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### James Bond (1900-1989)

James Bond, the leading expert on West Indian avifauna and the author of "Birds of the West Indies," died on 14 February 1989. Bond, in his long association with the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, first came to the West Indies in 1926, and from that trip began a series of life-long expeditions that took him to almost every island in the West Indies and established him as the authority on the region's avifauna.

Bond's "Checklist of Birds of the West Indies" (1940, 1950, 1956) and annual supplements (which he continued to publish through his later years) are among the most important references on the avifauna in the Caribbean.

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### Annabelle Stockton de Dod Retires

Annabelle "Tudy" Stockton de Dod recently retired with her husband, Don Dod, to Berkeley, California. Don, a specialist in West Indian orchid biology, and Tudy lived in the West Indies since 1946, when they directed the project named "Centro de Servicio Cristiano" in Puerto Rico. In 1964, the Dods moved to the Dominican Republic, where Tudy became that country's leading expert on the local avifauna. Don and Tudy were instrumental in establishing the fine bird collections at the new Museo Nacional de Historia Natural, as well as developing the Museo's excellent public displays. Tudy was employed as the Museo's ornithologist for nine years before a three year stint with Parques Nacionales. Tudy was active in local conservation issues, and once she identified a problem, she untiringly labored to correct the situation with bulldog-like tenacity. Her role in regulating the formerly extensive bird trade in the Dominican Republic is legendary. The Dods produced a regular column in the local newspaper *Caribe*, entitled "Viajes en el Pais," which stimulated considerable interest in local conservation issues. In later years, Tudy published extensively on the avifauna of the Dominican Republic, including scientific papers and popular articles. Her books, "Las Aves de la República Dominicana," and "Guía a las Aves de la República Dominicana," contain the most up-to-date information on that country's birds.

Tudy and Don were made members of the Order of Cristobal Colon, Heraldica with the rank of Knight, by the President of the Dominican Republic in recognition for their contribution to the country's conservation program. Their energy and dedication will be missed by all us who have worked with the Dods for conservation of West Indian avifauna.

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### Third Annual Meeting of Society to be held in Santo Domingo

The Society of Caribbean Ornithology will host its third annual meeting in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, August 16-19, 1989. In addition to the general sessions, three symposia will be featured: Ecology and Evolution of Introduced Birds in the Caribbean, Bird-Plant Interactions in the Caribbean, and Legislation and Education in the Caribbean. Field trips will follow the meeting. Discount airfares and hotel rates are available. For further information, contact Jorge A. Moreno, Scientific Research Area, Department of Natural Resources, Apartado 5887, Puerta de Tierra, Puerto Rico 00906.

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### Optimism Grows for Recovery of Puerto Rican Plain Pigeon

Optimism for the recovery of the endangered Puerto Rican Plain Pigeon (*Columba inornata wetmorei*), or Paloma Sabanera, has considerably increased within the past year, as the result of several successes in the program at the University of Puerto Rico. On April 22, 1988, a plain pigeon squab ("Gulliver") hatched from an egg incubated by a 4-year-old pair. The parents were also allowed to raise the squab through fledging. This was a first, as all other captive-produced plain pigeon chicks have been hand-raised by biologists or hatched and foster-raised by domestic ringed doves (*Streptopelia risoria*). Raul A. Perez-Rivera, Director of the Captive Program, and his associates believe this is a major achievement in the recovery of the race, since parent-reared birds are more desirable candidates for release into the wild than human- or surrogate-raised chicks, which are subject to imprinting on these inappropriate "parents." Another milestone in the program was the captive production of second-generation plain pigeons in 1988. Perez-Rivera feels these breakthroughs will now allow mass production of plain pigeons suitable for reintroduction into the wild.

Perez-Rivera's breeding program began in 1983 under a cooperative agreement among the University of Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico Department of Natural Resources, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The first captive-produced squab hatched in 1984. A total of 47 plain pigeon squabs have been produced by the captive flock since then. The program has been so successful that the number of plain pigeons has outgrown the original aviary facility and a new, more modern facility will soon replace it. An additional aviary, at the Rio Abajo Forest release site in



Plain Pigeon (Continued)

northwestern Puerto Rico, is near completion. The first releases into the wild will occur once these facilities are finished and a sufficient number of birds is available for re-introduction.

### Genetics and Bird Conservation

by Kelly Brock, Department of Biology, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario K7L 3N6

Population declines, such as those suffered historically by the Puerto Rican Parrot (*Amazona vittata*), have predictable biological consequences on the genetic diversity of species. Random genetic drift, inbreeding, and population bottlenecks result in dramatic reductions in genetic variability and fitness correlates. Phenotypic manifestations of reduced genetic diversity and inbreeding depression in small populations include decreased fertility and fecundity, poor parental care, increased juvenile mortality, and vulnerability to disease. With this in mind, recombinant DNA technology is being used in a new approach to the Puerto Rican Parrot conservation program. With the use of "DNA fingerprints," it will be possible to determine the degree of relatedness among individual parrots. These molecular profiles can be used to design a more effective captive breeding program, and they can also be used to assess the genetic structure of the wild flock. Genetic variation in the Puerto Rican Parrots will also be evaluated using other "DNA probes," such as the major histocompatibility complex (MHC), a highly variable gene complex involved in the immune system, and Restriction Fragment Length Polymorphisms (RFLPs). With insights into some underlying mechanisms involved in population biology of the Puerto Rican Parrot, such as at the molecular level, it will be possible to address management questions from a whole new perspective. As a result, it is hoped that a genetic management plan can be generated that will boost the recovery of the species.

Additional benefits can be reaped when molecular techniques are applied to conservation. For instance, DNA fingerprints and RFLPs can be maintained in a species data management system, such that molecular "tags" can be used to trace the origin of individuals, as well as conduct pedigree analyses. These applications of recombinant DNA technology may have significant impact on wildlife law enforcement.

### Draft Forestry and Wildlife Legislation for Monsterrat and Antigua

Legislation has been drafted for forestry and wildlife for both Monsterrat and Antigua under the terms of reference of a Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Project. This legislation may be of interest to other Caribbean countries. Further information can be obtained by contacting the author, Thomas J.P. McHenry, 444 South Flower Street, Fifth Floor, Los Angeles, California 90071, U.S.A. (telephone 213-623-2322).

### Requests for Assistance

One aspect of the molecular study of the Puerto Rican Parrot involves an investigation of the phylogenetic relationship of the Greater Antillean parrots. Small blood samples are needed from the Jamaican Black-billed (*Amazona agilis*) and Yellow-billed (*A. collaria*) parrots and the Yellow-lored Parrot (*A. xantholora*). If anyone has, or knows of, individuals of these species in captivity and is willing to cooperate in this project, please contact Kelly Brock, Department of Biology, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada K7L 3N6 (telephone: 613-545-6124).

As part of an ongoing conservation project on the endangered Bahama Parrot on Abaco Island, Bahamas, information is needed on feral cat control programs on islands. Bahama Parrots are extremely vulnerable to nest predation by feral cats because of the parrot's subterranean nesting habitat. In 1988, 53% of the parrot nests in our study areas suffered from feral cat predation. The Bahamas National Trust chapter on Abaco is hoping to begin a feral cat control program in 1989 and seeks logistical advice. Please send information to Rosemarie Gnam, Department of Ornithology, American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th St., New York, NY 10024, U.S.A.

Sound recordings are needed for a forthcoming cassette of voices of New World pigeons and doves. Sounds of over 50 of the 70 species have been assembled, but a recording of vocalizations of the Antilles Quail-Dove (*Geotrygon martinica*; island of Martinique) is needed. If you can supply this recording, please write to John W. Hardy, Florida Museum of Natural History, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida 32611, U.S.A.