INTRODUCTION

The Dominican Republic occupies the eastern two-thirds of the island of Hispaniola which, at 77,900 km², is the second largest island in the Caribbean. The Republic of Haiti, with which the Dominican Republic shares a 360-km border, occupies the rest of Hispaniola. The island lies 80 km east of Cuba, 90 km west of Puerto Rico, and 150 km from north-eastern Jamaica. The topography of the Dominican Republic is dominated by four principal mountain systems that run from north-west to south-east, namely the Cordillera Septentrional (Northern Mountain Range); the Cordillera Central (Central Mountain Range), which extends into Haiti where it is called the Massif du Nord; the Sierra de Neiba, which extends into Haiti as the Montagnes du Trou d’Eau; and Sierra de Bahoruco, which in Haiti continues as the Massif de la Selle. These parallel mountain ranges are responsible for the longest and most voluminous rivers in the Caribbean: Yaque del Norte, Yaque del Sur, Yuna-Camú, and Nizao. The diverse habitats (five distinct ecoregions are recognised) include 1,500 km of coastline, freshwater and brackish wetlands, dry forest, broadleaf forest and pine forest, xeric areas, savannas, and dunes. The climate is warm, with a mean annual temperature of 27°C.

Hispaniola is considered to have the highest biodiversity in the Caribbean, distributed across an intricate mosaic of environments and microclimates that have formed as a result of a complex geological history. This has produced sites which range from 40 m below sea-level (e.g. Hoya de Enriquillo), to those at more than 3,000 m above (within the Cordillera Central), as well as sites such as Isla Alto Velo that supports unique species confined to only 1 km². Rates of endemism across most taxonomic groups are high. However, most habitats (but especially cloud forest and moist broadleaf forest) that support these endemic species have been (and continue to be) severely affected by deforestation and other human pressure. With the growing human population concentrated in coastal regions, habitats in these areas (e.g. beaches, coastal wetlands and mangroves) are suffering from multiple threats. Not only are the habitats being destroyed directly by cutting forests, draining or polluting wetlands and urban and agricultural expansion, but invasive alien species (including plants, predatory and grazing animals) are impacting what habitat remains and the species that rely upon them.
Conservation

The Environment and Natural Resources General Law (No.64-00) is the legal framework that protects wild areas and biodiversity in the Dominican Republic. This law allows for the creation of sector-specific laws such as the Law of Protected Areas (No.202-04) which regulates the National System of Protected Areas (NSPA). However, attempts in 2004–2005 by the president and the legislature to eviscerate the national parks system by selling-off protected lands for tourism and development activities shows how fragile the parks are from a legal standpoint. In response, conservation and academic groups are working towards modifying the nation’s constitution to declare the National System of Protected Areas as inalienable, non-sequestrable national treasures, and not subject to statutory limitations.

The National System of Protected Areas has improved in terms of the quantity of protected areas and their management categories over the last 20 years. In 1980, only nine areas (4.2% of the country’s land area) were legally protected, but this number increased to 19 (11.2%) from 1981 to 1990, and to 86 areas (25.4%) between 2002 and 2008. The Jaragua-Bahoruco-Enriquillo Biosphere Reserve is unique in the country, embracing a number of protected areas and the Lago Enriquillo Ramsar Site. The Directorate of Protected Areas administers the management of protected area system, although a number of NGOs collaborate with or have been assigned to protected areas (e.g. Grupo Jaragua to Jaragua National Park, and Fundación Moscoso Puello to Valle Nuevo) under co-management agreements with the Directorate. However, in spite of this enlightened approach to management, only 10 of the Dominican Republic’s national parks have management plans, and for only six is there some level of implementation.

The protected areas of the Dominican Republic face multiple threats to the effective conservation of their biodiversity. These include uncertainties in land ownership, the lack of an appropriate system of compensation for the expropriation of land for conservation purposes, lack of clear policies for the administration and management of funds generated by protected areas, inadequate management of the areas, as well as delayed local development as a result of centralised policies. Knowledge of regulations and permitted uses of the protected areas is lacking, as is a general awareness of their importance, value and the ecological services they provide. Together with imprecise boundaries, these deficiencies lead to disturbances such as expansion of agricultural activities (including cattle grazing), as well as forest fires, deforestation, illegal hunting, fishing, and trafficking of endangered species.

Other threats relate to the expansion of unsustainable tourism.
mining, and hydro-electric projects. Finally, poverty levels in communities adjacent to the parks have led to unsustainable land-use practices and illegal human settlement both within the protected areas and their buffer zones. The threats faced by the nation’s protected areas (many of which are IBAs) are indicative of what is happening to biodiversity across the country.

### Birds

Of the 306 bird species reported for the Dominican Republic c.140 are breeding residents. Hispaniola is also an important over-wintering area for Neotropical migrants, with 136 species recorded. The Hispaniolan avifauna exhibits exceptional levels of endemism. The island is an Endemic Bird Area (EBA) with 36 restricted-range species, 34 of which are known from the Dominican Republic. The remaining two species, Grey-crowned Palm-tanager *Phaenicophilus poliocephalus* and Thick-billed Vireo *Vireo crassirostris*, have only been recorded in Haiti. A total of 28 of the restricted-range birds are endemic to the island, the others being shared with adjacent EBAs. For example, Vervain Hummingbird *Mellisuga minina*, Stolid Flycatcher *Myiarchus stolidus*, Greater Antillean Elaenia *Elaenia fallax* and Golden Swallow *Tachycineta euchrysea* are all shared with Jamaica. Six of the restricted-range species represent genera endemic to Hispaniola, namely *Calyptophilus*, *Dulus* (also a monotypic family), *Microligea*, *Nesoctites*, *Phaenicophilus* and *Xenoligea*. Endemism is also high at the sub-specific level with over 35 subspecies described from Dominican Republic.

There are records of 23 threatened species in the Dominican Republic, including one Critically Endangered, four Endangered, nine Vulnerable, and nine Near Threatened species. However, three of the Near Threatened species were excluded from the IBA analysis since they are not considered to sustain significant populations in the country, namely Back Rail *Laterallus jamaicensis*, Piping Plover *Charadrius melodus* and Golden-winged Warbler *Vermivora chrysoptera*. The

### Important Bird Areas

The Dominican Republic contains 21 IBAs—the country’s international site priorities for bird conservation—cover c.14% of the land surface of the country. The IBAs have been identified on the basis of 49 key bird species (listed in Table 1) that variously meet the IBA criteria. These species include...
## Table 1. Key bird species at Important Bird Areas in the Dominican Republic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key bird species</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>National population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>West Indian Whistling-duck</strong> <em>Dendrocygna arborea</em></td>
<td>VU</td>
<td>90,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesser Scaup</strong> <em>Aythya affinis</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>90,005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ruddy Duck</strong> <em>Oxyura jamaicensis</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>10,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Black-capped Petrel</strong> <em>Pterodroma hasitata</em></td>
<td>EN</td>
<td>60–120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Magnificent Frigatebird</strong> <em>Fregata magnificens</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>250–999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brown Pelican</strong> <em>Pelecanus occidentalis</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>250–999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ridgway’s Hawk</strong> <em>Buteo ridgwayi</em></td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>240–360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Caribbean Cost</strong> <em>Fulica caribaea</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,500–9,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Least Tern</strong> <em>Sterna antillarum</em></td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>2,500–9,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Briddied Tern</strong> <em>Sterna anaethetus</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,000–2,499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sooty Tern</strong> <em>Sterna fuscata</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>130,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brown Noddy</strong> <em>Anous stolidus</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>50–380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>White-crowned Pigeon</strong> <em>Patagioenas leucocephala</em></td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>2,500–9,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plain Pigeon</strong> <em>Patagioenas inornata</em></td>
<td>NT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grey-headed Quail-dove</strong> <em>Coturnix caniceps</em></td>
<td>VU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hispaniolan Parakeet</strong> <em>Aratinga chloroptera</em></td>
<td>VU</td>
<td>✓ 30 – 30 ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hispaniolan Amazon</strong> <em>Amazona ventralis</em></td>
<td>VU</td>
<td>✓ 30 – 30 ✓ ✓ ✓ 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hispaniolan Lizard-cuckoo</strong> <em>Saucothra longirostris</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bay-breasted Cuckoo</strong> <em>Coccyzus nigulans</em></td>
<td>EN</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ashy-faced Owl</strong> <em>Tyto glaucops</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Least Pauraque</strong> <em>Siphonorhis brewsteri</em></td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>10,000–19,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hispaniola Nightjar</strong> <em>Caprimulgus ehrni</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Antillean Mango</strong> <em>Anthracothorax dominicus</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hispaniolan Emerald</strong> <em>Chlorostilbon sarawsoni</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vervain Hummingbird</strong> <em>Mellisuga minima</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hispaniolan Trogon</strong> <em>Proctochilus roseigaster</em></td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Narrow-billed Tody</strong> <em>Todus arguniostris</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Broad-billed Tody</strong> <em>Todus sabulatus</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Antillean Piculet</strong> <em>Nesocolichas micromegas</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hispaniolan Woodpecker</strong> <em>Melanerpes stratus</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Greater Antillean Elaenia</strong> <em>Elaenia taxax</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hispaniolan Pewee</strong> <em>Contopus hispaniolensis</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stolid Flycatcher</strong> <em>Myiarchus stolidus</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flat-billed Vireo</strong> <em>Vireo rarus</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hispaniolan Palm Crow</strong> <em>Corvus pamorun</em></td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>50–249 90 – 90 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>White-necked Crow</strong> <em>Corvus leucognaphalus</em></td>
<td>VU</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ 30 30 30 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Palmchat</strong> <em>Dulus dominicus</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Golden Swallow</strong> <em>Tachycineta euchrysea</em></td>
<td>VU</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ 36 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pearly-eyed Thrasher</strong> <em>Margarops fuscatus</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>** Rufous-throated Solitaire** <em>Myodestes gentilis</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bicknell’s Thrush</strong> <em>Catharus bicknelli</em></td>
<td>VU</td>
<td>✓ 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>La Selle Thrush</strong> <em>Turdus swaynii</em></td>
<td>EN</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Antillean Siskin</strong> <em>Carduelis micromelas</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hispaniolan Crossbill</strong> <em>Loxia megaplaqa</em></td>
<td>EN</td>
<td>3,100–3,500 50–249 3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Green-tailed Warbler</strong> <em>Microlophus palustris</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>White-winged Warbler</strong> <em>Xenocichla montana</em></td>
<td>VU</td>
<td>✓ ✓ 30 30 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Black-crowned Palm-tanager</strong> <em>Phaenicophilus palmarum</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chat Tanager</strong> <em>Calyptorhynchus funigavis</em></td>
<td>VU</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Antillean Euphonia</strong> <em>Euphonia musica</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All population figures = numbers of individuals. Threatened birds: Critically Endangered ■; Endangered ■; Vulnerable ■; Near Threatened ■; Restricted-range birds ■; Congregatory birds ■.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominican Republic IBAs</th>
<th>DO009</th>
<th>DO010</th>
<th>DO011</th>
<th>DO012</th>
<th>DO013</th>
<th>DO014</th>
<th>DO015</th>
<th>DO016</th>
<th>DO017</th>
<th>DO018</th>
<th>DO019</th>
<th>DO020</th>
<th>DO021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>540–660</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>240–360</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000–6,000</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,500–9,999</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300–30</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250–999</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150–249</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50–249</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
20 threatened birds (see “Birds” above), all 34 restricted-range species, and 10 congregatory species. Of the 21 IBA identified, 20 support critical populations of globally threatened birds; 17 are home to important assemblages of restricted-range species; five support globally significant populations of congregatory waterbirds or seabirds; and four are important for congregatory birds at a regional level.

All but two IBAs belong partially or totally to the National System of Protected Areas, and thus are formally protected under a recognised management category. IBAs at Punta Cana (DO021) and Honduras (DO016) lack any type of formal protection, whilst Loma Nalga de Maco–Río Limpio IBA (DO002) protected in part as a national park. The majority of the country’s life zones, habitats and vegetative associations are represented within the IBA network. Some of the IBA are recognised under other international designations, such as the Lago Enriquillo Ramsar Site, the Jaragua-Bahoruco-Enriquillo Biosphere Reserve, and Los Haitises and Sierra de Bahoruco as Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) sites.

Grupo Jaragua has been coordinating the IBA program in the Dominican Republic since 2002. Grupo Jaragua is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation established in 1987 and whose mission is to bring about the effective management of Dominican Republic’s natural resources and biodiversity through research and projects aimed at solving local conservation problems. Despite most of their efforts being concentrated in the Jaragua National Park and surrounding communities, Grupo Jaragua pays special attention to the development of the Jaragua-Bahoruco-Enriquillo Biosphere Reserve, and Los Haitises and Sierra de Bahoruco as Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) sites.

State, pressure and response scores have been collated for 11 (DO001 Cayos Siete Hermanos, DO003 Armando Bermudez National Park, DO005 Lago Enriquillo, DO006 Sierra de Bahoruco, DO007 Jaragua National Park, DO008 Laguna Cabral, DO011 Valle Nuevo, DO013 Loma Quita Espuela, DO018 Los Haitises, DO019 Laguna Limón and DO020 Del Este National Park) of the Dominican Republic’s IBAs, but should be monitored annually at all IBAs to provide an objective status assessment and highlight management interventions that might be required to maintain these IBAs in a healthy state. Of the 20 IBAs, 16 are monitored for threats to IBAs (“Pressure”), the condition of IBAs (“State”) and conservation actions taken at IBAs (“Response”).
internationally important biodiversity sites. Monitoring of the country’s globally threatened birds (especially the Critically Endangered and Endangered species), waterbirds and seabirds is urgently needed, and can usefully inform the annual status assessment of the IBA network.

**KEY REFERENCES**


**BOLAY, E.** (1997) *The Dominican Republic: a country between rain forest and desert; contributions to the ecology of a Caribbean island*. Weikersheim, Germany: Margraf Verlag.


ACNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank the staff of Grupo Jaragua, Yolanda León, Esteban Garrido, Ernst Rupp, Rafael Lorenzo, Eduardo Vasquez, Jesús Almonte, José Manuel Mateo, Juana Peña, Bolívar Cabrera and José Ramón Martínez for their continuous support and strengthening of the IBA framework in the Dominican Republic; also the technical staff of the Natural Resources and Environment Secretariat, the Hispaniolan Ornithological Society, the National Botanical Garden, and the Dominican Environmental Consortium. Special thanks to Jaragua Community Volunteers, our pillar in the community of Oviedo, Pedernales.

Cayos Siete Hermanos IBA is part of Cayos Siete Hermanos Wildlife Refuge and supports activities such as fishing, marine research, ecotourism, birdwatching and traditional tourism. However, the cays have been subject to significant human disturbance, mainly by fishermen from both the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Disturbances include: cutting trees for firewood, establishment of camps (with their associated refuse), indiscriminate and inappropriate fishing practices (e.g. use of chemicals and harpoons), overfishing, and unsustainable collection of the eggs of Sterna anaethetus, S. fuscata and Anous stolidus (which are thought to have aphrodisiac properties) for food. Other threats include the removal of sea-turtle eggs and individuals, the presence of rats Rattus sp., unsustainable tourism, sand extraction, and an increasing sediment load in marine waters. Most human activity is concentrated on Torurú, Terrero, Rata, Muerto and Arenas islands. Guards from the refuge and the navy have, in the last few years, have been protecting the seabird colonies during the breeding season.

Cayos Siete Hermanos IBA is in Montecristi province and comprises a group of small, barren islands on the Montecristi Bank, stretching 5–15 km from the north-westernmost coast of the Dominican Republic. The islands of Torurú, Monte Chico and Terrero form the closest group to the mainland while Monte Grande, Ratas, Muerto and Arenas make up the most distant, westward group. Low thorny shrubs, grasses, herbs and cacti make up the scarce vegetation present on these sandy islets.

Site description

Cayos Siete Hermanos IBA is in Montecristi province and comprises a group of small, barren islands on the Montecristi Bank, stretching 5–15 km from the north-westernmost coast of the Dominican Republic. The islands of Torurú, Monte Chico and Terrero form the closest group to the mainland while Monte Grande, Ratas, Muerto and Arenas make up the most distant, westward group. Low thorny shrubs, grasses, herbs and cacti make up the scarce vegetation present on these sandy islets. Marine areas up to 1 km from each island are included within the IBA. The coastal region of Montecristi Province is an important fishing area associated with the Yaque del Norte River.

Birds

This IBA is significant for its breeding seabirds, with the population of Bridled Tern Sterna anaethetus being globally important and that of Brown Noddy Anous stolidus regionally so. Other species such as Sooty Tern S. fuscata also nest on the islands. The most significant seabird colonies are reported from Monte Chico and Ratas islands, with nesting primarily concentrated between May and August.

Other biodiversity

The Critically Endangered hawksbill turtle Eretmochelys imbricata is present, along with the commercially-important queen conch Strombus gigas. Cayos Siete Hermanos (and their coral reefs) support a diverse marine fauna and are important marine nursery grounds for the Montecristi Bank.

Wildlife Refuge

Cayos Siete Hermanos IBA is part of Cayos Siete Hermanos Wildlife Refuge and supports activities such as fishing, marine research, ecotourism, birdwatching and traditional tourism. However, the cays have been subject to significant human disturbance, mainly by fishermen from both the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Disturbances include: cutting trees for firewood, establishment of camps (with their associated refuse), indiscriminate and inappropriate fishing practices (e.g. use of chemicals and harpoons), overfishing, and unsustainable collection of the eggs of Sterna anaethetus, S. fuscata and Anous stolidus (which are thought to have aphrodisiac properties) for food. Other threats include the removal of sea-turtle eggs and individuals, the presence of rats Rattus sp., unsustainable tourism, sand extraction, and an increasing sediment load in marine waters. Most human activity is concentrated on Torurú, Terrero, Rata, Muerto and Arenas islands. Guards from the refuge and the navy have, in the last few years, have been protecting the seabird colonies during the breeding season.
Site description

Loma Nalga de Maco–Río Limpio IBA is located in the northern region of the Dominican Republic, towards the westernmost end of the Cordillera Central, close to the border with the Republic of Haiti. Loma de Maco National Park belongs to the municipality of Pedro Santana, province of Elias Piña. To the north it borders Los Almácigos municipality, Santiago Rodríguez province, to the east with the Armando Bermúdez National Park (DO003), to the west Restauración municipality. Dajabón province, and to the north-west with Río Limpio, a local coffee growing community. Communities surrounding the protected area are rural and generally lack basic services. A unique dwarf cloud forest survives in this IBA.

Birds

This IBA supports populations of 25 (of the 34) Hispaniolan EBA restricted-range birds, 10 of which are threatened including the Endangered Bay-breasted Cuckoo Coccyzus rufigularis (reported from the Río Limpio–Carrizal area) and the Vulnerable White-necked Crow Corvus leucognaphalus, Golden Swallow Tachycineta euchrysea, Bicknell’s Thrush Catharus bicknelli (wintering), White-winged Warbler Xenoligea montana, and (Eastern) Chat Tanager Calyptophilus fragivorus (fragivorus).

Other biodiversity

Seven amphibian species are present (primarily in the riparian vegetation of the Río Limpio), representing 36% of those reported for the Cordillera Central. The flora is diverse with a high degree of endemism, particularly so in the summit area of the IBA.

Conservation

Loma Nalga de Maco–Río Limpio IBA is under mixed ownership. Nalga de Maco is a national park created in 1995 and ratified by law in 2000 and 2004. Río Limpio borders Nalga de Maco, but contains private lands and is not legally protected. Río Limpio offers visitor accommodation, and access to the national park via a two-day long hiking trail. Among the threats to this IBA are agriculture (including slash-and-burn practices), cattle ranching, forest fires, land invasions and human settlements, and disturbances caused by illegal migratory movements and scientific research. A visitor centre has been built at the end of what will become the “Hispaniola Trail”, which will facilitate enjoyment of the national parks throughout the Cordillera Central.

Site description

Armando Bermúdez National Park IBA is on the northern slope of the Cordillera Central, extending from Ciénaga de Manabao to Nalga de Maco National Park (IBA DO002). To the north it is bounded by the communities of Mata Grande, La Diferencia, Los Ramones, Lomita, and La Cidra. To the south is the José del Carmen Ramírez National Park with which it shares the highest peaks in the Cordillera Central, namely Pico Duarte, La Pelona and Pico Yaque. The most important rivers in the country originate from this IBA, including Yaque del Norte, Jagua, Bao, Amina, Guayubín, Mao, and Cenovi. The park is adjacent to small communities in Jarabacoa, San José de Las Matas, and Santiago Rodríguez districts.

Birds

This IBA supports populations of 31 (of the 34) Hispaniolan EBA restricted-range species. It is particularly significant for threatened species associated with montane and pine forests such as the Endangered Bay-breasted Cuckoo Coccyzus rufigularis, La Selle Thrush Turdus swalesi and Hispaniolan Crossbill Loxia megaplagia, and the Vulnerable White-winged Warbler Xenoligea montana, Golden Swallow Tachycineta euchrysea and (Eastern) Chat Tanager Calyptophilus fragivorus (fragivorus). The Vulnerable Hispaniolan Parakeet Aratinga chloroptera and Hispaniolan Amazon Amazona ventralis also occur, and the IBA is a winter refuge for migratory species such as Vulnerable Bicknell’s Thrush Catharus bicknelli.

Other biodiversity

Mammals include the Endangered Hispaniolan solenodon Solenodon paradoxus and Vulnerable Hispaniolan hutia Plagiodontia aedium. This is also one of the few areas where the endemic pine Pinus occidentalis occurs.

Conservation

The Armando Bermúdez National Park was created in 1956 and ratified in 2000 and 2004. The park is mostly used for conservation and research, although there is some agriculture. Pico Duarte is the primary “ecological” destination in the country. Popular visitor activities include hiking, camping, rafting and birdwatching. Local communities are actively involved in the area’s management and conservation and generate income through ecotourism activities such as donkey rides and guided tours. The IBA has five visitor centres and a small eco-lodge. Main threats include agricultural expansion, cattle grazing, invasive alien species, fuelwood and timber extraction, dove hunting, fires, and rural infrastructure development. There are proposals to develop hydro-electric plants in the area.
Sierra de Neyba IBA is north of Lago Enriquillo (IBA DO005) and from the town of Galván it crosses into Haiti under the name of “Montagnes du Trou d’Eau”. It extends south-east among the valleys of El Cercado, Hondo Valle, and Hoya de Enriquillo, descending gradually to the valley of the Rio Yaque del Sur. The San Juan and Neyba valleys divide this IBA from the Cordillera Central and Sierra de Bahoruco respectively. The Sierra de Neyba is composed of limestone and now supports little primary forest. What does remain includes open pine forest (c.1% of the area), evergreen broadleaf forest, and dry forest (c.26% of the area). Nearly all forest below 1,600 m has been cut.

**Birds**

This IBA supports populations of 29 (of the 34) Hispaniolan EBA restricted-range species. It is particularly significant for the Endangered Bay-breasted Cuckoo Coccyzus rufipalmis and La Selle Thrush Turdus svalesi, and the Vulnerable White-winged Warbler Xenoligea montana, Golden Swallow Tachycineta euryclea and (Eastern) Chat Tanager Calyptophilus frugivorus (frugivorus). The Vulnerable Hispaniolan Parakeet Aratinga chloroptera was abundant but may have been extirpated due to poaching. The Critically Endangered Ridgway’s Hawk Buteo ridgwayi may possibly still occur.

**Other biodiversity**

The Critically Endangered Eleutherodactylus parabates and the locally endemic E. nottiode occur along with nine other endemic amphibians. Reptiles are represented by 39 island endemics including the locally endemic lizard Anolis plumatus. Mammals include the Endangered Hispaniolan solenodon Solenodon paradoxus and Vulnerable Hispaniolan hutia Plagiodontia aedium. The flora includes over 170 endemics.

**Conservation**

The Sierra de Neyba National Park was created in 1995 (with boundaries set in 2004). Little conservation action has been undertaken, and there are numerous information gaps. Nevertheless, there are 24 park staff and a number of local conservation committees. Recreational activities include hiking, horse riding, mountain bikes, camping, agro-ecotourism, and birdwatching. Threats include slash-and-burn agriculture and expansion, livestock farming, charcoal production and logging. Landslides and floods are common. Illegal hunting of doves and trafficking of the parrot and parakeet are traditional local practices. Almost 40% of the park’s dry forest area has been affected by shifting agriculture and other activities, resulting in erosion and habitat degradation. Uncontrolled immigration from Haiti is a serious problem.

Lago Enriquillo IBA is in the Neyba Valley between Independencia and Bahoruco provinces, south-western Dominican Republic. It comprises a closed system of hypersaline wetlands in Hoya de Enriquillo (40 m below sea-level), and receives waters from the Sierra de Neyba and Bahoruco mountain ranges, respectively to the north and south of the lake. Lago Enriquillo is flanked by marshy areas such as at Caño Boca de Cachón and Villa Jaragua. This is the largest lake in the insular Caribbean, with a surface area of 256 km² and a maximum depth of 24 m. It contains three islands, the largest being Isla Cabritos (24 km²), and Islaita and Barbarita which connect to the lake shore when water levels drop.

**Birds**

This IBA is an important wetland site, supporting large numbers of waterbirds including hundreds of Caribbean Flamingos Phoenicopterus ruber, and ibises, egrets, herons and shorebirds. The Vulnerable West Indian Whistling-duck Dendrocygna arborea occurs. The areas adjacent to the lake support 14 (of the 34) Hispaniolan EBA restricted-range species, including the Vulnerable Hispaniolan Amazon Amazona ventralis and White-necked Crow Corvus leucognaphalus.

**Other biodiversity**

This IBA supports the country’s only remaining viable population of the Vulnerable American crocodile Crocodylus acutus. The Critically Endangered Ricord’s iguana Cyclura ricordi and Vulnerable rhinoceros iguana C. cornuta both occur. A rich ichthyofauna including Limia sulphurophila which is endemic to the lake.

**Conservation**

Isla Cabritos was declared as a national park in 1974, but it was not until 1996 that Lago Enriquillo and the surrounding marshy areas were incorporated into it. Lago Enriquillo and Isla Cabritos National Park is one of the core zones of the Jaragua-Bahoruco-Enriquillo Biosphere Reserve and was also Hispaniola’s first Ramsar site. It is primarily used for fishing, aquaculture, and agriculture. However, the IBAs ecological integrity is threatened by cattle ranching, unsustainable fishing practices, hunting and capture of flamingos and crocodiles, destruction of vegetation, and the canalisation and deviation of water for irrigation and associated activities. In addition, the use of pesticides pollutes both the soil and water, and is impacting the preferred habitats of waterbirds and crocodiles. This IBA features key places for recreation and wildlife observation with great potential for sustainable tourism, conservation, research, and environmental education.
DO006 Sierra de Bahoruco

- **COORDINATES**: 18°10'N 71°31'W
- **ADMIN REGION**: South-western Region
- **AREA**: 112,488 ha
- **ALTITUDE**: 300–2,367 m
- **HABITAT**: Pine forest, mid-montane grasslands, cloud forest, humid broadleaf forest, semi-arid forest, semi-deciduous forest, dry forest, thorny brush

### Site description
The Sierra de Bahoruco IBA is in south-west of the Dominican Republic, between the provinces of Pedernales, Independencia and Barahona. It is bordered to the north by Hoya de Enriquillo, to the south by Jaragua National Park (IBA DO007) and Barahona, and to the east by Jimani. To the west it connects with Haiti’s Massif de la Selle. Sierra de Bahoruco comprises an eastern section (represented in IBA DO009) and a western section embraced by this IBA. The highest peak is Loma del Toro, and the vegetation is a diverse range of forest types across a wide variety of life zones.

### Birds
This IBA supports 32 (of the 34) Hispaniolan EBA restricted-range species. Threatened birds include the Endangered Black-capped Petrel *Pterodroma hasitata* (small numbers breed in the IBA), Bay-breasted Cuckoo *Coccyzus rufipennis*, La Selle Thrush *Zviradus swalesi* and the largest known population of Hispaniolan Crossbill *Loxia megaplaga*. The IBA provides vital wintering habitat for 21 Neotropical migratory species including the Vulnerable Bicknell’s Thrush *Catharus bicknelli*, the Critically Endangered Ridgway’s Hawk *Buteo ridgwayi* occurred until 1994.

### Other biodiversity
Threatened mammals include the Endangered Hispaniolan solenodon *Solenodon paradoxus* and Vulnerable Hispaniolan hutia *Plagiodontia aedium*. Many *Eleutherodactylus* frogs occur, all of which are Critically Endangered or Endangered, including the locally endemic *E. rufifemoralis* (Critically Endangered). Reptiles include the Vulnerable rhinoceros iguana *Cyclura cornuta* and Hispaniolan slider *Trachemys decorata*.

### Conservation
Sierra de Bahoruco National Park was created in 1983 and its boundaries ratified by the Laws 64-00 and 202-04. It is one of the three core zones of the Jaragua-Bahoruco-Enriquillo Biosphere Reserve. The IBA contains important but unprotected sections in La Placa and Puerto Escondido. Activities include research, conservation, recreation and ecotourism. Main threats include agricultural expansion, introduced animals, forest fires, illegal logging, capture of parrot chicks and illegal hunting. Temporary settlement of illegal immigrants from Haiti moving through this area results in habitat damage and disturbances. Tree-nesting species are affected by the unsustainable removal of dead and diseased trees. Most of these problems are a result of weak park management and enforcement.

DO007 Jaragua National Park

- **COORDINATES**: 17°49'N 71°32'W
- **ADMIN REGION**: South-western Region
- **AREA**: 165,448 ha
- **ALTITUDE**: 0–331 m
- **HABITAT**: Dry forest, mangroves, coastal wetlands, coral reefs, offshore cays, sandy and rocky shore

### Site description
Jaragua National Park IBA is in the south-western corner of the Dominican Republic on the Barahona peninsula. It borders the Sierra Bahoruco IBA (DO006), and lies across the municipalities of Pedernales and Oviedo, close to the border with Haiti. Within the IBA are the Beata and Alto Velo islands, the Los Frailes and Piedra Negra cays, and Laguna Oviedo—a “Watchable Wildlife Pond” and a proposed Ramsar site. Surrounding communities are Juancho, La Colonia de Juancho, Oviedo, Los Tres Charcos, Manuel Goya, and Pedernales. About 4 km from Tres Charcos is Fondo Paradí, a popular birdwatching area and “Ecotourism Pilot Site”.

### Birds
This IBA is important for its wetlands and islands, although the forest harbours 18 (of the 34) Hispaniolan EBA restricted-range species including the Vulnerable Hispaniolan Amazon *Amazona ventralis*, Hispaniolan Parakeet *Aratinga chloroptera* and White-necked Crow *Corvus leucognaphalus*. The wetlands support more than 20,000 waterbirds including the Vulnerable West Indian Whistling-duck *Dendrocygna arborea* and regionally important populations of species including Caribbean Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber*. The Sooty Tern *Sterna fuscata* colony (80,000 pairs) on Isla Alto Velo is one of the largest in the Caribbean.

### Other biodiversity
Reptiles include the Critically Endangered Ricord’s iguana *Cyclura ricordi* and hawksbill turtle *Eretmochelys imbricata* and *Sphaerodactylus ariasae*—the smallest amniote vertebrate in the world. *Anolis altavetensis* is endemic to Isla Alto Velo. The IBA is an invertebrate hotspot including newly discovered species such as *Beatadesmus ivonneae*. The plants *Pseudophoenix ekmanii* (Critically Endangered), *Pimenta haitensis*, and *Coccothrinax ekmanii* are almost endemic to the IBA.

### Conservation
Jaragua National Park was declared in 1983 and its boundaries set in 1986. There have been attempts to modify the legal framework that protects it. Since 1989, Grupo Jaragua and SEMARENA have jointly managed the IBA, facilitating and coordinating local community conservation actions. Lands are used for conservation, research, recreation, nature tourism and education, but small-scale fishing, agriculture, and livestock farming is practised in neighbouring communities. Main threats to this IBA include the development of tourist projects (although the beaches are unsuitable for large-scale tourism), agricultural expansion, introduced species, land invasions, mining, hunting, fishing, and extraction of eggs and chicks of the parrots, parakeets and seabirds.
DO008 Laguna Cabral

COORDINATES 18°17′N 71°14′W
ADMIN REGION South-western Region
AREA 5,615 ha
ALTITUDE 0–92 m
HABITAT Wetlands, dry forest, dry scrub

Site description
Laguna Cabral IBA is located in the south-western region between the provinces of Barahona and Independencia, c.20 km inland from the Bahía de Neyba. Laguna Cabral is the largest freshwater wetland in the Dominican Republic, and the IBA includes the nearby wetlands of Laguneta Seca, and the Cristóbal and Peñón Viejo hills to the north. The IBA is surrounded by the communities of Cabral, Peñón, Cristóbal and La Lista. In the flat southern section of the IBA, plantains and coconuts are cultivated alongside pastures and other crops.

Birds
The IBA supports 12 (of the 34) Hispaniolan EBA restricted-range species, including the Vulnerable Hispaniolan Parakeet Aratinga chloroptera and Near Threatened Least Parauraque Siphoonorhis brevistri. However, it is for the waterbirds that this IBA is primarily significant. Huge (globally important) concentrations of duck have included counts of up to 90,000 Lesser Scaup Aythya affinis and 10,000 Ruddy Duck Oxyura jamaicensis. Up to 3,000 Near Threatened Caribbean Coot Fulica caribaea have also been recorded. Other duck present are American Wigeon Anas americana (up to 10,000), Blue-winged Teal A. discors (up to 25,000) and White-checked Pintail A. bahamensis (up to 22,000).

Other biodiversity
The Vulnerable toad Buffo guentheri, Hispaniolan slider Trachemys decorata and rhinoceros iguana Cyclura cornuta occur. The aquatic fauna of the lake includes crustaceans such as Palaeon pondafolium, the endemic fish including Nandopsis haitiensis and various species of the genera Limia and Gambusta. Eight plants are endemics, such as Justicia abeggi, Tournefortia sufraticosa, Neoabbottia paniculata, and Mulpylia micropetala.

Conservation
Laguna Cabral IBA was declared a Scientific Reserve in 1983 and a Wildlife Refuge in 1996. It has been proposed as a Ramsar site. Habitat loss has resulted from agricultural activities such as cattle ranching; the planting of non-timber species, fires, and felling trees for charcoal production is reported. Fish stocks have also diminished because of overfishing, the introduction of exotic species, and pesticide pollution. Additionally, natural aquatic systems have been altered through canalisation. Other threats include land invasion, illegal constructions, the hunting of turtles, iguanas, coots and the persecution of Caribbean Flamingo Phoenicopterus ruber. Among the proposed initiatives for the sustainable management and conservation of this site are ecotourism, environmental education, and monitoring.

DO009 Bahoruco Oriental

COORDINATES 18°10′N 71°10′W
ADMIN REGION South-western Region
AREA 2,964 ha
ALTITUDE 300–1,305 m
HABITAT Evergreen broadleaf cloud forest

Site description
Bahoruco Oriental IBA is in south-west of the Dominican Republic, between the provinces of Pedernales, Independencia and Barahona. The Sierra de Bahoruco is the country’s southernmost mountain range, and comprises an eastern section (this IBA) and a western section (represented in IBA DO006). Bahoruco Oriental IBA embraces the mountainous part of the province of Barahona, bounded to the north by the Valle de Neyba, to the east by the Caribbean Sea, to the south by the Nizaito river valley, and to the west by the valleys of Polo and La Cueva. The landscape is a mosaic of primary forest (including Hispaniola’s only magnolia Magnolia hamori forest, and the largest Prestoea montana forest), secondary forests, vast coffee plantations, farming and secondary vegetation areas.

Birds
This IBA supports populations of 26 (of the 34) Hispaniolan EBA restricted-range species including the Vulnerable Grey-headed Quail-dove Geotrygon caniceps leucometopia, Hispaniolan Amazon Amazona ventralis, Hispaniolan Parakeet Aratinga chloroptera, White-necked Crow Corvus leucognaphalus, Golden Swallow Tachycineta euchrysea and (Western) Chat Tanager Calyptophilus frugivorus (terraitor). The Vulnerable Bicknell’s Thrush Catharus bicknelli has been recorded, but not in significant numbers.

Other biodiversity
Frogs include the Critically Endangered Eleutherodactylus rufifemoralis, the Endangered E. armstrongi and Vulnerable E. audanti. Endemic reptiles include Anolis bahorucoensis, Chamaelionops barbouri and Wemorena haetiana. Threatened mammals are represented by the Endangered Hispaniolan solenodon Solenodon paradoxus. Rare Lepidopterys orchids are also present, some restricted to microhabitats within the IBA.

Conservation
Bahoruco Oriental IBA was declared the Biological Reserve Padre Miguel Domingo Fuerte (Bahoruco Oriental) in 1996 (with boundaries ratified in 2000). The management category was changed into Wildlife Refuge/Natural Monument in 2008. Land use is mainly for agriculture. However, research and rural tourism activities are also carried out in this area, as well as projects and initiatives aimed at social, economic, and environmental sustainability. This IBA has suffered multiple impacts since the 1930s and 1940s from agriculture, cattle ranching, deforestation, slash-and-burn practices, mining (silica and “Larimar” or blue pectolite), and road construction. Other threats include bird hunting, extraction and illegal trade in flora (e.g. ferns) and fauna (e.g. parrot and parakeet chicks), introduced and invasive flora and fauna, as well as natural and intentionally lit forest fires.
Site description

Sierra Martín García IBA is in south-west Dominican Republic between the provinces of Azua and Barahona, next to Puerto Viejo. This limestone massif emerges from the sea opposite the city of Barahona, at the north-east end of the Bahia of Neyba, and runs from Puerto Alejandro to Punta Martín García. There is evidence of Taino (the original island settlers) presence in local caves, especially in the town of Barreral, where plant fossils and the oldest Taino settlements have been found.

Birds

This IBA supports 23 (of the 34) Hispaniolan EBA restricted-range species including the Vulnerable (Eastern) Chat Tanager Calyptophilus frugivorus (frugivorus), White-winged Warbler Xenoligea montana, Hispaniolan Amazon Amazona ventralis and (wintering) Bicknell’s Thrush Catharus bicknelli. The Near Threatened Least Pauraque Siphonopterus brevistri is present. Poor management, regulation and enforcement resulted in the loss of the Critically Endangered Ridgway’s Hawk Buteo ridgwayi from this IBA.

Other biodiversity

This is a key site for the conservation of rare endemic plants such as Arcooa gonavensis, Cnidioscolus acranus, and Fuertesia domingensis. The palm Coccothrinax boschiana is endemic to the sierra and forms stands known locally as “guanales”.

Conservation

Sierra Martín García IBA has been legally protected at a national park since 1996. Its boundaries were defined in 2004 and an administrator was assigned for the first time in 2007. Local residents use this area for subsistence activities such as slash-and-burn agriculture, charcoal production and fishing. Other activities include limited scientific research, birdwatching and ecotourism. Threats include limestone extraction, intentional fires, excessive cattle and goat grazing, extraction of sand and gravel, as well as hunting of parrots and iguanas. Feral dogs, cats, and mongoose Herpestes auropunctatus prey on iguana eggs and juveniles and presumably birds. Human activities followed by the effects of rain and wind have removed vegetation and ground cover, resulting in a deteriorating, eroded and degraded landscape in which desertification is a real possibility. This IBA has been poorly studied and there are few conservation projects or actions being implemented.

Site description

Valle Nuevo IBA embraces the highlands at Alto de la Bandería hill, located in Constanza La Vega province, north-central Dominican Republic. It is surrounded by the provinces of Monseñor Nويل, La Vega, Azua and San José de Ocoa and is bordered to the east by Loma La Humeadora (DO015). With five river basins and more than 700 rivers, Valle Nuevo is an important catchment area supplying water for the provinces of the northern and southern regions, and Santo Domingo. The area supports a range of forest types including pine, broadleaf, cloud and Prestoea montana forest. Approximately 20 communities with a total population of 3,500 inhabitants live within this IBA.

Birds

This IBA supports populations of 27 (of the 34) Hispaniolan EBA restricted-range species including the Endangered Hispaniolan Crossbill Loxia megaplaga and La Selle Thrush Turdus swalesi, and the Vulnerable Hispaniolan Amazon Amazona ventralis, Hispaniolan Parakeet Aratinga chloroptera, Golden Swallow Tachycineta euchrysea, (Eastern) Chat Tanager Calyptophilus frugivorus (frugivorus), White-winged Warbler Xenoligea montana. It also provides wintering habitat for Neotropical migrants such as the Vulnerable Bicknell’s Thrush Catharus bicknelli.

Other biodiversity

Mammals such as the Endangered Hispaniolan solenodon Solenodon paradoxus and Vulnerable Hispaniolan hutia Plagiodonta aedium occur, and there are 29 endemic species of reptiles including Anolis aliniger and Cœlestes darlingtoni. There are 138 endemic plant species, including Magnolia pallescens. This is a critical area for Vegaea pungens and is important for the ferns Cyathea insignis and C. harrissii.

Conservation

Valle Nuevo IBA was declared as a restricted area (zona vedada) in 1961, a scientific reserve in 1983, and a national park in 1996. Lands have traditionally been used for forest exploitation, agriculture, and cattle ranching. Intentional fires have altered the natural fire regime of this IBA, which in 1983 suffered the worst forest fire in the history of the country. In recent years, nearly 5,000 ha have been lost to agricultural expansion and an additional 4,500 ha have been affected by forest fires. Other threats include agrochemical pollution, inadequate waste and waterway management, erosion, landslides, and road construction. All these threats affect biodiversity, ecological dynamics and succession, as well as water quality. Programs to develop the site’s ecotourism potential are being implemented.
**DO012 Ebano Verde Scientific Reserve**

**Site description**
Ebano Verde Scientific Reserve IBA is in north-central Dominican Republic on the north-eastern slope of the Cordillera Central, La Vega province, and municipality of Jarabacoa. The IBA contains the catchment areas of the Jimenoa, Camú, Jatuvey and Jayaco rivers. It is named after the local name (Ebano Verde) for the species *Prestoea montana*, the namesake species of the IBA. It also supports 156 species of endemic spermatophytes, and orchids are both prominent and highly endemic, with 81 species.

**Birds**
This IBA provides habitat for 24 (of the 34) Hispaniolan EBA restricted-range species, and is critical for globally threatened birds including the Vulnerable Grey-headed Quail-dove *Geotrygon caniceps leucometopia*, Golden Swallow *Tachycineta euchrysea*, White-winged Warbler *Xenoligea montana* and (Eastern) Chat Tanager *Calyptophilus frugivorus* (frugivorous). The Hispaniolan endemic race of Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis antillarum* occurs in the IBA.

**Other biodiversity**
Globally threatened frogs include the Endangered Hispaniolan giant tree-frog *Osteopilus vastus*, *Eleutherodactylus auriculatoides* and *E. pituinus*. The rare lizard *Anolis insolitus* and the endemic fish *Poecilia dominicensis* are present in this IBA. It also supports 156 species of endemic spermatophytes, and orchids are both prominent and highly endemic, with 81 species.

**Conservation**
Ebano Verde Scientific Reserve was created in 1989, ratified in 2000 and validated in 2004. Major threats to this IBA include introduced flora and fauna, livestock farming, intentional forest fires, timber extraction and trafficking, the capture of bird chicks, natural phenomena, habitat destruction and modification due to agricultural and urban expansion. Despite the IBAs restricted public use, it has huge potential for ecotourism. Activities such as birdwatching, hiking, enjoyment of landscapes and panoramic views are all activities enjoyed in the IBA. The Arroyazo Biological Station has acted as a central office for research conducted at this IBA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coordinates</th>
<th>19°04'N 70°32'W</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admin Region</td>
<td>Northern Region (Cibao)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>2,993 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altitude</td>
<td>900–1,565 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitat</td>
<td>Broadleaf cloud forest, riparian forest, secondary forest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**DO013 Loma Quita Espuela**

**Site description**
Loma Quita Espuela IBA is c.15 km from the north-east of the city of San Francisco de Macoris in northern Dominican Republic. It lies on the eastern slope of the Cordillera Septentrional in the provinces Maria Trinidad Sanchez and Duarte, and it includes the areas of Quita Espuela and La Canela. This IBA includes five hills: Quita Espuela is the highest and at the centre of the IBA (985 m), Vieja (730 m), El Quemao (565 m), La Canela (560 m) and Firme Los Sabrosos (510 m). The forested slopes of these hills protect the sources of several streams that supply water to a number of nearby towns.

**Birds**
This IBA supports populations of 19 (of the 34) Hispaniolan EBA restricted-range species including the Vulnerable Hispaniolan Amazon *Amazona ventralis* and Hispaniolan Parakeet *Aratinga chloroptera*. The IBA is important for Neotropical migrants including the Vulnerable Bicknell’s Thrush *Catharus bicknelli*.

**Other biodiversity**
Mammals such as the Endangered Hispaniolan solenodon *Solenodon paradoxus* and Vulnerable Hispaniolan hutia *Plagiodontia aedium* have been reported. The tree *Mora abbotti* is endemic to the Cordillera Septentrional and occurs within the IBA.

**Conservation**
Loma Quita Espuela is scientific reserve that was established in 1992. It is managed by the Office of the Subsecretary of Protected Areas and Biodiversity and the Loma Quita Espuela Foundation. Main uses include farming, charcoal production, research, conservation, ecotourism, local pilgrimages and recreation. Among the threats to this IBA are habitat loss related to forest fires, slash-and-burn farming, agricultural expansion, charcoal production, cattle grazing, and road and path construction. Other threats are related to extraction of flora and fauna, bird hunting, invasive alien fauna, and pollution of water sources. This IBA faces problems with land invasions, human settlements and management conflicts with neighbouring communities regarding land tenure and protected area boundaries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coordinates</th>
<th>19°23'N 70°08'W</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admin Region</td>
<td>Northern Region (Cibao)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>9,247 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altitude</td>
<td>100–985 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitat</td>
<td>Subtropical moist forest, cloud forest, rainforest, riparian forest, wetlands</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scientific Reserve</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SITE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Province</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Municipality</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IBA</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Altitude</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Habitat</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Admin Region</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COORDINATES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Restricted-range Birds</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Congregatory Birds</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Congregatory Birds</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Site description**

Loma Guaconejo IBA is at the eastern end of the Cordillera Septentrional in the provinces of María Trinidad Sánchez and Duarte. It lies east of Loma Quita Espuela IBA (DO013) and is named after the local name (Guaconejo) of the plant *Stevensia ebracteata*. This IBA embraces the Rio Helechal catchment area, which in turns feeds the Boba and Nagua rivers that finally supply water to the municipalities of Nagua and El Factor. Loma Guaconejo retains one of the best rivers that finally supply water to the municipalities of Nagua and El Factor. Loma Guaconejo has been seriously disturbed by farming and livestock farming, deficient environmental sanitation, erosion, shifting agriculture, fires, trafficking of timber, livestock farming, deficient environmental sanitation, unemployment, low levels of education, and solid waste accumulation.

**Conservation**

Loma Guaconejo was designated as a scientific reserve in 1996 and its boundaries were defined in 2004. The area is jointly managed by the State Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources and the Society for the Integral Development of the Northeast (SODIN). The land is used for conservation, agriculture, and recreation. The Cuesta Colorada Ecotourism and Environmental Capacity Centre is also located in this area. SODIN has facilitated self-management and participatory processes, especially in María Trinidad Sánchez province. Since 1995 it has worked toward sustainable management of the IBAs natural resources. Currently the society is collaborating with local guides and Peace Corps Volunteers in developing an environmental education program for the buffer zone. Some threats to the area include water pollution, sand extraction, erosion, shifting agriculture, fires, trafficking of timber, livestock farming, deficient environmental sanitation, unemployment, low levels of education, and solid waste accumulation.

**Birds**

This IBA is significant for supporting a large wintering population of the Vulnerable Bicknell’s Thrush *Catharus bicknelli*. A range of other Neotropical migratory birds (including various *Dendroica* warbler species) winter in these forests. The avifauna has been poorly studied and other key bird species probably occur.

**Other biodiversity**

Four endemic frogs include the Critically Endangered *Eleutherodactylus parabates* and *E. inoptatus*. The forests include a large population of *Calyptrona plumeriana*, intermixed with the endemic *Tabebuia ricardii*, *Plumeria magnifica* and other trees considered exclusive to Loma Quita Espuela and Los Haitises (IBA DO018).

**Site description**

Loma La Humeadora IBA is on the south-easternmost slope of the Cordillera Central, 10 km to the south-west of the municipality of Villa Altagracia and to the north-east of San Cristóbal city. This IBA comprises Loma La Humeadora, with an area of c.84 km² and a surrounding group of lower-elevation hills which support forest remnants. Average annual rainfall is 2,300 mm and numerous rivers and streams originate within the area, representing an important hydrological resource for the surrounding area.

**Other biodiversity**

Restricted-range Hispaniolan plant endemics include *Pricramnia dyctioneura*, *Podocarpus hispaniolensis*, *Urera domingensis*, *Omphalea ekmanii*, and *Piper luteobaccum* (20% of the plant species are Hispaniolan endemics). Species previously considered exclusive to Lomas La Sal and La Golondrina (to the north of the IBA), such as *Chaetocarpus domingensis*, *Cinnamomum alatini*, and *Gonocalyx tetramerus* have been found in Loma La Humeadora.

**Conservation**

In 1992 Loma La Humeadora IBA was declared as a restricted area (zona vedada) to protect the streams and rivers that originate in this area. In 1996 it was declared as national park (which was ratified in 2000, with boundaries set in 2004). Loma La Humeadora has been seriously disturbed by farming activities, slash-and-burn practices, firewood extraction and charcoal production. Only remnants of primary forest remain. This affects the landscape, the fauna and flora, the environmental services such as water production, and as a result, the general well-being of the human populations that depend on this resource. Apart from scheduled visits to fulfill management tasks and sporadic visits by birdwatchers, conservation actions within the IBA are scarce.
Site description
Honduras IBA is in the south-eastern region of the Dominican Republic, c.15–20 km north of Bani (in Peravia province, and the municipality of Matadero). About 90% of this IBA supports montane forest, although little has been documented concerning this IBA so details are unclear. There are also cultivated areas within the IBA.

Birds
This IBA supports populations of 16 (of the 34) Hispaniolan EBA restricted-range species including the Vulnerable (Eastern) Chat Tanager Calyptothorax frugivorus (frugivorus), and others such as Hispaniolan Lizard-cuckoo Saurothera longirostris, Ashy-faced Owl Tyto glaucops, Hispaniolan Nightjar Caprimulgus ekmani, Antillean Piculet Nesocites micromegas, Palmchat Dulus dominicus, Green-tailed Warbler Microgliea palustris and Black-crowned Palm-tanager Phaenicophilus palmarum. The Vulnerable Bicknell’s Thrush Catharus bicknelli has been recorded, but numbers are unknown.

Other biodiversity
New species, such as the spider Pozonia andujari have been reported, but the flora and fauna are poorly known and need further work.

Conservation
Honduras IBA is a mixture of private and state owned lands, and currently (2008) has no legal protection. Detailed information regarding threats to the IBA is lacking, but during recent exploratory visits human settlements, introduced animals, and the evidence of agriculture (over c.10% of the area) were observed in the area. Threats to the key species in the IBA are unknown and this requires further research. As well as the area’s agricultural tradition; some lands (35% of the area) are used for research, recreation, and bird tourism, whilst others are unexploited (55% of the area). The Dominican Republic IBA Program is exploring the possibility of joint initiatives with the private sector to protect the remaining critical forests and perform more thorough research in this IBA. It is also facilitating discussions with the State Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources about potential protection mechanisms for the site (e.g. Private Reserve, Reserve or Protected Municipal Area).

Site description
Bahía de las Calderas IBA is located in the Peravia province, in the south-eastern region of the Dominican Republic, about 115 km south-west of Santo Domingo. It is on the peninsula of Las Calderas, which is primarily covered by a hyper-saline pond—Salado del Muerto—used for salt extraction. Several towns are present in Las Calderas as well as a naval base. Bahía de las Calderas IBA also includes the dunes of Bani, that stretch 15 km from the town of Matanzas to Puerto Hermoso.

Birds
This IBA is significant for its populations of the Vulnerable West Indian Whistling-duck Dendrocygna arborea and Near Threatened Hispaniolan Palm Crow Corvus palmarum. A wide diversity of waterbirds use this IBA and nesting species include Snowy Plover Charadrius alexandrinus, Wilson’s Plover Charadrius wilsonia, Least Tern Sterna antillarum and Willet Catoptrophorus semipalmatus. The Near Threatened Piping Plover Charadrius melodus has been recorded in small numbers. Many rare and vagrant species records come from this IBA.

Other biodiversity
There have been reports of the Vulnerable rhinoceros iguana Cyclura cornuta within the IBA. Many other reptile species frequent the area. The ichthyofauna is represented by the endemic species Limia perugiae and Cyprinodon spp., and others such as Elops saurus, Megalops atlanticus, Gerres cinereus and Centropomus undecimalis. Simarouba berteroana is a dune-stabilising tree endemic to this region.

Conservation
Bahía de Las Calderas IBA has been legally protected as Dunas de las Calderas Natural Monument since 1996. Activities in this area include small-scale agriculture, aquaculture, fishing, scientific research, birdwatching, recreation, and traditional tourism. Mangroves along the lagoon have been used for charcoal production and firewood. Threats to this IBA include fires, introduced and feral animals, extraction of non-timber vegetation, and sand extraction for commercial and construction purposes. Other threats include water drainage and canalisation; housing, commercial and industrial development; land invasions, and human settlements. Furthermore, recreational activities such as the use of 4x4 vehicles and beach tourism result in solid waste pollution, disturbance and habitat damage. Ecotourism is promoted through the construction of trails and student visits.
### Site description

Los Haitises IBA is located in the north-eastern region of the country, and extends from the southern portion of the Cibao Oriental Valley to the town of Sabana de la Mar, south-west of the Bahía de Samaná. The IBA is a national park, and lies across the provinces of Monte Plata, Hato Mayor and Samaná. Due to its size, the park has been divided into two administrative sectors, an eastern sector that includes Sabana de la Mar and adjacent areas, and a southern sector that includes Monte Plata and San Francisco de Macorís. The IBA embraces areas of limestone karst (supporting moist broadleaf forest), secondary forest, agricultural areas, and the Dominican Republic’s largest area of mangroves. The park offers a vast cave system with pictograms and petroglyphs.

### Birds

This IBA supports populations of 20 (of the 34) Hispaniolan EBA restricted-range species. However, it is as the last known refuge for the Critically Endangered Ridgway’s Hawk *Buteo ridgwayi* that this IBA is significant. There are about 50 pairs within the IBA, but productivity is low and the species is becoming scarce, even within Los Haitises. Other threatened birds include the Vulnerable Hispaniolan Amazon *Amazona ventralis*, White-necked Crow *Corvus cyanus*, and Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*. The Endangered Hispaniolan solenodon *Solenodon paradoxus* and West Indian manatee *Trichechus manatus* occur within the IBA.

### Other biodiversity

The Vulnerable fresh water turtle *Trachemys decorata* is present. More studies on the flora and the fauna of this site are needed.

### Conservation

Laguna Limón IBA was declared a scientific natural reserve in 1983, a strict natural reserve in 1995, and a wildlife refuge in 2004. The surrounding lands are mostly privately owned. Activities around and within the lagoon include fishing, aquaculture, and farming, as well as coconut and rice cultivation. Some threats to this region include agrochemical pollution, disturbance by cattle, extraction of sand and gravel for construction, unsustainable hunting and fishing, disturbance from (tourist) motor boats, and natural and intentional fires. Another threat is the presence of the invasive aquatic plant *Hydrilla verticillata*. Changes in water levels within the lagoon appear to be the result of deforestation in the surrounding uplands leading to increased runoff and sedimentation. Conservation and research efforts are being performed through waterbird (duck) counts in the area.
Del Este National Park IBA is on the south coast at the easternmost end of the Dominican Republic. The park covers most of the peninsula that extends from the towns of Boca de Yuma and Bayahibe in the municipality of San Rafael del Yuma. It also includes the 110-km² Isla Saona (and the nearby 22-ha Isla Catalinita) from which it is separated by the Catuano channel. The park embraces coastal habitats, lagoons, mangroves, scrub forest and extensive woodlands. The park offers several tourist attractions such as its excellent beaches and evidence of the country’s pre-Columbian heritage. It is the most visited protected area in the country.

Birds
This IBA supports 18 (of the 34) Hispaniolan EBA restricted-range species including the Vulnerable Hispaniolan Amazon Amazona ventralis and White-necked Crow Corvus leucognaphalus. Other globally threatened species include the Vulnerable Bicknell’s Thrush Catharus bicknelli, and the Near Threatened Least Pauraque Siphonorhis brewsteri and White-crowned Pigeon Patagioenas leucocephala. Isla Saona supports the country’s largest breeding colony (200 pairs) of Magnificent Frigatebird Fregata magnificens. Other seabirds nest on Isla Saona (and nearby Isla Catalina), but numbers are unknown.

Other biodiversity
The Endangered Hispaniolan solenodon Solenodon paradoxus and Vulnerable Hispaniolan hutia Plagiodontia aedium occur, as does the Critically Endangered hawksbill turtle Eretmochelys imbricata and the Endangered frog Eleutherodactylus probolaeus. The endemic freshwater fish Limia perugiae is present, as are many endemic (and threatened) plants.

Conservation
Del Este National Park was declared a protected area in 1975. Its boundaries have been considerably altered by law. Activities in the area include conservation, research and birdwatching. Approximately 8% of this IBA has been affected by agriculture (e.g. coconut crops), mostly on Isla Saona. The main threat to this IBA relates to the 260,000 tourists that visit the park (mostly Isla Saona) each year. The modification of the park boundaries has rendered the coastal area vulnerable to unsustainable tourist development. The IBA, it is still vulnerable to real estate speculation due to land tenure irregularities. Other threats include introduced species, indiscriminate and unsustainable fishing, hunting of pigeons, intentional forest fires, land invasions and illegal settlements inside the protected area, extraction and trafficking of parrot chicks.

Punta Cana IBA is at the easternmost tip of the Dominican Republic, in the province of Altagracia and north-east of Del Este National Park (DO020). The town of Bávaro lies to the north of the IBA, and to the east are the Mona channel and the Caribbean Sea. Little information has been documented concerning the vegetation or habitats of this IBA. However, it appears to comprise lowland moist forests, shrubland, pastureland and urban areas. Within the site is the Ojos Indigenous Reserve and Ecological Park, which is mostly used for recreation and tourism.

Birds
This IBA supports 13 (of the 34) Hispaniolan EBA restricted-range species including Vulnerable Hispaniolan Amazon Amazona ventralis. The area supports many other native and migratory birds (116 species have been recorded) such as the

Other biodiversity
Nothing recorded.

Conservation
Punta Cana IBA currently (2008) has no official protection status. Lands are privately owned, including the 610-ha Ojos Indigenous Reserve and Ecological Park, which was donated in 1994 by the Punta Cana Resort and Club to the Punta Cana Ecological Foundation. In general, main uses include tourism, recreation, and agriculture. There is no detailed information of threats to this IBA, but since it is located in one of the most popular tourist zones in the country, loss of habitat for tourist development could be considered as one of its main threats.