

ST. LUCIA

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ST. LUCIA PARROT (*AMAZONA VERSICOLOR*) PROJECT

A record number of parrot nests were found this nesting season, bringing to 42 the total number of nests that were monitored at some time during the nesting season (Table 1).

Table 1. Status of St. Lucia Parrot nests monitored during the 1996 nesting season.

Total number of nests monitored	42
Active nests	19
Non-active nests	22
Nests that failed	12
Nests that fledged 2 chicks	3
Nests that fledged 1 chick	4

The last fledging occurred at the end of June. Pearly-eyed Thrasher (*Margarops fuscatus*) nesting activity was observed in a few parrot nests and this indicates that the thrashers nest later than the parrots. The areas scouted where parrot nesting activity was discovered represents only a tiny part of the parrot habitat. With this in mind and knowing that the parrots are nesting essentially in all of their range, we have just scratched the surface in terms of parrot nest finds.

Highlights of the season include:

- Record number of nests found
- One parrot nest found with 3 chicks
- Largest flock of parrots found feeding in a single tree – 43
- First chick fledged was captured on film by cameraman of the BBC Natural History Unit
- Parrot crew learned new rope climbing technique
- First eye-witness of a parrot chick death
- Most measurements of chicks taken this season
- Most nest trees spiked and measured
- Parrot crew learned the technique of crop sampling

ST. LUCIA WHIPTAIL (*CNEMIDOPHORUS VANZOI*)

Translocated lizards on Praslin Island have reproduced and it is possible that F_3 generation offspring should be running around soon. The following is justification for this optimism:

- May 1995 — Seven whiptail pairs were translocated to Praslin Island after the first translocation failed because of mongoose predation.
- August 1995 — First F_1 offspring seen on Praslin Island.
- January 1996 — Gravid F_1 females seen on Praslin.

From "bone dry" conditions in the dry season, the island responded with an explosion of plant growth at the onset of the rains. Insects are abundant and the lizards are thriving. A nature trail on Praslin Island is nearing completion.

GRANDE ANSE

The final project proposal for the development of Grande Anse Estate as an eco-tourism resort was submitted to Cabinet by the Grande Anse Advisory Committee. Bill Toone (San Diego Zoological Society, USA) was instrumental in the latest initiative toward the purchase of Grande Anse Estate. He is now pursuing efforts to raise funds for the project in the United States. In St. Lucia, Toone visited Grande Anse Estate and saw some of the species for which the area is famous. He also held meetings with all the major players and stock holders in the Estate.

PARROT CONFERENCE

A parrot conference will be held in St. Lucia from 11-14 August 1996. Several papers will be presented on parrot research projects in St. Lucia and Jamaica, together with other parrot research activities in the region. Participants are expected from the Caribbean region, United States, Canada, Mexico, and the United Kingdom. A census of the St. Lucia Parrot will be undertaken during the conference, as many parrot experts will be present.

NEW DISCOVERY

On 28 January an endemic subspecies, the St. Lucia Wren (*Troglodytes aedon maesoleocos*) was discovered on the long loop of the Union Nature Trail. This form is known to occur only along the Grande Anse to Louvert Belt and on Gros and Petit Pitons.

ROSEAU DAM PROJECT

Roseau Dam, the largest freshwater dam in the Eastern Caribbean States, was officially opened in February 1996. The reservoir is over 2 km long and contains over 700 million gallons of water. The Roseau River watershed is the longest in St. Lucia and the dam is serviced by a protected watershed of over 3000 acres of rain forest. However, a small part of a farming community had to be relocated and some 300 acres of private and Crown Lands reforested because they were within the dam watershed. Reforestation works are continuing using natural forest species as much as possible. This area is one of the strongholds of the St. Lucia Parrot and the additional 300 acres of forest will provide more habitat and forage areas for the species.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Environmental education is an on-going activity, and lectures and slide shows are given to various groups, schools, and farmers on request. Topics vary from "The importance of soil and water conservation," to "Birds of Grande Anse," or

"Why conserve forests?" A recently held workshop on environmental education for secondary school teachers was well attended. This is an annual event and participation keeps increasing.

A total of 3976 children participated in the zoo education

program. Over 4000 persons from 20 communities participated in various education activities ranging from eco-tourism to reptile conservation to solid waste management. Over 5000 persons visited our five rain forest trails.

GUIDELINES FOR DUTIES OF ISLAND REPRESENTATIVES

The following are the guidelines for duties of Island Representatives agreed on at the SCO meeting in Nassau; August, 1996.

1. Promote the SCO in their island:
 - a) encourage membership
 - b) disseminate information
 - c) encourage paid members to vote
2. Provide and coordinate three contributions to coincide with the publication of *El Pitirre*, one of which will be the annual report.
3. Representatives who attend the annual meeting will be expected to give a written report of the meeting,

especially on issues which are important to their particular country.

4. Serve as contact persons for visiting scientists and research groups.

Island Representatives are asked to send a communication to the Treasurer by 15 March to say if they have secured or have applied for funding to attend the meeting.

Representatives who need funding are also asked to apply by 15 March. Priority will be given to representatives who can secure matching funds; e.g., airfare or accommodations. Applicants must be Caribbean nationals or are residing in the region.

RESOLUTIONS DEVELOPED AT SCO MEETING IN NASSAU

DRAFT RESOLUTION:

CONSERVATION OF THE WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL IN THE WEST INDIES

WHEREAS a recent survey has shown that the White-cheeked Pintail (*Anas bahamensis bahamensis*) has declined precipitously in numbers over much of its range during the last century;

WHEREAS this decline is caused by human factors including overhunting, poaching, introduction of non-native predators, and habitat destruction;

WHEREAS the White-cheeked Pintail is one of only several waterfowl species resident in the West Indies;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Society of Caribbean Ornithology urges governments of all West Indian islands to:

1. Inform the public (through educational programs) of the decline of the White-cheeked Pintail in the West Indies in order to increase awareness of, and support for, their islands;
2. Establish a monitoring program of White-cheeked Pintail populations inhabiting their islands;
3. Establish reserves encompassing all wetland types utilized by White-cheeked Pintails throughout the year;
4. Monitor and control predator populations on offshore cays and other areas used by females for nesting;
5. Establish legal protection (if not already available) and employ wardens to ensure that hunting laws are enforced.

Submitted by Lisa G. Sorenson and Bethany L. Woodworth