cerca de la playa, aunque escuchamos en varias ocasiones sus gemidos mar afuera al anochecer.

No fue hasta el día 10 de enero de 1990 en que tuve otra oportunidad de visitar de nuevo la costa y la playa de Boca de Yaguanabo, y utilizando la luz de dos reflectores conectados a dos baterías eléctricas y un bote, pude disparar sobre las aves que volaban cerca de la playa a baja altura. Aunque tenía la seguridad de haber herido al menos una, no pudimos encontrar nada durante la noche y las aves desaparecieron. Pero al amanecer, localizamos en la orilla de la play el cuerpo sin vida de un Diablotín hembra. Este ejemplar no pudo disecarse debido al mar estado en que se encontraba pues había permanecido unas nueve horas dentro del agua y los peces le habían comido más de la mitad del cuerpo.

Así, tras casi 15 años de espera, pudimos comprobar que Boca Yaguanabo y los macizos montañosos del Escambray que lo rodean, constituyen una nueva localidad de la presencia de *Pterodroma hasitata* para Cuba y el sitio de ocurrencia más occidental para esta especie en el Caribe.

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TWO NEW AVIAN RECORDS FOR HISPANIOLA: SWAINSON'S WARBLER AND SONG SPARROW

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DURING RECENT FIELD WORK in montane forests of southwestern Dominican Republic, we encountered two species of birds that have not previously been reported from Hispaniola. The first of these, a Swainson's Warbler (*Limnothlypis swainsonii*), was captured in a mist net on 10 November 1997 during banding studies in moist, predominantly broadleaf forest at "Palo de Agua" in Sierra de Baoruco National Park, Pedernales Province (18°12´N, 71°31´W, ca. 1400 m elevation). This site is characterized by a dense understory, a solid canopy of broadleaf trees 8–15 m high, and scattered, emergent pines (*Pinus occidentalis*) up to 30 m in height. The bird's identity was unmistakable, although we were unable to determine its age or sex. Most distinctive were the relatively large, daggerlike bill, unusual among paruline warblers, its large, somewhat flattened head with solid brown crown and pale supercilium, and the overall brownish, unmarked coloration of its upperparts. The bird's wing chord measured 69.0 mm, it weighed 14.8 g, and it had no visible subcutaneous body fat. The Swainson's Warbler was viewed in the hand by seven people, including the authors, James Tietz, James Goetz, Jesús Almonte, Elvis Cuevas, and Esteban Garrido. Three series of photographs were taken.

During a follow-up visit to Palo de Agua in March 1998, we recaptured this same individual on 7 March within 100 m of its original site of capture. The bird weighed 15.4 g and had a trace of visible subcutaneous body fat. Its site tenacity over a 4-month period strongly suggests that it over-wintered at the location. On 9 March we mist-netted a second Swainson's Warbler at the Palo de Agua site. This individual had a wing chord of 69.5 mm, a weight of 14.4 g, and a trace of body fat. It was viewed in the hand by six of the above seven observers, plus Steven Holmes, Tomás Vargas, and Paul Wieczoreck. Two series of photographs were taken.

The discovery of Swainson's Warbler in the Dominican Republic is not surprising, given the species' wintering distribution, which is centered in the Greater Antilles but extends from the Yucatán Peninsula and Honduras eastward to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands (Raffaele 1989, Howell and Webb 1995, Graves 1996). The highest recorded densities of wintering Swainson's Warblers appear to have been found in the Blue and John Crow mountains of Jamaica and in certain areas of Cuba (Graves 1996). The species is secretive and cryptically plumaged, however, is not easily detected in winter, and appears to favor undisturbed or slightly modified montane forest habitats (Graves 1996). It is thus likely that Swainson's Warbler has been overlooked on Hispaniola. Focused surveys that incorporate tape-recorded playbacks represent the most effective means to census this species on its wintering grounds (Graves 1996), and we believe that such surveys might reveal Swainson's Warbler to be relatively widespread in suitable habitat on Hispaniola.

The second new species for Hispaniola was completely unexpected and appears to represent a new record for the Caribbean Basin south of the Bahamas. We observed a Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*) on 15 November 1997 in the western Sierra de Neiba, on the border of Baoruco and San Juan provinces, in shrubby roadside habitat on the international road above "Vuelta de Quince" near the Haitian border (18°41´N, 71°46´W, ca. 1900 m elevation). This site, about

20 km above the town of Los Pinos, is characterized by moist, broadleaf montane forest, of which only a relatively small fragment remains. The area surrounding this remnant forest has been extensively cleared for agriculture and grazing, and the remaining forested patch contains scattered clearings and many small trails. The road to Hondo Valle which passes through this tract is fringed in many places by dense, shrubby habitat with numerous, small openings. We observed the Song Sparrow in this low, roadside growth.

The bird was first observed by Rimmer at 09:45 hr as it flushed from the wet, grassy road into a bordering shrub. His immediate impression of the bird's identity was of an Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*), based on its size, brown dorsal coloration, and streaked underparts. Upon viewing it through binoculars from a distance of 7-8 m, as it moved furtively but in occasional full view in a shrub 1-1.5 m above ground, both authors quickly realized that the bird was some type of sparrow. This was based on the bird having a distinctly longer tail, richer dark brown upperparts, and a shorter, heavier, more conical bill than an Ovenbird. During the next 30-45 sec, the sparrow remained in the bush, continually moving but providing several clear views, despite its fairly elusive behavior. After about 20 sec, both authors exclaimed nearly in unison that the bird appeared to be a Song Sparrow, a species with which both were familiar on its northeastern North American breeding grounds. Several seconds before flying out of sight, the bird vocalized twice, giving single, short, high, slightly rising "*seeet*" or "*seeep*" calls. These sounded to the authors exactly like the alarm calls often heard in North America and confirmed the species' identity in their minds. Several minutes of "*spishing*" failed to bring the bird back into view, and the species' characteristic nasal "*tchep*" call note, often given in response to human "*spishing*," was never heard.

Recognizing that Song Sparrow was unlikely to have been previously recorded on Hispaniola, and that neither of us was familiar with juvenal or first basic plumages of Rufous-collared Sparrow (*Zonotrichia capensis*), a relatively common species in the area, we independently recorded detailed field notes within 24 hours of the sighting, before consulting field identification guides. The following description, compiled from our combined field notes, summarizes the salient features that we believe confirm the accuracy of our initial identification of the bird as a Song Sparrow. The head was distinctively marked by a grayish-white median crown-stripe bordered by two brown lateral crown-stripes and a fairly broad, grayish-white supercilium without supraloral markings. A thin but distinct postocular stripe formed the upper border of ear coverts that appeared pale brownish or grayish-brown and were bordered below by a dark moustachial stripe. The submoustachial stripe was broad and whitish. A prominent, dark malar stripe bordered the whitish, unmarked throat. The eyes and bill appeared all dark. The upperparts were brown with a rufous tinge, especially on the back and wings. The mantle and back were conspicuously marked with vertical blackish streaks. No wingbars were evident. The underparts were whitish, with prominent dark streaks on the breast and flanks; these did not extend onto the belly. Neither author saw a central breast spot, which is often, but not invariably, a distinctive feature of basic-plumaged Song Sparrows (Byers et al. 1995). The tail was markedly long and brownish, appearing to be nearly as long as the bird's body. Neither of us specifically noted the coloration of the legs and feet.

Although we did not observe the central breast spot diagnostic of most Song Sparrows in basic plumage, we believe that the above description rules out any other sparrows known to occur on Hispaniola or other islands of the West Indies. The distinctive head striping, bold streaking on the underparts, and absence of prominent wingbars eliminate the possibility of confusion with juvenile Rufous-collared Sparrow or other *Zonotrichia* species. Grasshopper Sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*), of which an endemic subspecies (*A. s. intricata*) occurs on Hispaniola (Dod 1981, Byers et al. 1995), is smaller with a short tail and unstreaked or only faintly streaked underparts with a buffy wash on the breast. Savannah Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*), which winters in the Bahamas and western Greater Antilles (Bond 1993, Byers et al. 1995), has a short, notched tail, indistinct crown-stripes, yellowish supraloral markings in most subspecies, and generally finer, less bold streaks on the underparts than Song Sparrow. Lincoln's (*Melospiza lincolnii*) and Swamp (*M. georgiana*) sparrows, both of which have been recorded as vagrants in the Greater Antilles (Raffaele 1989, Bond 1993), are readily separable in basic plumage from Song Sparrow; Lincoln's by its finely-streaked underparts and pale buffy breast and flanks, Swamp by its more uniformly dark brown crown, lack of distinct malar and moustachial stripes, and grayish, unstreaked underparts.

The documentation of Song Sparrow on Hispaniola represents a significant extralimital occurrence of the species. The known wintering range extends throughout the southeastern United States to south-central Florida and into northern Mexico (northern parts of Sonora, Chihuahua, and Coahuila), with eight sedentary subspecies resident in central Mexico from Durango to Michoacán and Puebla (Byers et al. 1995). We are aware of only five previous records of Song Sparrow from the Caribbean Basin, all sight records from the Bahama Archipelago between Grand Bahama and Crooked islands (H. Raffaele, pers. comm.). The encounter reported here, involving a probable vagrant individual, extends the extralimital range of wintering Song Sparrows at least an additional 550 km to the southeast. While we can only speculate about the origin of this bird and the causes of its appearance in Sierra de Neiba, our prior field experience with Song Sparrows in the northeastern United States and consultation with several field identification guides (e.g., Byers et al. 1995) suggest that it belonged to the nominate subspecies *M. m. melodia*.

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A LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (*LARUS FUSCUS*) IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

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WE OBSERVED A LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus fuscus*) in first-year plumage at Las Salinas, Bani, Dominican Republic on 22 November 1997. The bird was in the company of a small flock of other gulls and terns, including Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*), Royal Tern (*S. maxima*), Laughing Gulls (*L. atricilla*) in various plumages, a Greater Black-backed Gull (*L. marinus*) in first– or second–winter plumage, a first–winter Herring Gull (*L. argentatus*), and an adult Ring-billed Gull (*L. delawarensis*). The terns are common at this site, the Ring-billed and Herring gulls are both uncommon but regularly seen, and several Greater Black-backed Gulls, although rare throughout the Caribbean, have been present here for more than a year. Fortuitously, we were able to study the Lesser Black-backed Gull from a distance of 20-25 m with a spotting scope, with the bird at times side-by-side with each of the other gull species. The Lesser Black-backed Gull was first picked out as possibly unique owing to its size (intermediate between that of the larger Herring and Greater Black-backed gulls, but larger than the Ring-billed Gull) and an entirely black, comparatively small bill, contrasting with the larger, two–tone bill of the young Herring Gull, which was distinctly lighter at the base. In general, the bird was largely brown, but considerably paler than the Herring Gull, especially on the head, neck, and underparts. In comparison, the Herring Gull was darker brown with less contrast among the head, upperparts, and underparts. When the gull jumped in the wind, spreading its wings, or took short flights, a well-defined, dark tail-band was seen, contrasting with a light, almost white rump, which also contrasted with the brown back. In addition, the wing showed dark primaries, secondaries, and coverts, such that two dark bars formed on the inner wing. No light window in the inner primaries was seen as is typical of Herring Gulls.

This appears to be the first record of the Lesser Black-backed Gull for Hispaniola, and one of only a few for the Caribbean. No records of this species exist in Keith et al. (in prep.), and Bond (1979) lists the species as a vagrant, with records from Puerto Rico and St. Martin. The bird was also seen by Mia Sondreahl of the Vermont Institute of Natural Science, and Kate Wallace and Danilo Mejias of the Club de Observadores de Aves Annabelle Dod.

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