed Saltator*Saltator atriceps*

Three birds were seen along the Vigio Chico Road on March 12.

Cinnamon-bellied Saltator***Saltator grandis***

As we walked over from our hotel to the ruins at Cobá on the morning of March 11, we came across three birds in a fruiting tree. Two were also attending a fruiting tree at the ruins of Uxmal on March 15.

Mammal List**Bat sp.**

Five bats were roosting in a small depression at the top of the cave complex at Ruina en Cenote on March 11.

Central American Black Howler***Alouatta pigra***

A family group was lounging in the campground during the day on March 13 at the Campamento Yaax'Che.

Northern Grey Fox***Urocyon cinereoargenteus***

One was spotted from the car as we drove from Becán to Uxmal on March 14.

Yucatan Squirrel***Sciurus yucatanensis***

Just one sighting along the paths at the ruins of Calakmul on March 13.

Deppe Squirrel***Sciurus deppei***

One was spotted at the ruins of Becán on March 14

Reptile List**Snake sp.**

A snake bearing the resemblance of a coral snake crossed the path near the main temple complex at Cobá ruins on March 11. Unfortunately, I didn't note the sequence of coloured bands, nor take a photo of it. There seems to be a confusing (at least to me) taxonomy of the coral snakes in the Yucatan. However, it was more likely a mimic of the coral snakes as it was active during the day, and most probably was, in fact, a Tropical Milksnake, *Lampropeltis triangulum*.

Central American Boa***Boa imperator***

During our short nightbirding attempt along the Vigio Chico Road March 11, a very large Central American Boa crossed the road in front of the car.

Black Spiny-tailed Iguana***Ctenosaura similis***

Widespread in dry, rocky habitats.

Morelet's Crocodile***Crocodylus moreletii***

Two were seen in a small swamp on the Sendero Peten Mac on March 19.