

Puerto Rico and Vieques: July-August 2013



By Jacob C. Cooper

On 24 July 2013, Michael McCloy and I boarded our first flight in Denver as we headed towards Puerto Rico. This was Michael's first trip to the tropics, and my second trip to the Caribbean. We decided to do as low-budget of a trip as we could, and despite our initial difficulties, were successful with 106 species (and all but one endemic) detected between the two of us on Puerto Rico and the offshore island of Vieques. We used both the Lonely Planet® guide to the island and the National Geographic® adventure map (from which I draw all names for locations for this report) to navigate on the island and help locate places to stay.

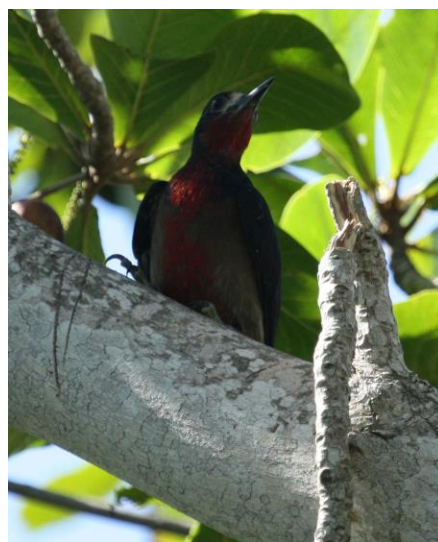
Photo: Michael McCloy at the Finca Seven Seas Natural Reserve looking towards El Yunque in the distance.

Logistics

When we arrived, we picked up a pre-reserved car from Nu-Car/Regional Car Rentals. The car came with automatic mileage and moderate damage, but worked very well for us throughout the trip. Unfortunately, we were hit with underage fees we were not previously aware of, but the 8 day rental was still less than \$600 dollars, and a more researched rental could be as low as \$350. The cars, though slightly cumbersome and expensive, are a necessity for birding Puerto Rico and getting to the different localities that we birded. The roads in Puerto Rico, though paved, are extremely narrow and winding, with barely enough room to pass and near constant blind corners on many roads. As such, I highly recommend getting the smallest car possible, as it allows the most room for narrow misses on tight mountain passes.

For accommodations, I took my two person tent and we each brought sleeping bags. Dengue fever has been confirmed in some parts of the commonwealth, so it is wise to not sleep outside without a tent (especially in areas near mangroves). We stayed in parks operated by La Compañía de Parques Nacionales, which operates several campgrounds around the island. Though extremely crowded on some weekends and holidays, the parks never charged us for camping, and seemed to care very little where we stayed as long as we were within the security zones. As such, the camps were always near a beach, often adjacent to excellent birding territory, and provided 24/7 security. The camps we used as “base camps” were Finca Seven Seas Natural Reserve (signed as Parque Nacional de Seven Seas), Balneario de Añasco (signed for this and for “Parque Nacional de Tres Hermanos”), and in the Bioluminescent Bay Natural Reserve (Balneario/Parque Nacional de Sun Bay). Locals refer to these areas as Balnearios, and give excellent directions, but did not have accurate information regarding camping. Camping is also possible in the State Forests and in El Yunque National Forest, but the processing time for permits is 14 days, and permits are not guaranteed, whereas Balnearios are always open and required no reservations.

Food was readily come by on the island, with many local areas offering cheap, filling meals. Asking at the Balnearios for places to eat and exploring the local towns was very rewarding in this endeavor. Most chain restaurants from the mainland United States and convenience stores are also readily found, with many large supermarkets along highways as well.



Puerto Rican Woodpecker at Sun Bay, Vieques, on 13 July.

Birding

Day 1 – 25 July

We started out by picking up the car and heading straight to El Yunque, scoring many common birds such as **Greater Antillean Grackle** and **Caribbean Martin** within the first hour. Our main goal was to just start calibrating to Antillean avifauna, and the visitor center to El Yunque allowed us to do that and gather information about the forest. Many charismatic Caribbean birds were foraging around the visitor center, with a singing **Pearly-eyed Thrasher** watching tourists walk below, **Bananaquits** foraging in almost every tree, and a surprise **Broad-winged Hawk** of the endemic *brunnescens* subspecies making for an intriguing drive up the mountain. After spending about an hour checking out the center and making sure we knew where to head the next day, we worked our way east to Fajardo, and checked into the Finca Seven Seas Natural Reserve for camping for the night. Unfortunately, the beach was completely packed – “Puerto Rican Independence Day” is what we were told was going on – and hundreds of partying Portorriqueños grilled and drank as **Zenaida Doves**, **White-winged Doves**, **Laughing Gulls** and **Pearly-eyed Thrashers** watched for pieces of food to be dropped. We followed the trails back further into the reserve, where many fewer people made for a much nicer birding atmosphere. Despite people lugging their coolers to more remote beaches, the woods harbored singing **Adelaide’s Warblers**, **Black-whiskered Vireos**, **Mangrove Cuckoos**, and our only **Green-throated Carib** of the trip. The beach also afforded us spectacular views of the cloud-shrouded El Yunque, and one group of beachgoers even gave us beer as we worked our way down the coast. As it grew darker, a long **Brown Booby** flew out of the bay, **Roseate Terns** passed by heading east, and our first **Puerto Rican Screech-Owl** of the trip began trying to out-sing the speakers blasting salsa music.



Pearly-eyed Thrashers are ubiquitous and widespread throughout Puerto Rico. Photographed 28 July in Guánica State Forest.

Day 2 – 26 July

After an early morning and re-learning how to negotiate island traffic, we headed straight up El Yunque, and were there before the access gate opened on the entrance road. Not to be deterred, we spent approximate 2 hours hiking along the road from La Coca Falls to Yokahu Tower and back. The falls, spectacular in and of themselves, were accented by the **Black Swifts** circling their heights and nearby **Red-tailed** and **Broad-winged Hawks**. The Yokahu Tower parking lot, when visited before the throngs of tourists, is also an extremely productive spot. **Puerto Rican Orioles**, **Black Swifts** and **Gray Kingbirds** foraged in the opening between the trees, and our first **Puerto Rican Lizard-Cuckoo** of the trip landed within ten feet of us and called maniacally before slipping back into the thick foliage. Our rarest bird of the trip also flew by us before the tower opened, a heard-only **Puerto Rican Parrot** below the parking lot.



Male Antillean Euphonia in the Yokahu Tower parking lot, El Yunque National Forest

As more people began crowding the slopes of the mountain, we decided to head even further up towards the peak to see what higher elevation birds we could get. The fog shrouded foraging **Black Swifts** and **Caribbean Martins**, as the woods, though largely quiet, still hosted a large number of **Bananaquits** and, near the summit, a shy, vocalizing **Elfin-woods Warbler**. The hike, though not nearly as bird-rich as the lower slopes, was well worth the views of the coastlines below and thick rainforest vegetation.

Upon returning to the Finca Seven Seas Natural Reserve, we were able to compare our high-elevation birding with the nearby coastal zone, as well as score our first **White-cheeked Pintail** of the entire trip.

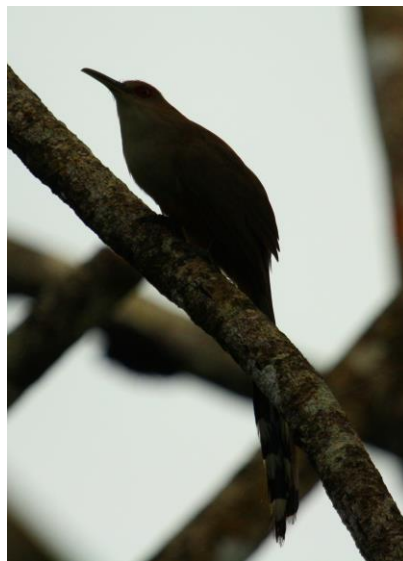
Day 3 – 27 July

Our third day was spent traversing the island. We ended for the night in Ponce, and cut diagonally across the island to get there. The roads on the interior of Puerto Rico are extremely hard to navigate, crowded, and very narrow. We did get some good birds, but I would not take the same route again as it was physically and mentally taxing to be on narrow, curvy mountain roads for so long.

Our first goal for the day was to explore the western edge of El Yunque National Forest on PR-186. This dilapidated road has very little traffic (thankfully) but is overgrown with bamboo and riddled with potholes, and is only one lane wide in most places. Despite this, it was a fantastic birding area, and one I wish we could have spent more time in. This stretch of road hosted many of the same birds we had the day before, with **Puerto Rican Lizard-Cuckoo** being seen well, and flocks of **Scaly-naped Pigeons** flying over the valleys. Our best birds of the early morning drive were both Quail-Doves – our only visuals of **Ruddy Quail-Dove** were of several individuals we ended up flushing off the road, and we had extremely brief glimpses of a fly-by **Key West Quail-Dove** in the area as well.

From here, we (arduously) drove across to the town of Comerío, visiting “Finca Longo” on PR-172. Located where the bridge crosses a fairly large stream, the location is possibly the best and most accessible location for **Plain Pigeon**, and indeed, we saw several flying overhead in flocks of **Scaly-naped Pigeons**, but the looks were far from satisfactory. Also present at this location was our first **Loggerhead Kingbird** of the trip, and a very cooperative **Mangrove Cuckoo**. From here, we continued our southwestern pursuit, and spent the rest of the day driving the spine of the Cordillera Central to Ponce. The roads were much worse than we anticipated, and we were not able to do very much birding for the rest of the day.

We spent the night in the Hotel Belgica (\$80 for one night) in what ended up being our only night spent in a hotel on the entire trip. The hotel, located in historic downtown Ponce, provided a nice environment for walking around at night, and was close to a large **Greater Antillean Grackle** roost and home to several displaying **Antillean Nighthawks**.



Puerto Rican Lizard-Cuckoo in El Yunque National Forest, 2 July.

Day 4 – 28 July

The next day, we drove west along the southern coast until we came to Guánica State Forest and Biosphere Reserve. The largest remaining coastal dry forest in the Caribbean, it is the stronghold for many dry habitat species in Puerto Rico. It was also extremely productive for us our first morning, with **Caribbean Elaenia** greeting us enthusiastically, and singing **Puerto Rican Vireos** and **Adelaide's Warblers** flitting amongst the trees. The site also afforded great study of the *caribaeorum* subspecies of the **American Kestrel** hunting in the dry forest.



This *caribaeorum* American Kestrel afforded great views at the Guánica State Forest parking area.

From here, we scoured the immediately adjacent area for beautiful beaches and some more coastal sites before heading northwest towards Cabo Rojo. We stopped by the Boquerón State Wildlife Refuge and were rewarded with some excellent mudflats and our best shorebirding of the entire trip. Large groups of **Least Sandpipers** and **Semipalmated Plovers** were staging in the area, foraging **Orange Bishops**, **Orange-cheeked Waxbills**, and **Yellow-faced Grassquits** lined the road edges, and our only **Glossy Ibis** and **Caribbean Coots** of the trip afforded excellent views. Pushing further into the mangroves, we were surprised by a root-dwelling **Least Bittern**, multiple calling **Lesser Antillean Pewees** of the endemic Puerto Rican race and great views of **Puerto Rican Flycatcher**.

From here, we pressed up to our campsite, the Balneario de Añasco, north of Mayagüez, and watched Sandwich Terns forage from shore before a massive tropical storm moved through around sunset.



Puerto Rican Flycatcher in the mangroves at Boquerón State Wildlife Refuge.

Day 5 – 29 July

We began our day by heading directly to Cabo Rojo National Wildlife Refuge, where we found it was hard for us to even leave the parking lot! Boisterous **Venezuelan Troupials** sang and foraged in the tree tops, while a nearby singing **Antillean Euphonia** almost escaped our detection altogether. Calling **Caribbean Elaenias** and singing **Adelaide's Warblers** kept our attentions, and the trails seemed to provide a never ending supply of **Common Ground-Doves** to flush. From here, we voyaged further south to the salinas to try our luck with shorebirds. **Wilson's Plovers** provided good views, and large numbers of **Least Sandpipers**, **Lesser** and **Greater Yellowlegs** foraged in the shallows. A lone juvenile **Yellow-shouldered Blackbird** flew overhead, and a territorial **Antillean Mango** defended some vines on the road in. From here, we headed east and found a flock of about a dozen **Yellow-shouldered Blackbirds** feeding in a trash can on the side of PR-303, providing much better views!

After growing hot in the lowlands, we ascended to the shade of Maricao State Forest. A noticeably drier high elevation forest type from El Yunque, activity was low in the afternoon but the birds were well worth it. Calling **Puerto Rican Lizard-Cuckoos** revealed themselves briefly in the undergrowth, **Puerto Rican Tanagers** called from the thickets and **Lesser Antillean Pewees** and **Puerto Rican Bullfinches** foraged over the trails. By far our best bird, however, was spotted when we were sitting in the car about to leave. Mike jumped up full alert as he spotted a male **Elfin-woods Warbler** foraging right in front of the car at the Alto del Descanso! We had great views from the cab, but as soon as we exited, it vanished back into the forest from which it came.



Puerto Rican Vireo in Maricao State Forest. These charming little birds were best found by their unique song, “*bien te veo.*”

From here, we descended back to Balneario de Añasco, where a twilight walk yielded a flyover pair of **West Indian Whistling-Ducks**.

Day 6 – 30 July

Needing to return back to the northeast by the evening, we decided to start out by revisiting the Boquerón State Wildlife Refuge. There, we encountered many of the same birds we had previously encountered, as well as our only **Least Grebe** of the entire trip, migrating **Greater** and **Lesser Yellowlegs**, a small group of **Glossy Ibis** and a nice mix of resident exotics including **Eurasian Collared-Dove**, **African Collared-Dove**, and **Orange-cheeked Waxbill**. From here, we returned to the Maricao State Forest to try our luck with more montane species. There, we birded the picnic area, where a **Red-legged Thrush** was foraging, and descended into the montane forest below the parking area. Though we failed to find the endemic subspecies of Sharp-shinned Hawk, we did locate other good birds. **Puerto Rican Lizard-Cuckoo** put in an appearance, and we could hear a territorial **Green Mango** singing in some thick forest. A lone **Loggerhead Kingbird** of the endemic *taylori* subspecies gave us a great study of the species, and we had both **Puerto Rican Tanager** and **Puerto Rican Bullfinch**. From here, we spent most of the day driving the southern coast until we returned to the Seven Seas Natural Reserve, where we enjoyed delicious empanadas at the restaurant down the street and enjoyed good looks of both **Green Heron** and **Red-legged Thrush**.

Day 7 – 31 July

The next day, we woke up early and made our way to the Fajardo Harbor to catch a ferry. We were immediately offput by the line several hundred people long waiting for the ferry, and began discussing alternative plans when I overheard a local salesmen and learned the line was, in fact, for Culebra, and hardly anyone was in line for Vieques. Wanting to visit the larger (though, according to guidebooks, less scenic) of the offshore islands, we switched lines and after a few hours of waiting were on our way towards Vieques. The Fajardo harbor sheltered a pair of **Spotted Sandpipers** and as we departed, we were joined by **Magnificent Frigatebird** and escorted by foraging **Caribbean Martins**.



Magnificent Frigatebird hitchhiking on the ferry to Vieques.

The ferry ride was extremely worthwhile, as we rode on the top and watched for pelagic birds passing by. Being early morning, nesting terns were passing us closely as they headed towards their deeper foraging waters. **Brown Boobies** perched on bouys while **Brown Noddies** passed by with their distinctive, bouncing flight. Several **Sooty Terns** also put in an appearance, along with a long **Bridled Tern** that came as close as 100 feet(!). The terns were also interesting, with a pair of **Roseate Terns** also being seen in the channel.

After arriving in the town and eating a well-earned meal, we grabbed a taxi and headed towards Sun Bay, where we would camp. Afternoon birding there was quite productive, with the reefs hosting many surprises such as **Wilson's Plover**, **Semipalmated Plovers** and several sandpiper species including a close-range **Whimbrel**. Many endemic Caribbean species were also common around the campground, with **Antillean Nighthawk**, **Zenaida Dove**, **Puerto Rican Woodpecker**, **Adelaide's Warbler** and **Antillean Crested Hummingbird** putting in appearances.

That night, we walked to the nearby bioluminescent lagoon (our “goal bird” on the island) and enjoyed the blue glow of the ocean before the moon came up. The lagoon alone was fantastic, but the presence of so many great birds in the area made it that much better!

Day 8 – 1 August

The next morning, there were strong winds blowing into the bay from the south. Mike spotted and I was able to confirm two extremely distant **Cory's Shearwaters** at the mouth of the bay, but with the height of the waves we were unable to obtain documentation. The birds were joined by a close-to-shore **Brown Booby** and a surprising **Caspian Tern**. Birding around the park also turned up a flock of **Black-necked Stilts**, a lone **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron**, and a pair of **American Oystercatchers**. From here, we returned for the ferry, and found our first **Barn Swallow** of the trip foraging over the pier. However, what was supposed to be a short wait quickly turned into several hours as the ferries were delayed for reasons that were never fully explained to us. We eventually left Vieques approximately 2 hours later than intended, and were thankful when we were finally heading back towards the main island of Puerto Rico. Being mid-day, the return voyage was much less birdy, with the best sighting being a small group of **Sooty Terns**.

Day 9 – 2 August

Our last day in Puerto Rico was spent returning to the airport and sleeping at the terminal, and therefore resulted in no birds of note. It did, however, provide us with plenty of opportunities to reflect on our successful trip, and discuss possible future trips to the fantastic Caribbean.



Sun Bay, Vieques, with our campsite barely out of view to the left.

Complete Trip List

As we were eBirding our entire trip, I am listing species, but when a distinctive group was present, noting the eBird group with brackets and the local subspecies occurring in the scientific epithet. For example, Cave Swallows on the island will be listed as Cave Swallow [Caribbean] (*Petrochelidon fulva puertoricensis*). All of our observations were uploaded to eBird.

1. **West Indian Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna arborea*)**
JCC Only. Flying south overhead at Parque Nacional de Tres Hermanos.
2. **White-cheeked Pintail [White-cheeked] (*Anas bahamensis bahamensis*)**
Encountered twice, both times with birds flying along the coastline, with the first being in the Finca Seven Seas Natural Reserve, and the second observation being two birds in the Bioluminescent Bay Natural Reserve, Vieques.
3. **Helmeted Guineafowl (*Numida meleagris*)**
Encountered once, along the southwestern edge of El Yunque National Forest.
4. **Red Junglefowl (*Gallus gallus*)**
Feral populations are widespread on the island, and common on menus as well.
5. **Least Grebe (*Tachybaptus dominicus*)**
Only seen once, foraging in the mangroves in Boquerón State Wildlife Refuge.
6. **Cory's Shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea*), believed to be nominate (Scopoli's Shearwater)**
After a storm the night before, two birds were at the entrance to Sun Bay, Vieques.
7. **Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*)**
Commonly seen from shore throughout the archipelago.
8. **Brown Booby [Atlantic] (*Sula leucogaster leucogaster*)**
Seen from shore in Finca Seven Seas Natural Reserve and from Bioluminescent Bay Natural Reserve. These birds were also encountered on the ferry between Fajardo and Isabela Segunda.
9. **Least Bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*)**
Seen once, in the mangroves in Boquerón State Wildlife Refuge.
10. **Great Egret [American] (*Ardea alba egretta*)**
Encountered sporadically throughout the archipelago.
11. **Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*)**
Encountered sporadically throughout the archipelago.
12. **Little Blue Heron (*Egretta caerulea*)**
Encountered sporadically throughout the archipelago.
13. **Tricolored Heron (*Egretta tricolor*)**
Seen once, at the Finca Seven Seas Natural Reserve.
14. **Cattle Egret [ibis] (*Bubulcus ibis ibis*)**
Seen throughout the archipelago.
15. **Green Heron [Eastern] (*Butorides virescens virescens*)**
Commonly seen coastally flying overhead or foraging in areas with cover.
16. **Black-crowned Night-Heron [American] (*Nycticorax nycticorax hoactli*)**
Seen once, at the Finca Seven Seas Natural Reserve.
17. **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron [Yellow-crowned] (*Nyctynassa violacea bancrofti*)**
Only encountered at the Boquerón State Wildlife Refuge.
18. **Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)**
Common at the Boquerón State Wildlife Refuge, otherwise rare or absent.

19. **Turkey Vulture [Northern] (*Cathartes aura aura*)**
Common in the southwestern parts of the island, and noticeable absent in wetter areas.
20. **Broad-winged Hawk [Caribbean] (*Buteo platypterus brunnescens*)**
A markedly dark, small *Buteo*, seen only in the vicinity of El Yunque National Forest.
21. **Red-tailed Hawk [jamaicensis] (*Buteo jamaicensis jamaicensis*)**
Common.
22. **Clapper Rail [Caribbean] (*Rallus longirostris caribaeus*)**
Seen and heard in the mangroves adjacent to the salt flats in Cabo Rojo National Wildlife Refuge.
23. **Common Gallinule [American] (*Gallinula galeata cerceris*)**
Heard and seen in many estuarine and coastal localities.
24. **Caribbean Coot (*Fulica caribaea*)**
Only seen at Boquerón State Wildlife Refuge near the parking area; several individuals were timidly feeding near the edge of some grass in the open ponds.
25. **Black-bellied Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*)**
Seen once, near Esperanza, Vieques.
26. **Wilson's Plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*)**
Seen in Cabo Rojo National Wildlife Refuge and on some exposed reefs near Esperanza, Vieques.
27. **Semipalmated Plover (*Charadrius semipalmatus*)**
Fairly large flocks seemed to be on the move. It was most common at Boquerón State Wildlife Refuge and Sun Bay, Vieques.
28. **Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*)**
Seen in many different open areas, such as beach parking areas and campgrounds.
29. **American Oystercatcher (*Haematopus palliatus*)**
Two individuals seen on exposed reefs in Sun Bay, Vieques.
30. **Black-necked Stilt [Black-necked] (*Himantopus mexicanus mexicanus*)**
Common in low-lying wet areas.
31. **Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularius*)**
Seen in rocky coastal localities in Fajardo and on Vieques.
32. **Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*)**
Seen at several locations throughout the archipelago.
33. **Willet (*Tringa semipalmata*)**
Mike only; seen in Sun Bay, Vieques.
34. **Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*)**
Seen at several locations throughout the archipelago.
35. **Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*)**
One bird seen at close range on Cayo de Tierra, Vieques. Photos confirm it was *hudsonicus*.
36. **Sanderling (*Calidris alba*)**
One small flock seen at Sun Bay, Vieques.
37. **Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*)**
Seen at several locations throughout the archipelago.
38. **Laughing Gull (*Leucophaeus atricilla*)**
Common on the eastern coast.
39. **Brown Noddy (*Anous stolidus*)**
Seen mostly east of Isla Piñeros on the Fajardo Isabela Segunda ferry.
40. **Sooty Tern (*Onychoprion fuscatus*)**

Fairly common on the Fajardo-Isabela Segunda ferry.

41. Bridled Tern (*Onychoprion anaethetus*)

One bird, seen flying east of Isla Piñeros on the Fajardo-Isabela Segunda ferry.

42. Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*)

Several birds were seen foraging in Finca Seven Seas Natural Reserve.

43. Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*)

Once bird seen flying over Sun Bay, Vieques.

44. Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*)

Not uncommon coastally; most prevalently seen on the northeastern corner of the island, but individuals were seen at a few other scattered coastal localities as well.

45. Royal Tern [American] (*Thalasseus maximus maximus*)

Uncommon coastally.

46. Sandwich Tern [Cabot's] (*Thalasseus sandvicensis acuflavidus*)

Uncommon coastally.

47. Rock Pigeon [Domestic Type] (*Columba livia*)

Common in urban areas.

48. Scaled Pigeon (*Patagioenas squamosa*)

Abundant throughout the archipelago.

49. White-crowned Pigeon (*Patagioenas leucocephala*)

Uncommon; seen daily at Finca Seven Seas Natural Reserve, and one was heard singing in Maricao State Forest.

50. Plain Pigeon (*Patagioenas inornata*)

Rare, seen only at Finca Longo near Comerío.

51. Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*)

Less common than African Collared-Dove, but a few individuals were seen.

52. African Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia roseogrisea*)

Common in southern Puerto Rico.

53. White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*)

Common, but seen mostly on the eastern part of Puerto Rico. Also seen briefly on Vieques.

54. Zenaida Dove (*Zenaida aurita*)

Common throughout the archipelago.

55. Mourning Dove [Caribbean] (*Zenaida macroura macroura*)

Uncommonly seen in the southwestern lowlands.

56. Common Ground-Dove (*Columbina passerina*)

Common and abundant in the archipelago.

57. Key West Quail-Dove (*Geotrygon chrysia*)

Only seen once; a lone individual crossing the road in El Yunque National Forest.

58. Ruddy Quail-Dove (*Geotrygon montana*)

Heard and seen in El Yunque National Forest.

59. Mangrove Cuckoo (*Coccyzus minor*)

Seen throughout the island, but most commonly in low elevational dry forest. One was also seen fairly high in elevation near Comerío.

60. Puerto Rican Lizard-Cuckoo (*Coccyzus vieilloti*)

Less than ten were seen the entire trip, but these birds were almost always found in pairs in the higher elevation forests throughout the island.

61. Smooth-billed Ani (*Crotophaga ani*)

Most common in the southwestern part of the island, where we saw several on our drives and in our birding localities.

62. Puerto Rican Screech-Owl (*Megascops nudipes*)

Common in Finca Seven Seas Natural Reserve, which was the only place we found them.

63. Antillean Nighthawk (*Chordeiles gundlachi*)

We found these only on the south and west coasts, where it was not uncommon.

64. Black Swift [Caribbean] (*Cypseloides niger niger*)

Fairly common in the higher elevations of El Yunque National Forest, especially in the early morning.

65. Antillean Mango (*Anthracothonax dominicus*)

Seen once, in Cabo Rojo National Wildlife Refuge.

66. Green Mango (*Anthracothonax viridis*)

Heard only in Maricao State Forest.

67. Green-throated Carib (*Eulampis holosericeus*)

Seen only once, at Finca Seven Seas Natural Reserve.

68. Puerto Rican Emerald (*Chlorostilbon maugaeus*)

Seen virtually everywhere except the eastern lowlands; nowhere common, but a couple were seen daily.

69. Antillean Crested Hummingbird [Lesser Antilles] (*Orthorhynchus cristatus exilis*)

Fairly common at Finca Seven Seas Natural Reserve and on Vieques.

70. Puerto Rican Tody (*Todus mexicanus*)

Encountered most frequently on the western half of Puerto Rico in all habitats, we also saw these birds in the higher elevations of El Yunque National Forest.

71. Puerto Rican Woodpecker (*Melanerpes portoricensis*)

Common throughout Puerto Rico; uncommon on Vieques.

72. American Kestrel [Eastern Caribbean] (*Falco sparverius caribaeorum*)

73. Puerto Rican Parrot (*Amazona vittata*)

Heard only once, as a flyby near Yokahu Tower in El Yunque National Forest.

74. Caribbean Elaenia (*Elaenia martinica*)

Fairly common in low elevational dry forest in the southwestern corner of the island.

75. Lesser Antillean Pewee [Puerto Rico] (*Contopus latirostris blancoi*)

We found these pewees in coastal mangroves and high elevation forest only on the western part of the island.

76. Puerto Rican Flycatcher (*Myiarchus antillarum*)

Detected most often in lowland dry forests and areas near mangroves.

77. Gray Kingbird (*Tyrannus dominicensis*)

Extremely common throughout the archipelago.

78. Loggerhead Kingbird [Puerto Rican] (*Tyrannus caudifasciatus taylori*)

This forest-dwelling kingbird was seen only twice: once at Finca Longo near Comerío, and once in Maricao State Forest.

79. Puerto Rican Vireo (*Vireo latimeri*)

Common in dry lowland forests in the western part of the island; uncommon in higher elevations in the west and noticeably absent on the eastern part of the island. Strangely, we heard a bird that

sounded like a territorial Puerto Rican Vireo on Vieques near the town of Esperanza, but were unfortunately unable to document it.

80. Black-whiskered Vireo (*Vireo altiloquus*)

Uncommon to common throughout the archipelago.

81. Caribbean Martin (*Progne dominicensis*)

Very common coastally, less common when foraging at higher elevations. Seen at almost every spot we birded.

82. Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)

Seen only once, at the dock in Isabela Segunda.

83. Cave Swallow [Caribbean] (*Petrochelidon fulva* [fulva Group])

Fairly common island wide. Seen frequently while driving.

84. Red-legged Thrush [Eastern] (*Turdus plumbeus ardosiaceus/albiventris*)

Most commonly seen in the higher elevations of Puerto Rico, but one individual was also seen feeding in the parking lot of Finca Seven Seas Natural Reserve at sea level.

85. Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*)

Fairly common in dry forest and lowland localities in Puerto Rico and Vieques.

86. Pearly-eyed Thrasher (*Margarops fuscatus*)

Very common in disturbed habitats throughout the archipelago.

87. Elfin-woods Warbler (*Setophaga angelae*)

Detected only twice; once as a heard only near the summit of Mt. Britton, El Yunque National Forest, and seen in Maricao State Forest.

88. Yellow Warbler [Golden] (*Setophaga petechial* [petechial Group])

Fairly common in lowland areas with mangroves.

89. Adelaide's Warbler (*Setophaga adelaidae*)

Common in lowland scrub in the northeast, dry forests both high and low in the west, and in scrub on Vieques.

90. Bananaquit (*Coereba flaveola*)

Common throughout the islands. The birds appear slightly different on Vieques and Puerto Rico, as they are different subspecies (*sanctithomae* and *portoricensis*, respectively).

91. Yellow-faced Grassquit (*Tiaris olivaceus*)

Uncommon; seen only in the southwestern part of Puerto Rico.

92. Black-faced Grassquit (*Tiaris bicolor*)

Common on Puerto Rico and Vieques.

93. Puerto Rican Bullfinch (*Loxigilla portoricensis*)

Common in the western part of Puerto Rico, decidedly less so in the higher elevation forests further east.

94. Puerto Rican Tanager (*Nesospingus speculiferus*)

Heard only in Maricao State Forest.

95. Puerto Rican Spindalis (*Spindalis portoricensis*)

Uncommon, but seen with regularity, in the higher elevation forests.

96. Yellow-shouldered Blackbird (*Agelaius xanthomus*)

Seen briefly in Cabo Rojo National Wildlife Refuge and a flock was found feeding from a trashcan along PR-303.

97. Greater Antillean Grackle (*Quiscalus niger*)

Abundant virtually everywhere on Puerto Rico and Vieques.

98. Shiny Cowbird (*Molothrus bonairiensis*)

Seen sporadically in urbanized areas.

99. Puerto Rican Oriole (*Icterus portoricensis*)

Formerly considered a subspecies of Greater Antillean Oriole. Seen in the wetter, higher elevations of El Yunque National Forest.

100. Venezuelan Troupial (*Icterus icterus*)

Common and very vocal resident in southwestern low-elevational dry forests with open canopies. Mike saw one at Balneario de Añasco as well.

101. Antillean Euphonia (*Euphonia musica*)

Detected only three times, at El Yunque National Forest, Maricao State Forest, and Cabo Rojo National Wildlife Refuge.

102. House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)

In urbanized areas around the island.

103. Northern Red Bishop (*Euplectes franciscanus*)

Encountered only once at the Boquerón State Wildlife Refuge.

104. Orange-cheeked Waxbill (*Estrilda melpoda*)

Like the bishop, only found at Boquerón State Wildlife Refuge, but fairly common in the grass near the entrance.

105. Nutmeg Mannikin (*Lonchura punctulata*)

Uncommon, but encountered regularly at Tres Hermanos National Park and Finca Seven Seas Natural Reserve.



Puerto Rican Pewee at Maricao State Forest, 29 July.