



A [Tropical Birding](#) CUSTOM tour

JAMAICA

18th – 24th March 2016



There are about 30 endemics in Jamaica (taxonomy dependent), and most are easy to see on a short trip. Jamaican Owl is one of the trickier ones, with this one seen just a 2-minute walk from our bayside villa!

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Report and all photos by Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours

INTRODUCTION

Picture postcard images of Jamaica typically depict bikini-clad tourists relaxing on beautiful beaches. However, many are not aware that Jamaica is a rugged island boasting mountain peaks rising to 6,600ft (2200m), and home to rainforests too. It is here that we spent the most time, in order to chase after the 30 or so endemics (27-30 depending on taxonomy) on the island. Jamaica boasts an extraordinarily high number of endemic birds, considering the size of the country – Cuba is TEN times the size of Jamaica, and yet holds fewer island endemics. Furthermore, not even a week is needed to see them all on Jamaica, whereas a trip to Cuba rarely gets them all, and generally requires a stay of around 2 weeks. While many tourists fly into Montego Bay on the western side of the island, and experience little of the “real” Jamaica, when staying in all-inclusive beach resorts; we traveled purely in the eastern side of the island, spending five days birding, in two main areas, racking up the full compliment of specialties in the process-ALL the endemic bird species were seen. This allowed us to see parts of Jamaica that are sadly missed by other more generalist tourists, not least the pleasantly cool Blue Mountains, where the Lion’s share of the birds were added to our list, and where we also got to sample the revered and famously expensive local coffee, and were able to purchase some directly from the local supplier. The Blue Mountains were combined with the foothills of the John Crow Mountains further north, where the relaxed seaside location of Port Antonio, allowed us to combine personal images of the endemic birds with the classic images of Jamaica’s beaches referred to earlier.



While seeing the “full house” of Jamaican endemic birds was normal and expected, we also saw some other less predictable birds, like **Caribbean Coot**, **West Indian Whistling-Duck**, and a very popular **American Flamingo** near Kingston, which outranked all of the endemics for choice of top bird of the tour. While the latter was a less predictable highlight, birds like the tiny, strikingly beautiful “Robin Red Brest” (i.e. **Jamaican Tody-photo page 2**), “Old Man Bird” (**Chestnut-bellied Cuckoo**), “Old Woman Bird”, (**Jamaican Lizard-Cuckoo**), and “Doctorbird” (**Red-billed Streamertail-photo below**), were all more usual highlights for this trip. We also saw a healthy contingent of American Wood Warblers, preparing the group for the forthcoming spring back home on the shores of Lake Erie in Ohio. To hear these regular attendees of Magee Marsh (Ohio), (touted as one of THE great warbler spots in North America), state “this is as good as Magee!” at times, also reflected well on the great warbler viewing we had on this tour, with some 14 species seen well (including an endemic one all of their own-**Arrowhead Warbler**), along with an equally regular procession of specialty parrots, hummingbirds, flycatchers, doves, thrushes, and even a single owl and woodpecker only found on this idyllic Caribbean island.

For these people looking for a quick getaway, to work their cameras on some new birds, and hoping to leave little behind, this tour fit the bill perfectly. They got the birds, got some good photos, and departed feeling like they had seen much of what Jamaica offers the birder in just a week in the country...



TOUR SUMMARY

DAY ONE – of birding - (19th March): **HELLSHIRE HILLS & HOPE GARDENS to the BLUE MOUNTAINS**

After an evening arrival, we were all keen to get out and see what Jamaica had to offer. We left near first light and traveled to *Hellshire Hills*, an area of dry, scrub-covered hills close to Kingston. To Kingstonians, this is home to some of the best “party” beach locations in the area, but to us, we were all about the *birds*. In particular, we were looking for a Caribbean specialty that only occurs in a couple of places on the island. While localized on Jamaica, the **Bahama Mockingbird** is often bold and conspicuous, so its habits, *and its habitat*, usually make it readily found on a short venture into the area. And so it proved; after 90 minutes on site we had seen at least five of them (*photo below*), along with our other main avian target, several **Stolid Flycatchers**, which headed up a list of specialty flycatchers on the cards for the tour. Several **Jamaican Mangos** at the site kick started a hummingbird list comprised of 4 endemic species. Supporting cast was provided by a handful of waterbirds, like **Tricolored and Little Blue Herons, Common Gallinule, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs**, and an **Osprey** to compliment the songbirds. A short stop at a local sewage works produced **American Crocodiles, Yellow-crowned Bishops**, and **Glossy Ibis**.



Our final stop of the morning was Hope Botanical Gardens. We passed the Bob Marley Museum on the way, illustrating the island's position as the birthplace of Dance Hall and Reggae music. Our visit to Hope Gardens was essentially, as this is often the best place to see the endemic Yellow-billed Parrot. As if to illustrate this, as we pulled into the parking lot, the harsh calls of several **Yellow-billed Parrots** were heard resonating around the car park! It took a little longer to actually see them though (*photo below*), as finding a green parrot hiding in amongst a sea of green leaves took some doing!



After enjoying prolonged views of the parrot, we entered the gardens, noting a number of Zenaida Doves parading around on the lawns. We headed straight to a specific tree, (seeing a handsome **White-crowned Pigeon** on the way), where a **Northern Potoo** had recently been nesting. Initial searches indicated the birds may have moved away, as Lyndon announced they were not on their "usual" perches. However, persistence paid off, and Lyndon eventually found a ghostly white juvenile bird perched high in the canopy of this massive tree (*photo next page*). The same tree was also buzzing with *American Wood Warblers*, with **Northern Parula**,

American Redstart, Bay-breasted, Black-and-white, Palm, Prairie and Cape May Warblers all featuring there. The same productive tree also hosted a singing **Vervain Hummingbird**, which is the second smallest bird in the World, at just 2 inches (5cm) long (i.e. a US dollar bill is 3 times the length of this bird!).



After lunch in a restaurant in Kingston, we left the sweaty lowlands behind, and climbed up into the **Blue Mountains**, passing by the army base at **Newcastle**, where several **Antillean Palm Swifts** were seen on the wing. We gradually made our way up to **Silver Hill Gap**, and our base for the next two nights-**Starlight Chalet**. On the way up we saw the first **Jamaican Pewee**, which was to become a tour regular. After checking in, and gawking at the procession of **Red-billed Streamertails** visiting the chalet's feeders, we took a walk along the road nearby, finding one of the key birds of the area, the so-called "Mountain Witch", otherwise known as **Crested Quail-Dove**, perched within the forest. We also saw our first **Jamaican Tody**, undoubtedly one of the avian highlights of any trip to Jamaica, an endemic species, and an endemic family to the Caribbean. In the evening, we visited a regular spot for the endemic **Jamaican Owl**, which had recently nested in the area. As darkness drew in, the long begging screeches of the young bird were heard, and after a short period of panic, we managed to get several

views of the bird, which still showed some downy feathers on its head.

DAY TWO – of birding - (20th March): **THE BLUE MOUNTAINS (Silver Hill Gap, Section & Woodside)**
We opened the day right within the grounds of **Starlight Chalet**, actually watching the birds right from the balcony shortly after dawn. Several lights in the garden, act as a magnet for birds, and endemic birds at that, near dawn, when birds come in to pick off the insects drawn in by them during the night. It was a lively opening, with **Jamaican Tody**, **Jamaican Elaenia**, and **Sad and Rufous-tailed Flycatchers** all in attendance, while an **Ovenbird** walked around the flowerbed below, and a **Black-throated Blue-Warbler** foraged on the garden lawn! After breakfast we took a stroll nearby, and ran into one of the missable endemics, in the form of a **Jamaican Blackbird**, in an area where they are not usually found, a good early score.

The last part of the morning was spent at *Woodside*, where a **Greater Antillean Elaenia**, several "Glasseyes" or **White-eyed Thrushes**, **Greater Antillean Bullfinch**, and a marvelous male **Yellow-shouldered Grassquit**, were all seen, the latter one of the most underrated of the island endemics (*photo right*).

Over lunchtime back at our mountain chalet we enjoyed more time with the local **Red-billed Streamertails**, one of the World's great hummingbirds, who were joined at the feeders from

time to time by the odd **Jamaican Oriole**, and John found a male **Merlin** perched in the garden too (*photo page 9*). Our afternoon birding near *Section*, started slowly as we walked among the flowering local **Blue Mahoe**



trees (the national tree of Jamaica—see *photo below*), with a few more **Jamaican Spindalis**, but picked up once we found one of several **Rufous-throated Solitaires**, one of the classic, melancholy sounds of the Blue Mountains (*photo page 8*). A very vocal **Chestnut-bellied Cuckoo** was also rated very highly by John, as it scampered around the large trees above us (*photo next page*). On the way back to the chalet in the late afternoon, we stopped for a calling pair of **Jamaican Becards**, and another (this time a juvenile) **Crested Quail-Dove** sat on the side of the road.







DAY THREE – of birding - (21st March): **THE BLUE MOUNTAINS (Silver Hill Gap) to PORT ANTONIO**
We spent our final time in the Blue Mountains in the area in and around our mountain chalet, and also made time for a visit to sample the World famous Blue Mountain coffee, at a small, local supplier. The chalet, as usual, was alive for birds in the cooler early hours of the morning, an **Arrowhead Warbler** posed for photos (*photo next page*), as did a **Blue Mountain Vireo**, and a **Rufous-tailed Flycatcher** (*photo page 12*). We also saw more **Orangequits** along the roadside, got good looks at a perched **Ring-tailed Pigeon** (which had mostly been seen only in flight), and had cracking looks at a pair of **Jamaican Becards** (*photo page 10*).

After taking in our final looks at the local “Doctorbirds”/**Red-billed Streamertails** at the chalet’s feeders (*photo page 11*), we packed up and hit the road north, stopping to admire a colorful local Rasta along the way! We initially crossed over the **Blue Mountains**, then skirted the Caribbean coast to the northern town of **Port Antonio**, our base for the next two nights. The journey passed some tidal creeks where we stopped for a few waterbirds, like **American Coots**, **Common Gallinules**, **Royal Terns**, **Little Blue Herons**, **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons**, and a much less expected **Sora**, a tricky species to see in Jamaica.

After checking into our very comfortable hotel, near the foothills of the John Crow Mountains, formed of a series of villas overlooking an idyllic blue water bay, we took a short trip into the local rainforest at *San San*, where thick tangles and a dense overhead canopy provided welcome shade from the intense afternoon sun.



Soon after arriving we were hearing a new bird for us, the characteristic “John Chewit” calls of **Black-whiskered Vireos**, and saw one well in the ‘scope shortly after as it called back from the treetops. The main endemic that had thus far eluded us was the striking **Jamaican Lizard-Cuckoo**, the principal reason for us visiting this site, which is traditionally good for the species. After 40 minutes on site the harsh guttural calls of this wonderful cuckoo were heard, but moments of panic and frustration followed, as only glimpses of the bird were had. However, finally, we managed to locate the bird sitting quietly in the canopy, where we were able to ‘scope it up at length, and admire the conspicuous red eye ring, and warm orange underparts of this beautiful endemic. The remainder of the afternoon was spent focusing in trying to track down one of several calling **Caribbean Doves**, an arresting-looking dove with rich rufous upperside and clean Ariel white underparts. A very responsive bird initially frustrated us by diving into deep cover each time it came in, but then dropped on to a large rainforest

limb, where we were able to view it for some time, closing a very productive first afternoon in the foothills of the *John Crow Mountains*. That night we retired to our bayside villa, where we were served dinner overlooking the bay, at our own personal villa, a marvelous way to close the day, although our birding was not yet done. Having seen a juvenile **Jamaican Owl** in the Blue Mountains, we were keen to see if we could upgrade this to an adult on our hotel grounds. While the hoped for Barn Owl at the same site remained silent and unseen, the Jamaican Owl was soon heard giving its call from the trees just minutes walk from our villa, and soon had long, long looks at the bird perched above us.





DAY FOUR – of birding - (22nd March): **HECTOR'S RIVER & THE ECCLESDOWN ROAD**

The earliest start of the tour saw us leave our comfortable coastal villa under cover of darkness, in order to reach an area of sea cliffs near Happy Grove School, in *Hector's River*. The reason for our early departure was the chance to see some of the local breeding *White-tailed Tropicbirds*, which come ashore in January to March to breed (*photo next page*). They are generally best looked for in the early morning, as many of them head out to sea to forage for much of the day. On arrival, no ghostly white forms could be seen drifting over the bay, and we wondered if our timing was off. However, after a tense 20-minute wait, several distant elegant white forms were found over the next bay along the coast. We waited, but the birds seemed to be circling only that distant cove, and were avoiding the one we were standing alongside. Therefore, we debated leaving and trying to find a viewpoint over that other set of cliffs, but, just as we were set to leave, the first of these tropicbirds, began to move into the bay we were beside. Eventually, we counted at least 13 different **White-tailed Tropicbirds** in the two different bays, and got some close-ups of some of these birds gliding around the cliffs closeby. The same cliffside site also hosted an adult and juvenile **American Kestrel**, which had recently bred in the area, and which afforded super views by the parking area...



Later in the day, we made two visits to the famed *Ecclesdown Road*, one of the premier birding sites in the country, and one that boasts the *entire* list of Jamaican endemics. While we had already done well for most of these during our time in the *Blue Mountains*, there were still a few endemic gaps on our list, as some of the species – namely *Black-billed Streamertail*, *Black-billed Parrot*, and *Jamaican Crow*, cannot be found in the those mountains. This wonderful road initially passes through open, small-scale agricultural areas, and then rises into vine-tangled rainforest, where the vast majority of the endemics can be found. On the way through the open areas, we quickly found a **Gray Kingbird**, an austral migrant that had probably only arrived in recent days, with few being reported elsewhere by this time. Our two visits to the *Ecclesdown Road* and some local birding near our hotel at lunchtime, were good for parrots, with all 4 Jamaican species seen by the close of the day, including some great perched looks at **Black-billed Parrots**, as well as **Yellow-billed Parrots** and **Olive-throated (Jamaican) Parakeets** passing by in close flights. Another site close to our hotel gave us a short, perched view of a single **Green-rumped Parrotlet** to complete the quartet. It turned out to be a good day for **Ruddy Quail-Doves** on the *Ecclesdown Road*, with at least 8 sightings split between the morning and afternoon. Although most were the usual brief flight views of birds being flushed from the side of the road, one of our final looks of the day was the best, as we were able to slowly drive behind a bird that was feeding along the road at length in front of us, when we were able to observe it from the vehicle.



Other endemic repeats on this day included a female **Jamaican Becard**, several **Jamaican Todys** (*photo page 2*), another **Jamaican Elaenia**, a long look at a **Chestnut-bellied Cuckoo**, another handsome male **Yellow-shouldered Grassquit**, and several views of the common and widespread **Jamaican Woodpecker**, (the *only* woodpecker on the island). We also had further looks at **Black-whiskered Vireos**, which were locally abundant and vocal in the area, and saw both **Antillean Palm** and **White-collared Swifts** during the day. In between the visits to the *Ecclesdown Road*, we stopped back at the hotel and enjoyed a series of visits from a **Black-billed Streamertail** and one **Jamaican Mango** to the hotel's two barside feeders. Less expected at the hummingbird feeder was a male **Black-throated Blue-Warbler** that clambered over the chairs and lampshades in the bar to get at them! Before this, on the drive back to a *Port Antonio* restaurant for their famous hamburgers for lunch, we stopped along a windy beach road for another **Jamaican Lizard-Cuckoo**. A number

of **Vervain Hummingbirds** were also seen near our hotel (*photo page 19*). Eventually, after making a second run at the *Ecclesdown Road*, we tracked down a calling **Jamaican Crow**, which gave us a long flight view as it flew overhead calling. This species was formerly easy in the area, but appears to have become decidedly more difficult in recent years. A large flock of **Cave Swallows** was also found in the afternoon, the first encountered on the tour. It was another good day for American Wood Warblers; aside from the aforementioned **Black-throated Blue-Warbler** in the hotel bar, we also saw **Common Yellowthroat**, **Northern Parula**, and **American Redstart**. Another evening try for *Barn Owl* around the hotel came up empty-handed again, with no sight nor sound of the local birds.

DAY FIVE – of birding - (23rd March): **PORT ANTONIO & GREENCASTLE ESTATE to KINGSTON**

This was our final day of birding, and so we made the most of it. Although we had completed the full set of endemic birds with the late show from a *Jamaican Crow* the afternoon before, by visiting two wetland areas on this day, we still added plenty more species, including some regional specialties. A short time after dawn we took



a walk just outside our hotel in *Port Antonio*, taking in our final looks at some of the endemics, which, by then, had become quite familiar to us, like **Ring-tailed Pigeon**, **Jamaican Tody**, **Jamaican Vireo**, **Jamaican Euphonia**, **Orangequit**, **Yellow-shouldered Grassquit**, and **Jamaican Spindalis** (*photo page 16*). We also got a third and final view of the impressive **Chestnut-bellied Cuckoo**, and also saw a **Black-and-white Warbler**, and some final **White-crowned Pigeons** for the tour. After taking a long loop walk we returned to the hotel, where we got some of our best looks at one of the local **Black-billed Streamertails** in the garden of the hotel, before we checked out and headed south back towards *Kingston* (*photo left*).

On the way back we made a short side trip to a wetland on the Greencastle Estate, where we hoped to find some waterbirds to add to the list. This paid off handsomely, when a visit to their local reservoir produced 7 **West Indian Whistling-Ducks**, and a single **Caribbean Coot**, hiding out amongst the more common American Coots. The site also held a nice collection of other ducks, including **Ring-necked** and **Ruddy Ducks**, and **American**

Wigeons, and a **Pied-billed Grebe** or two. On the edges of the pool were **Black-necked Stilts**, and a couple of **Northern Jacanas**. In the scrubby woodland we walked through to get to the reservoir, we found several **Jamaican Orioles**, and much to our relief, a **Mangrove Cuckoo**, which we'd feared we were about to miss for the tour by then. Nearby, we hoped to find some other wetland birds on some roadside pools, but found them to be bone dry, and lacking in birds, although overhead we had more **Cave Swallows**, and several **Northern Rough-winged Swallows**, a rare passage migrant in Jamaica.

A rather late lunch was taken on the way into Kingston, where we visited a small shopping mall, where the palms hosted a number of nesting **Antillean Palm-Swifts**, giving us our best views yet of the species. Finally, we visited a water treatment works near *Kingston*, as we'd received news of some good wetland birds in recent days. This turned out to be a great finale to the tour, producing for the group at least, the bird of the trip, in the form of a super, bright pink, **American Flamingo**, seen at length as it fed in a tidal pool. Being their very first flamingo species, this bird rightly made a major impression on the group! The area was crawling with wetland birds, with many egrets and herons seen (including **Green**, **Little Blue**, and **Black-crowned Night-Herons**), and a scattering of shorebirds too – over 30 **Black-necked Stilts**, around 250 **Least Sandpipers**, 2 **Semipalmated Sandpipers**, and a **Western Sandpiper** were seen, along with a handful of **Black-bellied (Gray) Plovers**, **Semipalmated Plovers**, and two **Wilson's Plovers** too. A good selection of ducks were also in evidence, with a flock of **American Wigeon**, 9 **Lesser Scaup**, a single **Ruddy Duck**, and 7 **Northern Shovelers**. A large flock of swallows in the area held over 20 **Northern Rough-winged Swallows**, among the more numerous **Barn Swallows**. Several **White Ibis** were the only ones of the tour, and some **Glossy Ibis** were also seen.





*It was a very birdy finish to our last birding of the tour, so made for a great finish, especially with the flamingo giving such prolonged, marvelous views to us, which was quickly voted as the bird of the trip. Other popular birds on the tour included the ever-popular **Jamaican Tody**, both endemic cuckoos, **Jamaican Spindalis**, and Jamaica's national bird, the flamboyant **Red-billed Streamertail**.*



The endemic-rich rainforest along the **Ecclesdown Road**, near Port Antonio.

BIRD LIST

The taxonomy of the bird list follows: Clements, James F., White, Anthony W., and Fitzpatrick, John W. The Clements Checklist of Birds of the World. Cornell, 2007.

This list is up to date with the major changes published by Cornell up until August 2015.

- Jamaican endemic species/*subspecies* are indicated by **JE/JESS**.
- Caribbean endemic species/*subspecies* are indicated by **CE/CESS**.
- H indicates a species that was HEARD only.

Numbers: 128 species recorded.

DUCKS, GEESE & WATERFOWL: ANATIDAE

West Indian Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna arborea*: 7 were seen at Greencastle. **(CE)**

American Wigeon *Anas americana*: 6 were at Greencastle and 15 were seen near Kingston.

Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors*: 2 at Hellshire Hills, and a few were seen near Port Antonio.

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*: 7 were seen at a sewage plant near Kingston.

Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris*: 4 were seen at Greencastle.

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*: 9 were seen near Kingston, including 2 males in the group.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*: 5 at Greencastle, and another female was seen near Kingston.

GREBES: PODICIPEDIDAE

Pied-billed Grebe *Tachybaptus podiceps*: 2 were seen near Port Antonio, and 2 at Greencastle.

FLAMINGOS: PHOENICOPTERIDAE

American Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber*: A single bird was seen at a sewage plant near Kingston.

VOTED AS THE BIRD OF THE TOUR

TROPICBIRDS: PHAETHONIDAE

White-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon lepturus*: 13 were seen at Hector's River, near Happy Grove.

FRIGATEBIRDS: FREGATIDAE

Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens*: Recorded regularly along the coasts.

PELICANS: PELICANIDAE

Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis occidentalis*: Commonly seen in coastal areas. **(CESS)**

HERONS, EGRETS & BITTERNES: ARDEIDAE

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*: Seen at Hellshire Hills, and at a sewage plant near Kingston.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*: Recorded 3 times on the tour.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*: Recorded at Hellshire Hills, around Kingston and at Greencastle.

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea*: Seen at Hellshire Hills, near Port Antonio, and near Kingston.

Tricolored Heron *Egretta tricolor*: 1 was seen at Hellshire Hills, and another near Port Antonio.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*: Recorded on four of the five days.

Green Heron *Butorides virescens*: 2 were seen at the Greencastle Estate.

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*: 1 was seen at a sewage plant near Kingston.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax violacea*: 3 were seen on the journey to Port Antonio.

IBISES & SPOONBILLS: THRESKIORNITHIDAE

White Ibis *Eudocimus albus*: 3 were seen at a sewage plant near Kingston.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*: Seen near Hellshire Hills and near Kingston.

NEW WORLD VULTURES: CATHARTIDAE

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*: Known locally as "John Crow"; these were a regular, daily site.

OSPREY: PANDIONIDAE

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus ridgwayi*: 1 at Hellshire Hills, the Ecclesdown Road, and Port Antonio. (CESS)

HAWKS, EAGLES & KITES: ACCIPITRIDAE

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis jamaicensis*: Seen 3 times in the Blue Mountains. (CESS)

RAILS, GALLINULES & COOTS: RALLIDAE

Sora *Porzana carolina*: A surprise find along the Swift River, on the way to Port Antonio.

Common Gallinule *Gallinula galeata cerceris*: Seen at Hellshire Hills, near Port Antonio and Greencastle. (CESS)

American Coot *Fulica Americana*: Seen along the Swift River and also at Greencastle Estate.

Caribbean Coot *Fulica caribaea*: 1 was found among the *American Coots* at Greencastle. (CE)

STILTS & AVOCETS: RECURVIROSTRIDAE

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*: 2 at Greencastle, and 30 or more near Kingston.

PLOVERS & LAPWINGS: CHARADRIIDAE

Black-bellied Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*: 7 were seen at a sewage plant near Kingston.

Wilson's Plover *Charadrius wilsonia*: 2 were seen at a sewage plant near Kingston.

Semipalmated Plover *Charadrius semipalmatus*: 4 were seen at a sewage plant near Kingston.

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus ternominatus*: Several seen near Hellshire and near Kingston. (CESS)

JACANAS: JACANIDAE

Northern Jacana *Jacana spinosa violacea*: 2 were seen at the Greencastle Estate. (CESS)

SANDPIPERS & ALLIES: SCOLOPACIDAE

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularis*: Seen at Hellshire, near Port Antonio, and near Kingston.

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*: 2 were seen near Hellshire Hills.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*: A couple was seen at Hellshire Hills, and near Kingston.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*: 2 were seen near the airport in Kingston.

Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla*: 250 birds were seen at a sewage plant near Kingston; also seen at Hellshire Hills.

Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla*: 2 were seen in a flock of *Least Sandpipers* near Kingston.

Western Sandpiper *Calidris mauri*: 1 was seen in a flock of *Least Sandpipers* near Kingston.

GULLS, TERNS & SKIMMERS: LARIIDAE

Laughing Gull *Leucophaeus atricilla*: 30 were seen near Kingston's airport.

Royal Tern *Thalasseus maximus*: Seen along the Rio Grande, near Port Antonio, and by the airport.

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*: 15 were seen near Kingston airport.

PIGEONS & DOVES: COLUMBIDAE

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*: Seen commonly around urban areas.

White-crowned Pigeon *Patagioenas leucocephala*: Seen in Hope Gardens, in the Blue Mountains, and around Port Antonio.

Ring-tailed Pigeon *Patagioenas caribaea*: Seen in the Blue Mountains and around Port Antonio. **(JE)**

Common Ground-Dove *Columbina passerina jamaicensis*: Recorded on 4 days. **(JESS)**

Crested Quail-Dove *Geotrygon versicolor*: Known as the "Mountain Witch". Seen 3 times in the Blue Mountains. **(JE)**

Ruddy Quail-Dove *Geotrygon montana*: 8 sightings at Ecclesdown Road, including long views of one walking on the ground.

Caribbean Dove *Leptotila jamaicensis jamaicensis*: 1 was seen well in San San. **(JESS)**

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica*: Recorded on 4 days of the tour.

Zenaida Dove *Zenaida aurita*: Seen regularly, but best in Hope Gardens in Kingston.

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura macroura*: A few seen at a sewage plant near Kingston **(CESS)**

CUCKOOS: CUCULIDAE

Mangrove Cuckoo *Coccyzus minor*: 1 was seen at the Greencastle Estate.

Chestnut-bellied Cuckoo *Coccyzus pluvialis*: Known locally as the "Old Man Bird". Seen in the Blue Mountains, on the Ecclesdown Road, and near our Port Antonio hotel. **(JE)**

Jamaican Lizard-Cuckoo *Coccyzus vetula*: Known locally as the "Old Woman Bird". 2 different birds were seen near Port Antonio. **(JE)**

Smooth-billed Ani *Crotophaga ani*: Recorded around Kingston and Hellshire Hills.

OWLS: STRIGIDAE

Jamaican Owl *Pseudoscops grammicus*: A juvenile was seen near Section in the Blue Mountains, and a wonderful adult was seen at length in our hotel grounds in Port Antonio. **(JE)**

POTOOS: NYCTIBIDAE

Northern Potoo *Nyctibius jamaicensis jamaicensis*: A juvenile was seen at Hope Gardens **(JESS)**

SWIFTS: APODIDAE

White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris pallidifrons*: Seen in the Blue Mountains and the Ecclesdown Road. **(CESS)**

Antillean Palm-Swift *Tachornis phoenicobia*: Seen in the Blue Mountains, the Ecclesdown Road, and also nesting by a shopping mall in Kingston. (CE)

HUMMINGBIRDS: TROCHILIDAE

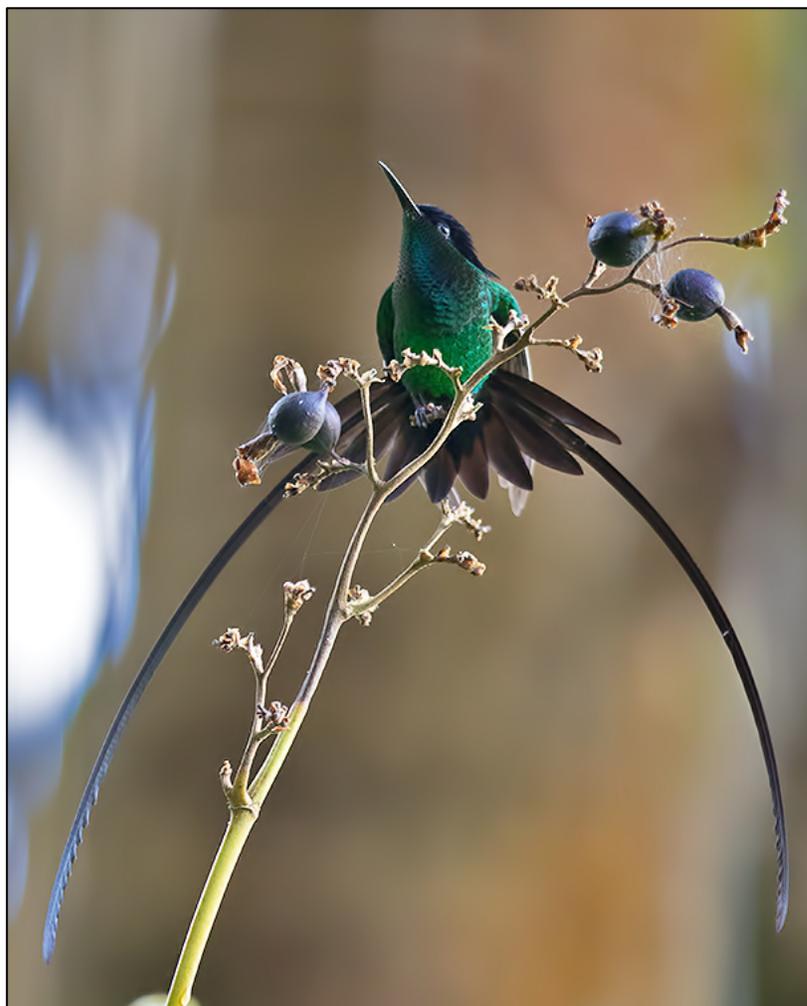
Jamaican Mango *Anthracothorax mango*: Came to feeders at our Port Antonio hotel; also seen at Hellshire Hills. (JE)

Vervain Hummingbird *Mellisuga minima minima*: Known in Jamaica as the "Little Doctorbird". This is the one of the smallest birds on Earth; second only to Bee Hummingbird of Cuba. Seen on two days, in Hope Gardens, and near Port Antonio. (CE)

Streamertail (Red-billed) *Trochilus polytmus polytmus*: Locally known as "Doctor Bird", this is the national bird of Jamaica. Seen regularly in the Blue Mountains, including at our chalet's feeders. (JE)

ONE OF THE BIRDS OF THE TOUR

Streamertail (Black-billed) *Trochilus polytmusscitus*: This is considered a subspecies under the species name of "Streamertail" on the Clements list, but divided into 2 endemic species on the IOC list. We saw it regularly around Port Antonio, with the best views coming in our hotel garden. (JE)



TODIES: TODIDAE

Jamaican Tody *Todus todus*: Also locally known as the “Robin Red Brest” or “Rasta Bird”. A fantastically abundant, and tame, bird, recorded well on most days of the tour. **(JE)**

ONE OF THE BIRDS OF THE TRIP

**KINGFISHERS: ALCEDINIDAE**

Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon*: 1 was seen near Kingston airport.

WOODPECKERS: PICIDAE

Jamaican Woodpecker *Melanerpes radiolatus*: Seen regularly throughout the tour. **(JE)**

FALCONS & CARACARAS: FALCONIDAE

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius dominicensis*: Recorded on 4 days of the tour. **(CESS)**

Merlin *Falco columbarius*: A male was found by John in our chalet garden in the Blue Mountains.

NEW WORLD & AFRICAN PARROTS: PSITTACIDAE

Black-billed Parrot *Amazona agilis*: Several perched birds were seen on the Ecclesdown Road. **(JE)**



Yellow-billed Parrot *Amazona collaria*: Seen very well in Hope Gardens, and another small group seen in flight on the Ecclesdown Road too. **(JE)**

Green-rumped Parrotlet *Forpus passerines*: A single bird was seen briefly perched near San San.

Olive-throated (Jamaican) Parakeet *Eupsittula nana*: NB. A paper has apparently recently been published splitting this endemic form from the rest, making it an *endemic species*. Seen passing by in low flight along the Ecclesdown Road, and also in Kingston. **(JE?)**

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS: TYRANNIDAE

Jamaican Elaenia *Myiopagis cotta*: 1 was seen at Starlight Chalet in the Blue Mountains, and another was seen along the Ecclesdown Road, near Port Antonio. **(JE)**

Greater Antillean Elaenia *Elaenia fallax fallax*: A pair was seen in the Blue Mountains. **(CE)**

Jamaican Pewee *Contopus pallidus*: Seen regularly in the Blue Mountains. **(JE)**

Sad Flycatcher *Myiarchus barbirostris*: Known locally as "Little Tom Fool". Recorded every day. **(JE)**

Rufous-tailed Flycatcher *Myiarchus validus*: Known locally as "Big Tom Fool". Seen twice in the Blue Mountains. **(JE)**

Stolid Flycatcher *Myiarchus stolidus*: Known as "Tom Fool". Seen only at Hellshire Hills. **(CE)**

Gray Kingbird *Tyrannus dominicensis*: Just 1 was seen at the start of the Ecclesdown Road.

Loggerhead Kingbird *Tyrannus caudifasciatus*: Seen daily, at many sites. **(CE)**



TITYRAS & BECARDS: TITYRIDAE

Jamaican Becard *Pachyramphus niger*: Seen well twice in the Blue Mountains, and a female was seen along the Ecclesdown Road too. **(JE)**

VIREOS, SHRIKE-BABLERS & ERPORNIS: VIREONIDAE

Jamaican Vireo *Vireo modestus*: Seen in the Blue Mountains and around Port Antonio. **(JE)**

Blue Mountain Vireo *Vireo osburni*: Seen at least 4 times in the Blue Mountains. **(JE)**

Black-whiskered Vireo *Vireo altiloquus*: Known locally as "John Chewit", because of its call. Seen around San San and along the Ecclesdown Road, where they were commonly heard too.

CROWS, JAYS & MAGPIES: CORVIDAE

Jamaican Crow *Corvus jamaicensis*: Known locally as "Jabbering Crow". Unusually difficult on this tour, just the one was seen in flight along the Ecclesdown Road. **(JE)**

SWALLOWS: HIRUNDINIDAE

Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis*: This rare migrant was seen around Greencastle Estate, and then a flock of at least 20 was seen near Kingston.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*: A large flock was seen at a sewage plant near Kingston.

Cave Swallow *Petrochelidon fulva poeciloma*: A large flocks was encountered near Port Antonio, and another few were seen on the Greencastle Estate. **(JESS)**

THRUSHES & ALLIES: TURDIDAE

Rufous-throated Solitaire *Myadestes genibarbis solitaries*: 2 were seen in the Blue Mountains. **(CE)**

White-eyed Thrush *Turdus jamaicensis*: Known locally as "Glass Eye". Seen in the Blue Mountains and along the Ecclesdown Road. **(JE)**

White-chinned Thrush *Turdus aurantius*: Known appropriately as "Hopping Dick". The common thrush in Jamaica, which was frequently seen hopping along the road; recorded daily. **(JE)**



MOCKINGBIRDS & THRASHERS: MIMIDAE

Bahama Mockingbird *Mimus gundlachi hillii*: Known locally as "Spanish Nightingale". This rare and local subspecies has just two main populations in Jamaica; we visited one of the main sites, Hellshire Hills, and found at least five birds. **(CE)**

Northern Mockingbird *Mimus polyglottus Orpheus*: Known locally as "Nightingale". Commonly encountered throughout. **(CESS)**

STARLINGS: STURNIDAE

European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*: This introduced species was seen in Hope Gardens in Kingston.

NEW WORLD WARBLERS: PARULIDAE

Ovenbird *Seiurus aurocapilla*: 2 different birds were seen in our chalet garden in the Blue Mountains.

Worm-eating Warbler *Helminthos vermivorum*: Two were seen in the Blue Mountains.

Louisiana Waterthrush *Parkesia motacilla*: One was seen in the Blue Mountains.

Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia*: Seen at least 4 times; in Hope Gardens, the Blue Mountains, and near Port Antonio.

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas*: One was seen on the Ecclesdown Road.

Arrowhead Warbler *Setophaga pharetra*: Known locally as "Ants Picker". Seen on 5 occasions in the Blue Mountains, including within the grounds of our mountain chalet there. **(JE)**

American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla*: Recorded daily at a number of sites.

Cape May Warbler *Setophaga tigrina*: 3 in Hope Gardens, and another in the Blue Mountains.

Northern Parula *Setophaga Americana*: Seen daily on the tour.

Bay-breasted Warbler *Setophaga castanea*: A female was seen in Hope Gardens.

Yellow Warbler *Setophaga petechial*: 1 was seen at Hellshire Hills.

Black-throated Blue Warbler *Setophaga caerulescens*: Seen daily; a particularly confiding male seen clambering around on the chairs and lampshades of the bar at our Port Antonio hotel!

Palm Warbler *Setophaga palmarum*: One was seen in Hope Gardens in Kingston.

Prairie Warbler *Setophaga discolor*: Seen on 3 days, in Hope Gardens and the Blue Mountains.

TANAGERS & ALLIES: THRAUPIDAE

Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola flaveola*: Recorded on 4 days of the tour. **(JESS)**

Yellow-faced Grassquit *Tiaris olivaceus olivaceus*: A pair was seen in our chalet garden in the Blue Mountains. **(CESS)**

Black-faced Grassquit *Tiaris bicolor marchii*: Seen on 3 days of the tour. **(CESS)**

Orangequit *Euneornis campestris*: An endemic genus; birds were seen daily. **(JE)**

Greater Antillean Bullfinch *Loxigilla violacea ruficollis*: Seen 3 times in the Blue Mountains. **(CE)**

Yellow-shouldered Grassquit *Loxipasser anoxanthus*: 3 males were seen, in the Blue Mountains and

Port Antonio area. (JE)

Jamaican Spindalis *Spindalis nigricephala*: This gaudy tanager was seen on all 5 birding days. (JE)

TROUPIALS & ALLIES: ICTERIDAE

Jamaican Blackbird *Nesopsar nigerrimus*: Seen near Silver Hill Gap in the Blue Mountains. (JE)

Greater Antillean Grackle *Quiscalus niger crassirostris*: Commonly seen in the lowland areas. (CE)

Shiny Cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis*: 1 was seen in the Port Antonio area.

Jamaican Oriole *Icterus leucopteryx leucopteryx*: Seen on all five birding days. (CE)

FINCHES, EUPHONIAS & ALLIES: FRINGILLIDAE

Jamaican Euphonia *Euphonia Jamaica*: Seen daily, in the Blue Mountains and Port Antonio area. (JE)

OLD WORLD SPARROWS: PASSERIDAE

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*: Seen at Kingston airport.

WEAVERS & ALLIES: PLOCEIDAE

Yellow-crowned Bishop *Euplectes afer*: A flock was seen around a sewage pond near Hellshire Hills.

OTHERS:

American Crocodile *Crocodylus acutus*: Several were seen in sewage ponds near Kingston.

Jamaican Turquoise Anole *Anolis graham*: One was seen at our Port Antonio hotel.

