



## Cuba People to People Tour December 1 – 10, 2016

Guides Gustavo Puig (Cuban tour guide), Bob Behrstock (NJ), Dodie Logue (NJ), and Odey Martinez (on Cayo Coco, with 15 participants:

Dawn and Michael, Gerry and Jim, Nancy and Jim, Amy, Patrice and Reg, Cande, Patricia, John and Julie, Carrie and Kit

### Bird List

Note: No “leader-only” birds are included.

**Pied-billed Grebe** (*Podylimbus podiceps*) – At least four were present on Niña Bonita Reservoir

**Brown Pelican** (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) – Numerous along the beaches at the *cayos*; a couple of flocks over the waterfront in Havana, and at Playa Larga.

**Neotropic Cormorant** (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – Scattered individuals and several larger flocks on the *cayos*.

**Double-crested Cormorant** (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) – Seen on the *cayos*; best looks along the causeway as we returned from Cayo Coco.

**Magnificent Frigatebird** (*Fregata magnificens*) – Encountered on three days. About 5, all females, were seen at Playa Larga and on the *cayos*.

**Great Blue Heron** (*Ardea herodias*) – Nowhere common, tidal flats, roadside ditches, reservoirs, etc. A white morph bird (“Great White Heron”) was noted at the west end of Cayo Coco.

**Great Egret** (*Ardea alba*) – Not especially numerous but easily seen at salt and freshwater wetlands

**Snowy Egret** (*Egretta thula*) – A couple at the Villa San José del Lago (bathroom stop) at Mayajigua, and small numbers on the *cayos*.

**Little Blue Heron** (*Egretta caerulea*) – seen first in a Cattle Egret roost at Villa San José del Lago (bathroom stop) at Mayajigua, scattered individuals along the coast and at Niña Bonita Reservoir.

**Tricolored Heron** (*Egretta tricolor*) – A few were seen on the *cayos* early in the trip

**Reddish Egret** (*Egretta rufescens*) – A dozen or so on tidal flats and in lagoons on the *cayos*; one white morph bird was noted in a mixed species feeding flock.

**Cattle Egret** (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Here and there with cattle; often numerous behind tractors. A roost was pondside at Villa San José del Lago (bathroom stop) at Mayajigua.

**Green Heron** (*Butorides virescens*) - Six or so in both marine and freshwater habitats.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron** (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – At least three were seen during the Snail Kite stop at Km. 108/109 near Los Palacios.

**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** (*Nyctanassa violacea*) – One adult on a tidal flat at the west end of Cayo Coco.

**White Ibis** (*Eudocimus albus*) – A few seen on tidal flats or in lagoons on the *cayos*.

**Roseate Spoonbill** (*Ajaia ajaja*) – Just a few seen on tidal flats or in lagoons on the *cayos*.

**Turkey Vulture** (*Cathartes aura*) – Common throughout

**American Flamingo** (*Phoenicopterus ruber*) – A distant swath of pink on Cayo Coco then close looks at several dozen of these improbable birds at Cayo Guillermo.

**Blue-winged Teal** (*Anas discors*) – Numerous in wetlands on the *cayos*, and a few at Bermejas.

**Northern Shoveler** (*Anas clypeata*) – One in a flock on the *cayos* and a few at Niña Bonita Reservoir

**Ring-necked Duck** (*Aythya collaris*) – One at Villa San José del Lago (bathroom stop) at Mayajigua and more mixed with scaup at Niña Bonita Reservoir

**Lesser Scaup** (*Aythya affinis*) – A large flock at Niña Bonita Reservoir

**Red-breasted Merganser** (*Mergus serrator*) – Several along the causeway as we returned to the mainland from Cayo Coco.

**Ruddy Duck** (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) – Several dozen at Niña Bonita Reservoir

**Osprey** (*Pandion haliaetus*) – Small numbers while on the *cayos* and over inland reservoirs.

**Snail Kite** (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*) – At least two at fish ponds along the West Highway at Km. 108/109 near Los Palacios.

**(E) Cuban Black Hawk** (*Buteogallus gundlachii*) – Perhaps eight were easily seen during our time on the northern *cayos*; one immature allowed us to walk up to it.

**Broad-winged Hawk** (*Buteo platypterus*) – Only one; and not a great look at Topes de Collantes.

**Red-tailed Hawk** (*Buteo jamaicensis*) – One was spotted in a kettle of Turkey Vultures at the pig farm outside Las Terrazas.

**Crested Caracara** (*Caracara plancus*) – Encountered on three days, mainly roadside on the *cayos*.

**American Kestrel** (*Falco sparverius sparverioides*) – Seen throughout, often a dozen or more per day. A red-breasted bird was seen at our hotel in Saroa. The Cuban subspecies may be erected to species level.

**Peregrine Falcon** (*Falco peregrinus*) – One seen very briefly as it harassed Rock Pigeons in Havana.

**Common Moorhen** (*Gallinula chloropus*) – One in a pond near the crocodile farm outside Playa Larga and one on a reservoir along the highway.

**American Coot** (*Fulica americana*) – Numerous in wetlands on the *cayos* and at Niña Bonita Reservoir.

**Black-bellied Plover** (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – One was seen on the beach at Cayo Coco.

**Semipalmated Plover** (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) – One was seen on the beach at Cayo Coco.

**Killdeer** (*Charadrius vociferous*) – Seen on five days at various wetlands, water treatment ponds and at the pig farm outside Las Terrazas.

**Black-necked Stilt** (*Himantopus mexicanus*) – A few small flocks on the *cayos* early in the trip.

**Greater Yellowlegs** (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – Perhaps a couple dozen seen on tidal flats at Cayo Coco.

**Lesser Yellowlegs** (*Tringa flavipes*) – One at a water treatment pond on Cayo Coco.

**Spotted Sandpiper** (*Actitis macularia*) – Seen at the water treatment pond on Cayo Coco and at Niña Bonita Reservoir.

**Ruddy Turnstone** (*Arenaria interpres*) – Two at the water treatment pond on Cayo Coco

**Sanderling** (*Calidris alba*) – Several along the beach at Cayo Coco.

**Least Sandpiper** (*Calidris minutilla*) – Two on mangrove flat on Cayo Paredón Grande

**Laughing Gull** (*Larus atricilla*) – Numerous on Cayo Coco, a few at the Havana waterfront

**Caspian Tern** (*Hydroprogne caspia*) – Several individuals seen on the *cayos* early in the trip

**Royal Tern** (*Sterna maxima*) – Three on the *cayos* early in the trip

**Common Ground Dove** (*Columbina passerina*) – Small numbers at several sites including Cueva del Jabali and the pig farm outside Las Terrazas.

**Rock Pigeon** (*Columba livia*) – Common in urban areas, especially in Havana

**(RE) White-crowned Pigeon** (*Columba leucocephala*) – Fly-bys at Playa Larga, good looks at the orchid garden at Saroa, where feeding on palm fruits.

**Eurasian Collared-Dove** (*Streptopelia decaocto*) – Seen several days; often plentiful around towns and hotel lawns.

**(RE) Zenaida Dove** (*Zenaida aurita*) – One or two at Cueva del Jabali on Cayo Coco, and one or two at Playa Larga.

**Mourning Dove** (*Zenaida macroura*) – Common throughout and seen most days.

**(RE) Key West Quail Dove** (*Geotrygon chrysis*) – Two cooperative individuals were seen at Cueva del Jabali on Cayo Coco.

**(E) Blue-headed Quail Dove** (*Starnoenas cyanocephala*) – Rather astonishing looks at four feeding in the open at Restaurante Cueva de los Peces just east of the Bay of Pigs. One of Cuba's six endemic bird genera.

**(E) Cuban Parakeet** (*Aratinga euops*) – Six or eight roosting birds that our local guide Orlando had staked out in Bermejas.

**(NE) Cuban Parrot** (*Amazona leucocephala*) – Dozens at Topes de Collantes, Playa Larga, and at the coffee farm. Nice looks at both flying and perched birds.

**(NE) Great Lizard Cuckoo** (*Saurothera merlini*) – Only one was seen and by just part of the group at our hotel in Playa Larga. Another heard at Topes de Collantes.

**Smooth-billed Ani** (*Crotophaga ani*) – Common throughout in pastures, at roadsides, and at woodland edge.

**(E) Cuban Pygmy Owl** (*Glaucidium siju*) – One seen well during our morning walk with Frank at Playa Larga. Another heard at our hotel in Saroa.

**(RE) Antillean Palm-Swift** (*Tachornis phoenicobia*) – Nice views of a dozen or so from the orientation talk gazebo next to a lake at Las Terrazas.

**(NE) Cuban Emerald** (*Chlorostilbon ricordii*) – Individuals seen throughout the trip; many fly-bys but a few seen well while perched.

**(E) Bee Hummingbird** (*Mellisuga helenae*) – Close looks at four or five in a private yard near the Korimacao Community Project in Playa Larga.

**(E) Cuban Trogon** (*Priotelus temnurus*) – Seen at various sites; most numerous at Topes de Collantes. A nice choice for Cuba's national bird.

**(E) Cuban Tody** (*Todus multicolor*) – This eye-popper was encountered at several sites including Cueva del Jabali, Topes de Collantes, and coffee farm at Las Terrazas.

**Belted Kingfisher** (*Ceryle alcyon*) – Seen on five days on both marine and freshwater habitats.

**(NE) West Indian Woodpecker** (*Melanerpes superciliaris*) – Seen throughout, numerous at our hotel in Saroa.

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** (*Sphyrapicus varius*) – One on the Jardín de los Gigantes trail at Topes de Collantes

**(E) Cuban Green Woodpecker** (*Xiphidiopicus percussus*) – Seen on four days along the coast and at inland sites. One of Cuba's six endemic bird genera.

**Northern Flicker** (*Colaptes auratus chrysocaulosus*) – Seen two or three times. Best looks probably on Cayo Paredón Grande. The subspecies found on Cuba and Grand Cayman Island is a candidate for a species level split.

**(NE) Cuban Pewee** (*Contopus caribaeus*) – Singles seen throughout. Inconspicuous, but its soft call distinctive.

**(NE) La Sagra's Flycatcher** (*Myiarchus sagrae*) – Encountered on three days but not seen by all participants.

**(RE) Loggerhead Kingbird** (*Tyrannus caudifasciatus*) – Small numbers seen on eight days at all elevations.

**(E) Cuban Vireo** (*Vireo gundlachii*) – Seen quickly by some on Cayo Guillermo, but much better along the road during our walk with Frank at Playa Larga.

**(RE) Thick-billed Vireo** (*Vireo crassirostris*) – Several toyed with us on Cayo Paredón Grande. Eventually, two showed well near the lighthouse. One of Cuba’s most localized residents and a good find.

**Yellow-throated Vireo** (*Vireo flavifrons*) – One seen in a mixed species flock at the coffee farm at Las Terrazas.

**(NE) Cuban Crow** (*Corvus nasicus*) – Numerous and vocal at Playa Larga.

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** (*Polioptila caerulea*) – Singles seen in mixed species flocks including Topes de Collantes and Las Terrazas. Just a few for the trip.

**(E) Cuban Gnatcatcher** (*Polioptila lembeyei*) – Excellent views of at least three our first morning at Cayo Coco.

**(E) Cuban Solitaire** (*Myadestes elisabeth*) – With some effort, all participants got satisfying looks at one of several birds calling at Cueva del Indio in Viñales.

**(RE) Red-legged Thrush** (*Turdus plumbeus*) – This snazzy thrush was widespread and easily seen most days; numerous at Topes de Collantes.

**Gray Catbird** (*Dumetella carolinensis*) – Seen at Topes de Collantes and heard once or twice elsewhere.

**Northern Mockingbird** (*Mimus polyglottos*) – Seen throughout the trip in urban and natural habitats.

**Northern Parula** (*Setophaga americana*) – Seen five days in mixed flocks.

**Cape May Warbler** (*Setophaga tigrina*) – Seen three days; most numerous on the *cayos*. A couple very handsome males were noted.

**Black-throated Blue Warbler** (*Setophaga caerulescens*) – Seen at various locations. Virtually all individuals were males. A female was noted feeding among the Bee Hummingbirds at Playa Larga.

**Yellow-rumped Warbler** (*Setophaga coronata*) – Individual birds were noted on three days, the first and perhaps longest sighting on Cayo Coco.

**Black-throated Green Warbler** (*Setophaga virens*) – A male was seen in a mixed flock at Las Terrazas.

**Yellow-throated Warbler** (*Setophaga dominica*) – Seen both inland and along the coast, usually associated with palm trees. Numerous on Cayo Coco and at Playa Larga.

**(NE) Olive-capped Warbler** (*Setophaga pityophila*) – Two were found along the driveway at the organic garden lunch stop just as we were about to drive elsewhere to search for them.

**Prairie Warbler** (*Setophaga discolor*) – Singles were noted on three days. The best looks were perhaps on our first morning on Cayo Coco.

**Palm Warbler** (*Setophaga palmarum*) – Numerous, active, and easily seen, especially on the *cayos*. All individuals noted were the pale-breasted western form *palmarum*.

**American Redstart** (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – Present in most mixed species flocks at all elevations.

**Black-and-White Warbler** (*Mniotilta varia*) – Individual birds seen four days, mostly in mixed species flocks.

**Ovenbird** (*Seiurus aurocapilla*) – Two seen the first morning on Cayo Coco at Cueva del Jabali, and one at Playa Larga.

**Louisiana Waterthrush** (*Parkesia motacilla*) – One pondside at Villa San José del Lago (bathroom stop) at Mayajigua, and one near the bar at our hotel in Saroa.

**Common Yellowthroat** (*Geothlypis trichas*) – Encountered just once or twice. best looks at roadside in Playa Larga.

**(E) Yellow-headed Warbler** (*Teretistris fernandinae*) – Seen quite well just down the road from the organic garden lunch stop. This and the following species belong to one of Cuba’s six endemic bird genera.

**(E) Oriente Warbler** (*Teretistris fornsi*) – A close individual at Cueva del Jabali on Cayo Coco

**Red-legged Honeycreeper** (*Cyanerpes cyaneus*) – Numerous in African tulip tree blossoms at Cueva del Indio in Viñales; a couple at Las Terrazas.

**(RE) Western Spindalis** (*Spindalis zena*) – Small numbers seen throughout the trip. Best views at the orchid garden in Saroa where a female and two males perched atop a leafless tree.

**Summer Tanager** (*Piranga rubra*) – Male and female at the orchid garden at Saroa.

**(NE) Cuban Bullfinch** (*Melopyrrha nigra*) – Seen two days; point blank looks at waist height at the orchid garden in Saroa.

**(E) Cuban Grassquit** (*Tiaris canora*) – Several seen eventually at the pig farm outside Las Terrazas.

**Yellow-faced Grassquit** (*Tiaris olivacea*) – Small numbers at various sites including Cayo Coco, Saroa, and outside Las Terrazas

**(E) Cuban (Zapata) Sparrow** (*Torreornis inexpectata*) – Very close views of two individuals feeding at the roadside on Cayo Coco. One of Cuba's six endemic bird genera.

**(NE) Tawny-shouldered Blackbird** (*Agelaius humeralis*) – A small flock in the Bee Hummingbird yard down the block from the Korimacao Community Project in Playa Larga.

**Eastern Meadowlark** (*Sturnella magna hippocrepis*) – At least four that Gustavo had up his sleeve at the Km. 40 highway stop after leaving Las Terrazas. The Cuban subspecies may be elevated to species rank.

**(E) Cuban Blackbird** (*Dives atrovioacea*) – Noisy and numerous throughout at all elevations visited.

**(RE) Greater Antillean Grackle** (*Quiscalus niger*) – Widespread, generally in small numbers; common at our hotel on Cayo Coco.

**(E) Cuban Oriole** (*Icterus melanopsis*) – Seen on three days. Many people had their best looks in flowering trees at Hotel Los Helechos in Topes de Collantes.

**House Sparrow** (*Passer domesticus*) – Seen at many locations from Trinidad through Havana.

**(E) Endemic, found only in Cuba**

**(NE) Near-endemic, found in Cuba and one or two other islands**

**(RE) Regional endemic, found in Caribbean**

## Dragonflies

**Great Pondhawk** (*Erythemis vesiculosa*) – Common along forest trails at Playa Larga.

**Band-winged Dragonlet** (*Erythrodiplax umbrata*) – Seen at various sites; common at Playa Larga.

**Roseate Skimmer** (*Orthemis ferruginea*) – Forty of these were lined up end-to-end on a utility wire at Restaurante Cueva de los Peces.

**Wandering Glider** (*Pantala flavescens*) – Seen at most sites. Numerous at our lunch stop at Topes de Collantes.

## Butterflies and Moths

Small blues (presumably Cassius Blue) and various sulphurs of at least four species were numerous on the *cayos*, but rarely alighted because of the wind.

**Julia Heliconian (Longwing)** (*Dryas iulia*) – Often numerous in roadside vegetation.

**Zebra Heliconian (Longwing)** (*Heliconius charithonia*) – Just a couple seen; pointed out at Topes de Collantes.

**Gulf Fritillary** (*Agraulis vanillae*) – A few on the *cayos* and at Topes de Collantes.

**Mangrove Skipper** (*Phocides pigmalion*) – One was seen by a couple of us by the lighthouse at Cayo Paredón Grande.

**Mournful Sphinx** (*Enyo lugubris*) – One on the inside wall of the Museum of Cuban Art in Topes de Collantes.

**Owl Moth** (*Thysania zenobia*) – This was the huge, banded, mostly white moth seen in the restaurant and bar area at Hotel Los Helechos. They were also numerous on the ceiling of the art gallery in Topes de Collantes.

## Herps

**(I) Bullfrog** (*Lithobates catesbeianus*) – This introduced species was heard throughout the night at our hotel at Saroa.

**Cuban Tree frog** (*Osteopilus septentrionalis*) – The huge tree frog pointed out on the window during dinner at our hotel at Saroa. Additionally, Dodie photographed one on her hotel sink at Cayo Coco.

**Cuban Giant Anole** (*Anolis equestris*) – One at the coffee shop in Topes de Collantes.

**Green Anole** – Several species at various locations.

**Brown Anole** (*Anolis sagrei*) – Common at the hotel at Playa Larga; a few elsewhere.

**Gecko** – A gecko on the ceiling at our hotel in Saroa was probably the widely introduced Mediterranean House Gecko (*Hemidactylus turcicus*).

**Cuban Curly-tailed Lizard** (*Leiocephalus carinatus*) – Several curly-tailed lizards, presumably this species, were seen in Trinidad at the lunch stop.