

the Commonwealth of Dominica, and Wildlife Preservation Trust International (WPTI) of the United States to study the Imperial or Sisserou Parrot (*Amazona imperialis*), and the Jaco or Red-necked Parrot (*A. arausiaca*), both endemic to Dominica.

In 1995, there was a misunderstanding between the two parties resulting in the withdrawal of WPTI. Nevertheless, the Division continued its research on the two parrot species, collecting valuable data up through the present. The program is intended to continue for the next 2-3 years. Summarization of observations of pre-laying, incubation, nestling, and fledging activities are underway.

#### CONCLUSION

Whereas the Forestry and Wildlife Division has some capacity

to organize bird research work, effectively enforce the laws, and conduct education and conservation programs, the Division's staff is limited in their capacities to complete tasks. The Division is in need of technical training at the Bachelor's and Master's degree levels and training of junior staff at the intermediate level (i.e., Eastern Caribbean Institute of Agriculture and Forestry [ECIAF], Rangers Certificate and Diploma Certificate courses). Whereas many research needs could be identified and projects developed, financing still remains a major problem. Although these limitations continue to plague the extent and depth of the Forestry and Wildlife Division's research and conservation efforts, the Division perseveres, thanks to the efforts, commitment, and dedication of our field officers. The Division would welcome any level of assistance possible.

### ISLAND REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

#### JAMAICA REPORT

SUZANNE DAVIS

Representative for Jamaica

Indeed, the past year has been one of rapid growth for the environmental and conservation movement in Jamaica. A steady interest in environmental and conservation issues is finally gaining momentum at all levels of society.

Commitment to the protection of Jamaica's natural resources by the island's Government has been indicated through:

- (1) The development of a proposed policy for a National System of Parks and Protected Areas.
- (2) A second revision of the Wildlife Protection Act.
- (3) The development of the Jamaica National Environmental Act Plan (JANEAP) 1995.

The Natural Resources Conservation Authority (NRCA), which has the responsibility to effectively administer the policies and plans related to the proper use of Jamaica's natural resources, recently published the Jamaica State of the Environment (SOE) Report. The report, which will be published on an annual basis, aims to provide readily available information about Jamaica's environment. The SOE Report was prepared in collaboration with other regulatory and resource management agencies, as well as with academic research institutions and non-government organizations (NGOs).

At the NGO level there has also been recognition of the increasing need for information sharing and collaboration among organizations. The National Environmental Societies Trust, in December 1995, combined its Annual General Meeting with a conference, at which NGO representatives

presented papers on various areas of interest. The conference was well supported and it is hoped it will become an annual event. Another first was the staging of Green Expo hosted by the Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust. The Expo provided an opportunity for NGOs, the private sector, and Government to produce an impressive display of environmental and technical information and services.

Where has the ornithology movement fallen in this process of change? With the acquisition of an office in October 1995, the Gosse Bird Club is now better equipped to spearhead the study and conservation of birds and their habitats. The office, which is based at 93 Old Hope Road, Kingston 6, was obtained through the Institutional Strengthening Project, which was funded by Green Fund.

The Club's part-time Office Director and Secretary have facilitated improved net-working among Gosse Bird Club members and with environmental agencies. This welcomed administrative support has been accompanied by an overwhelming demand on the Club's human and physical resources.

The Gosse Bird Club continues to contribute to national decisions on ornithological issues through its collaboration with the NRCA by representation on the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee of the Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park.

The Club is:

- (1) currently responsible for the project, *Inventory of Birds in the Blue and John Crow Mountains*. The Project Leader



*Island Representative Reports — Jamaica (continued)*

is Marcia Mundle and the funding agencies are the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and USAID.

- (2) partially responsible for the study of the *Biology, Distribution, and Natural History of the Jamaican Amazon Parrots*. The Project Leader is Susan Koenig (Wildlife Preservation Trust International [WPTI]) and the funding agencies are WPTI and Environmental Foundation of Jamaica.
- (3) providing support for the *Study of Effects of Habitat Fragmentation on Bird Communities in the Buffer Zone of the Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park*. The researcher is Suzanne Davis (University of the West

Indies) and the funding agencies are NFWF and USAID.

Schools and community groups have begun to value birds through wildlife education and the club has been flooded by requests for talks, slide shows, bird watches, and resource material. Consequently, the Gosse Bird Club is in the process of developing an illustrated teacher's guide and posters for distribution with the field guide *Birds of Jamaica* (Downer and Sutton 1990).

Much more work needs to be done to implement effective conservation strategies for birds. However, the increasing tendency toward information sharing, collaboration, and community involvement is encouraging and is definitely a step in the right direction.

ISLAND REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

RESEARCH AND ORNITHOLOGICAL ACTIVITIES IN THE BAHAMAS

CAROLYN WARDLE

Representative for The Bahama Islands

RESEARCH

Several scientific researchers continue to conduct activities in the Bahamas. The following are the most recent research permits issued:

- David S. Lee, North Carolina State Museum of Natural History — Study of neotropical migrant land birds, tropicbirds, and Audubon's Shearwater breeding in the Bahamas
- Nancy Staus, University of Minnesota — Research on whistling-ducks in Long Island
- Paul Allen, Cornell University, University of Montana — Breeding Bahama Swallows on Grand Bahama
- James W. Armacost, Jr., Mississippi State University — Breeding biology of the Thick-billed Vireo
- John Barlow and Marlene Walker, Royal Ontario Museum — Study of the inter-island variation of Thick-billed Vireos
- Lowell Overton, University of Arkansas — Genetic studies of the West Indian Woodpecker

PERMITS ISSUED

- The Ministry of Agriculture has issued permission to Ardastra Gardens to collect young parrots from Inagua for their captive breeding program. Capture was attempted in 1995 and 1996, but to date has been unsuccessful.
- The Bahamas National Trust issued permission for collection of Greater Flamingos in Inagua this year. Collection was not possible because the flamingos did not nest in 1996. Records show that during exceptionally dry periods the flamingos have not nested.

KIRTLAND'S WARBLER SIGHTING

Of note is David Lee's sighting of a Kirtland's Warbler in Abaco National Park in Fall 1996.

BAHAMAS NATIONAL TRUST ORNITHOLOGY GROUP

The Bahamas National Trust Ornithology Group is quite active, including:

- Beginning in 1994 the Group has conducted the annual Audubon Christmas bird count. The Bahamas were credited with the most species counted for the region in 1994.
- The Group conducts monthly walks, monitoring the Botanic Gardens for the Ministry of Agriculture and keeping an eye on other prime areas of habitat.
- They will begin to create a computerized data base with the information collected from the last four years this fall.
- They are also helping the Ministry of Tourism by organizing extra educational birdwalks for Bahamians working toward certification as bird tour guides.
- The Bahamas National Trust Ornithology Group, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the College of the Bahamas have entered into a partnership with the Partners-in-Flight Program of the North Carolina State Museum of Natural History