

Project Update: December 2018

Over the past several months, our monitoring efforts and data collection have continued uninterrupted. This effort is on track to produce one of the most complete records of a plant-frugivore network in any tropical forest ecosystem to date, allowing us to gain unique insight into the role that seed dispersal mutualisms play in structuring biodiversity. In recent days, we have engaged local communities through several events. First, Spencer attended a field trip in a remote farming village in Dajabon province with the Virginia Society of Ornithology in collaboration with US-based non-profit, Earth Sangha. The latter organisation runs a project reforesting coffee farms with native trees propagated in a local nursery, presenting important opportunities to exchange knowledge about the management of these projects. Back in Jarabacoa, our team organised and completed the town's inaugural Audubon Christmas Bird Count. With the participation of 24 surveyors, we documented 51 species on the day!



Spencer (centre, low) and the other Virginia ornithologists pose for a group photo with Earth Sangha staff, local hosts, and facilitators.



Our Christmas Bird Count was a resounding success, thanks to the help of many dedicated observers! Many of these participants were first-time birders from the Environmental Ministry's Institute in Jarabacoa using borrowed binoculars, all of whom reported seeing a species that they never knew existed before. ©Yulissa Nardi Matias.