Report of the Society's 1990 Annual Meeting in Kingston, Jamaica

The annual meeting of the Society of Caribbean Ornithology was convened at the University of the West Indies, Kingston, Jamaica, 12-16 August 1990. Approximately 80 people, from 14 Caribbean islands and the United States, attended. Thirty seven papers were presented in the scientific program (selected abstracts appear later in this issue). Workshops were conducted on "Funding sources for Caribbean ornithologists" and "Columbids in the Caribbean." Robert and Esther Tyrrell presented their spectacular color slides of hummingbirds of North America and the West Indies. Several field trips were made, including one to the Blue Mountains. Lisa Salmon was honored with the Society's Achievement Award for her outstanding contributions to the ornithology of Jamaica. Kelly Brock (Queen's University, Ontario, Canada) was presented the Student Award for the best paper, "The role of molecular genetics in the conservation of Caribbean amazon parrots."

The Society's next meeting will be held in St. Lucia, Lesser Antilles, 3-7 August 1991.

Notes on Conservation in the Turks and Caicos Islands and in the Cayman Islands

by Patricia Bradley

Turks and Caicos Islands: Announcement of the first Ramsar site in the British West Indies: 11,000 ha of intertidal wetlands on the Caicos Banks have been accepted as a Ramsar site by the IUCN meeting in Switzerland in July. The site is a valuable feeding area for migrating shorebirds as well as marine wildlife. In 1987, Norton and Clarke found an estimated 8,000 abandoned Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*) nests which date from about 1940, after which this large colony on North Caicos moved from the region. In 1990, 1,000+ flamingos wintered in Flamingo Pond and the shorebirds remained throughout the summer. They will be monitored in 1991 for signs of breeding. Norton and Clarke also found the Ramsar site contains breeding West Indian Whistling-Ducks (*Dendrocygna arborea*).

The Turks and Caicos Islands governments have recently declared 33 terrestrial and marine national parks. Of these, 13 sites are given special protection as nature reserves and sanctuaries. All the uninhabited cays in the Turks Banks and on the South Caicos Banks with breeding seabird colonies are protected. The species include 25-30 pairs of Roseate Terns (*Sterna dougallii*), and also Sooty

Turks & Caicos Islands Conservation (continued)

Terns (*S. fuscata*), Sandwich Terns (*S. sanvicensis*), Royal Terns (*S. maxima*), Least Terns (*S. antillarum*), Bridled Terns (*S. anaethetus*), Brown Noddys (*Anous stolidus*), and Laughing Gulls (*Larus atricilla*).

The Protection of Birds Ordinance has been revised to remove all species from the list of game birds, except the Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*). The Cuban Crow (*Corvus nasicus*) is now protected and an education campaign for North and Middle Caicos is planned for 1991. The whistling-duck, flamingo, and Roseate Tern have been given special protection status. Fines for violation of this law extend to $5,000.

British Overseas Development have agreed to fund an experienced post-graduate officer to get the infant Park system operating and to draft legislation for a National Trust for the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Cayman Islands: The two subspecies of the Cuban Parrot (*Amazona leucocephala caymanensis* of Grand Cayman and *A.l. hesterna* from Cayman Brac and, formerly, Little Cayman) have been removed from the list of game birds. It is to be hoped that the other recommendations in the *Amazona leucocephala* census (Bradley, Cayman Islands Gov. Tech. Publ. No. 1, 1986) will be adopted, especially in preventing the removal of young birds from the wild.

Laguna Cartagena National Wildlife Refuge Restoration, Development and Management Plan

The following is the abstract of Hilda Díaz-Soltero's Master of Science thesis (1990), University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez:

This document is a restoration, development and management plan for the Laguna Cartagena National Wildlife Refuge. Laguna Cartagena was the most important breeding habitat for resident waterfowl and the most important refuge for migratory species in Puerto Rico. It had the largest number and diversity of birds with a cumulative list of 163 species, and a rich flora of 178 species. This study compiled historic data on the biota of Cartagena since the beginning of the century. The lagoon has been modified by man since the 1920s. Exotic plants, decreased water level, effects of fertilizers, pesticides and sediments from surrounding farms, and untreated sewage from the Maguayo community contributed to the accelerated eutrophication and degradation of Laguna Cartegena as wildlife habitat.

Cartagena Lagoon Conservation Plan (continued)

A review of plant inventories, maps and aerial photographs shows that the flora has changed from that of a diverse freshwater lagoon to an impoverished marsh. Cattails now cover most of the lagoon. An inventory of flora and avifauna found 189 plants in six associations and 65 species of birds in 1990. This represents 50% of the plant species found in the 1950s and 40% of the cumulative list of birds since the 1920s.

Restoration of Laguna Cartagena for 13 target species is proposed using the conditions prevailing in the 1920s as the habitat restoration goal. A detailed list of actions needed to restore and manage the lagoon is presented. To accomplish the proprosed restoration, it is essential to manage water levels and eradicate most of the cattails. Monitoring and research actions are included.

Este documento es el Plan de Restauración, Desarrollo y Manejo para el Refugio Nacional de Vida Silvestre de Laguna Cartagena. Laguna Cartagena fue el lugar de anidamiento más importante para aves acuáticas residentes, asi como el refugio más importante en Puerto Rico para especies migratorias. Poseía la mayor diversidad y cantidad de aves, con una lista cumulativa de 163 especies, y una rica flora compuesta por 178 especies. Este estudio recopiló datos históricos sobre la biota de Cartagena desde principios de siglo. Encontró que la laguna ha sido modificada por el hombre desde los 1920. La introducción de plantas exóticas, las disminuciones en los niveles de agua, los efectos de abonos, pesticidas y sedimentos provenientes de fincas aledaãs, y los efluentes de la comunidad de Maguayo han contribuido a la eutroficación acelerada y a la degradación de Laguna Cartegena como habitáculo de vida silvestre.

La revisión de los inventarios de plantas, mapas y fotos aéreas demostró que la flora ha cambiado de la caracteristica de una laguna diversa a la de una ciénaga empobrecida. Actualmente las eneas cubren la mayor parte de la laguna. Un inventario de flora y avifauna en 1990 encontró 189 plantas en seis asociaciones y 65 especies de aves. Esto representa el 50% de las plantas presentes en la década de 1950 y el 40% de las aves en la lista cumulativa de avistamientos desde la década de 1920.

El estudio propone la restauración de la Laguna Cartagena dando atención a 13 especies y usando como el objetivo para la restauración las condiciones prevalecientes en la década de 1920. Se presenta una lista detallada de acciones necesarias para restaurar y manejar la laguna. Para lograr la restauración propuesta es esencial manejar los niveles de agua y erradicar la mayoría de las eneas. El plan incluye propuestas de investigación y acciones de seguimiento al proyecto de restauración.

Oscar T. "Bud" Owre
1917-1990

Dr. Oscar T. Owre, beloved teacher and associate of many West Indian ornithologists, passed away on August 9, 1990, at his Minnesota cabin.

Oscar Owre was born on October 10, 1917, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He earned his Bachelor's degree at the University of Miami in 1941, then served during World War II in the South Pacific as a pilot in the U.S. Naval Air Corps (1941-1945). Wounded in action, he was awarded a battle citation with the rank of Lieutenant Commander, the Navy Air Medal, and two gold stars. After the war, Oscar Owre resumed his academic career at the University of Miami, where he received his Master of Science degree in 1949. His Ph.D. was earned at the University of Michigan in 1959. Thereafter, Dr. Owre returned to the University of Miami's Department of Biology. This association continued for the rest of his life.

From 1958-1959, Dr. Owre served as Scientist-in-charge of the University of Miami Maytag Zoological Expedition to Lake Rudolph in East Africa . From the close friendship formed between Dr. Owre and Robert Maytag, the endowed Maytag Chair of Ornithology was established at the University of Miami. Dr. Owre became the first occupant of the prestigious Chair. Also established was the Maytag Fellowship Endowment, which has funded the graduate studies of numerous students of biology at the University.

Dr. Owre was an excellent observer and scientist, and produced many publications describing the results of his diverse ornithological work. However, those of us who had the privilege of studying under him, will best remember Bud for his boyish enthusiasm for the study of birds. He had an unique ability to enchant his students with the wonders of birds and science. His undergraduate and graduate courses were consistently filled with enrollees and auditors, eager for exposure to the teachings of this scholarly and gentle professor. Dr. Owre's classes were regularly visited by other ornithologists (including his former graduate students) passing through the Miami area; all delighted in participating in his "Birds of the World" seminars. A special attraction to attending Dr. Owre's courses was the opportunity of working through the extensive, well-curated bird collection, the result of Bud's long career of field work in Africa, India, Australia, and South America.