

TRANS-ATLANTIC VAGRANCY OF PALEARCTIC BIRDS IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

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Abstract: We summarize the status of 14 species of birds (pelagic seabirds excluded) breeding primarily in the Old World and occurring as trans-Atlantic vagrants in Trinidad and Tobago. We report details for three species new to Trinidad and Tobago: Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*), Eurasian Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*), and Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*). We also provide photographs for three species of birds previously undocumented by either a specimen or photograph in South America: Eurasian Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*), Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*), and Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*). In addition we summarize records of three species reported from Trinidad and Tobago but considered by us to be inadequately documented, and records of two widespread boreal species derived from Palearctic populations.

Key words: bird migration, Caribbean, distributional records, Palearctic bird vagrants, South America, trans-Atlantic vagrancy, Trinidad and Tobago

Resumen: AVES PALÉARTICAS COMO TRANSEÚNTES TRANSATLÁNTICOS EN TRINIDAD Y TOBAGO. Resumimos el estado de 14 especies de aves (excluyendo las aves marinas pelágicas) que crían primariamente en el Viejo Mundo y que aparecen como transeúntes transatlánticos en Trinidad y Tobago. Se brindan por primera vez, los detalles de tres especies nuevas para Trinidad y Tobago: *Ardea purpurea*, *Falco tinnunculus* y *Calidris ferruginea*. También se publican por primera vez las fotografías de tres especies de aves que no habían sido documentadas en Suramérica ni con fotos ni con especímenes colectados: *Platalea leucorodia*, *Tringa glareola* y *Larus ridibundus*. Además resumimos los registros de tres especies reconocidas en Trinidad y Tobago pero que se consideraban que estaban documentadas inadecuadamente y dos registros de subespecies paleárticas que pertenecen a especies boreales de amplia distribución.

Palabras clave: aves transeúntes paleárticas, migración de aves, registros de distribución, Suramérica, transeúntes trasatlánticos, Trinidad y Tobago

Résumé : ERRATISME TRANSATLANTIQUE D'OISEAUX PALÉARCTIQUES À TRINITÉ ET TOBAGO. Nous avons fait une synthèse du statut de 14 espèces d'oiseaux (espèces pélagiques exclues) nichant principalement dans l'Ancien Monde observées en tant qu'erratiques transatlantiques à Trinité et Tobago. Des détails sont donnés pour 3 espèces nouvelles : Le Héron pourpre (*Ardea purpurea*), le Faucon crécerelle (*Falco tinnunculus*) et le Bécasseau cocorli (*Calidris ferruginea*). Nous fournissons des photographies de 3 autres espèces pour lesquelles aucun spécimen ou photographie e sont disponibles pour l'Amérique du sud : la Spatule d'Europe (*Platalea leucorodia*), le Chevalier sylvain (*Tringa glareola*), et la Mouette rieuse (*Larus ridibundus*). Nous faisons également une synthèse des observations à Trinité et Tobago de 3 espèces que nous considérons comme incorrectement documentées ainsi que des observations pour les populations paléarctiques de 2 espèces boréales largement répandues

Mots clés : Amérique du sud, Caraïbe, erratisme transatlantique, migration, observation de distribution, oiseaux paléarctiques erratiques, Trinité et Tobago

VAGRANCY REFERS TO the long-distance dispersal of individuals, herein referred to as vagrants, beyond their normal distribution or migratory path (e.g., Thomson 1964, Veit 2000). A variety of Palearctic vagrants routinely cross the tropical North Atlantic Ocean with the assistance of easterly trade winds and arrive in the Caribbean region, although some may actually cross the northern North Atlantic before arriving in the Caribbean (Bond 1956, Bull 1978, Ebels 2002, Buckley *et al.* 2007). Perched upon the continental shelf of northeastern South America, the continental islands of Trinidad and Tobago are two of many islands in the eastern Car-

ibbean that provide a convenient destination for such vagrants.

In this paper we summarize the status of 14 species of birds (pelagic seabirds excluded) breeding primarily in the Old World and occurring as trans-Atlantic vagrants in Trinidad and Tobago. We report details for three species new to Trinidad and Tobago: Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*), Eurasian Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*), and Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*). We also provide photographs for three species of birds previously undocumented by either a specimen or photograph in South America: Eurasian Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*),



Fig. 1. Immature Gray Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) at Caroni, TRI, 28 August 2001. Photo by Courtenay Rooks.

Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*), and Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*). In addition we summarize records of three species reported from Trinidad and Tobago but considered to be inadequately documented, and records of two widespread boreal species derived from Palearctic populations.

ACCEPTED PALEARCTIC SPECIES

The following 14 species of birds breeding exclusively or almost exclusively in the Old World have been accepted by the Trinidad and Tobago Rare Bird Committee. Acronyms used in the following accounts include: AMNH = American Museum of Natural History; T&T = Trinidad and Tobago; TOB = Tobago; TRI = Trinidad; TTRBC = Trinidad and Tobago Rare Bird Committee.

GRAY HERON (*ARDEA CINEREA*)

A first-year immature shot at Fyzabad, TRI, on 27 August 1959, was banded as a nestling in France on 28 May 1958 (Baudouin-Bodin 1960), representing the first record for T&T, South America, and the New World. A first-year immature was seen and well described at Bon Accord, TOB, during 15-17 January 1999 (Finch 2002, White and Hayes 2002, ffrench and Kenefick 2003).

On 26 August 2001, a first-year immature was found at Caroni, TRI, by Nigel Lallsingh, Keisha Lallsingh, and F. E. Hayes. It was seen repeatedly by many observers at Caroni until 28 November 2001 and was also seen about 8 km away at Trincity on 27 September 2001 (Phil Davis *et al.*), 14 km away at Waterloo on 29 November 2001 (Courtenay Rooks), and 50 km away at Nariva Swamp on 20 November 2001 (C. Rooks). It was distinguished from Great Blue Heron (*A. herodias*) and Cocoi Heron (*A. cocoi*) by its shorter bill, neck, and legs, grayish forecrown with a black hindcrown, and pure white epaulettes and thighs. Several of these features are visible in a distant photograph taken on 28 August 2001 by C. Rooks (Fig. 1).

On 27 January 2005, an adult was observed from 50 m at Trincity, TRI, by Ken Calderon and William L. Murphy. It appeared too small and too pale for a Great Blue Heron. The crown, head, neck, epaulettes, and thighs were white and the legs were dull gray.

On 16 February 2005, a first-year immature was observed from 200 m at the Aripo Livestock Station, TRI, by M. Kenefick *et al.* It was identified by its blackish crown with just a hint of white centrally, pure white epaulettes and thighs, and gray legs.

On 5 May 2006, a first-year immature was observed from 200 m at Caroni, TRI, by M. Kenefick. It appeared smaller than a nearby Great Egret (*A. alba*). The crown was gray with a paler forecrown and a black wedge on the hindcrown. The bill was relatively short, the epaulette and thighs were pure white, and the legs were pinkish-gray.

Elsewhere in the Caribbean there are records from Montserrat, Martinique, and Barbados (e.g., Ebels 2002, Buckley *et al.* 2007). Up to six Gray Herons have been continually resident on Barbados since about 1997, with individuals coming and going and a daily maximum of three (Buckley *et al.* 2007). The only record from continental South America was from Amazonian Brazil (Sick 1993).

PURPLE HERON (*ARDEA PURPUREA*)

On 24 September 2002, M. Kenefick found an immature in a freshwater marsh at Caroni, TRI, where it was relocated repeatedly by various observers and photographed by Graham White (Fig. 2) until 10 October 2002. It appeared smaller and generally slighter than Great Blue Heron (*A. herodias*), with a scrawny profile and an exaggerated S-shaped neck when seen in flight. The bill was long and thin, with the upper ridge of the upper mandible blackish



Fig. 2. Immature Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*), compared with a Little Blue Heron (*Egretta caerulea*) at right in lower photo, at Caroni, TRI, 28 Sep 2002. Photo by Graham White.

and the remainder of the bill orangey-yellow. The iris was lemon-yellow. The crown was dark gray or black. The face was bright buff-brown marked by a darker moustachial stripe which extended from the bill beneath the eye and almost reached the nape. The lores were washed out and pale, definitely lacking the bright buff of the cheeks. The chin was white, the neck and chest were creamy-buff densely marked with dark reddish-brown streaks, and the lower breast and belly were biscuit-buff. The mantle was brown, a shade darker than the scapulars, which were a shade darker than the buff wing coverts. All scapular and covert feathers were edged buffy-white, indicative of an immature. The rump and upper tail were gray. The upperwings were two-toned with gray-black primaries and secondaries and brown wing coverts. The underwings were brownish, lacking contrast. The tibia were strawyellow and the tarsi were green/gray. This record



Fig. 3. Adult Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*) with Snowy Egrets (*E. thula*) at San Fernando, TRI, 25 April 2002. Photo by Brett D. Hayes.

provides the first for T&T and only the second for South America.

The previous record for South America was of an individual found at Fernando de Noronha, off the coast of Brazil, in June 1986 (Teixeira *et al.* 1987). An earlier report of a bird seen briefly only in flight at Buccoo, TOB, on 2 September 1999, was rejected by the TTRBC (White and Hayes 2002). Elsewhere in the Caribbean, there are two records from Barbados (Buckley *et al.* 2007).

LITTLE EGRET (*EGRETTA GARZETTA*)

An immature banded as a nestling at Doñana, Hueva Province, Spain, 24 July 1956, was recovered at Caroni Swamp, TRI, on 13 January 1957 (Downs 1959; AMNH 325358), providing the first record for T&T and South America. The species was not recorded again until 17 November 1989, when a bird was photographed in Port of Spain, TRI (Murphy 1992). The first for TOB was photographed at Buccoo on 4 January 1990 (Murphy 1992; photo not examined by TTRBC). Hayes and White (2001) summarized data for at least 33 records of the species for TRI and 17 for TOB up through June 2001. It has been recorded during each month of the year on each island, with no marked seasonal variation, although the highest monthly totals are from the first few months of the year. Maximum daily counts include five for TRI (1999) and two for TOB (1995). In addition to the specimen photographic documentation has been extensive (e.g., Fig. 3).

Little Egret has been reported widely from elsewhere in the Caribbean (e.g., Murphy 1992, Ebels 2002, Mlodinow *et al.* 2004). Since 1994, breeding has occurred in nearby Barbados (Massiah 1996), with ca. 15-25 pairs breeding annually (Buckley *et*



Fig. 4. Immature Western Reef-Heron (*Egretta gularis*) at Buccoo, TOB, 22 December 2000. Photos by Floyd E. Hayes.



al. 2007). Breeding occurs year-round, but peaks during the winter months, and numbers typically decrease during the summer, suggesting off-island dispersal (Buckley *et al.* 2007). The persistently small numbers in T&T suggest that a breeding population has not been established yet. Some individuals in T&T may represent strays from the breeding population in Barbados rather than trans-Atlantic vagrants from the Palearctic. There are only a few records from northern South America in Aruba (Mlodinow 2004, 2006), Guyana (Ryan 1997), Suriname (Haverschmidt 1983), and Brazil (Bencke *et al.* 2005).



Fig. 5. Immature Eurasian Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*) at Buccoo, TOB, 3 Nov 1986. Photos by Wayne Scott.



WESTERN REEF-HERON (*EGRETTA GULARIS*)

A dark-morph individual found by William L. Murphy and photographed by Winston Nanan at Nariva, TRI, on 22 January 1986, provided the first record for T&T and South America (Murphy and Nanan 1987). On 16 December 2000, M. Kenefick found a first-winter dark-morph immature at Buccoo, TOB. It was photographed by F. E. Hayes on 22 December 2000 (Fig. 4) and seen repeatedly in the vicinity of Buccoo and nearby Bon Accord until 11 January 2002. The bill was dark gray-horn, slightly paler on the basal half of the lower mandible, and noticeably broader based and slightly



Fig. 6. Immature female Eurasian Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) at Carli Bay, Trinidad, 18 Dec 2003. Photos by Roger Neckles.

thicker than that of Snowy Egret (*E. thula*), with only a slightly downcurved culmen. The iris was bright yellow. The body was dark powdery-gray except for a clear-cut white rectangle embracing the chin, throat and face below the eye. The thighs were white and the ventral area pale gray. Most of the coverts and tertials had a dusty-brown cast, indicative of juvenal plumage, but by summer were replaced by fresh dark gray feathers. The legs were dark, but not jet-black, and the feet were greenish-yellow, contrasting sharply with the darker legs without any projection up the legs. This record represents the first for TOB and only the second for T&T and South America.

Elsewhere in the Caribbean there are several records from St. Lucia (e.g., Murphy 1992, Ebels 2002, Mlodinow *et al.* 2004), one from St. Vincent

and the Grenadines (Paice 2006), and nine from Barbados (Buckley *et al.* 2007). There are no records from elsewhere in South America.

EURASIAN SPOONBILL (*PLATALEA LEUCORODIA*)

An immature was photographed (Fig. 5) at Buccoo, TOB, on 3 November 1986, by Wayne Scott, representing the first record for T&T, South America, and the New World (Murphy 1992). Adolphus James (pers. comm. to W. Scott) reported that two birds had been present, but no further details are available. The TTRBC considered it a natural vagrant rather than an escapee because it was a young bird unlikely to have spent any time in captivity, the legs were unbanded, no nearby zoos had kept the species, and TOB is an unlikely destination for an escapee, but a likely landfall for a trans-Atlantic vagrant (Hayes and White 2000).

There are no records from elsewhere in the Caribbean but there was an unsubstantiated report of a juvenile photographed on Fernando de Noronha, Brazil, during January to February 1999 (Ebels 2002).

EURASIAN KESTREL (*FALCO TINNUNCULUS*)

On 17 December 2003, M. Kenefick found an immature female at Carli Bay, TRI. It was photographed the following day by Roger Neckles (Fig. 6) and subsequently seen by many others until 1 January 2004. It was a medium-sized, chestnut-brown, long-tailed falcon, with the wing tip ending just short of the tail tip. The bill was rather small and grayish with a darker tip, contrasting with a yellow cere. The crown was pale chestnut-brown and densely streaked darker, the face unstreaked gray with a dark shadow surrounding the eye, the iris blackish surrounded by a thin yellow orbital ring, and the moustachial stripe was black and rather thin. The base colour of the underparts was buff-white with dense dark brown streaking on the breast and upper belly with bold streaking on flanks, but no streaking on vent. The under-tail was marked by three broad, black subterminal bars plus two fainter dark bars nearer the base. The nape, mantle, wing coverts, rump, and tail were rich chestnut-brown boldly barred with black, with the densest barring on the nape. The flight feathers were contrastingly darker brown. The underwing, seen only briefly, was whitish and heavily spotted dark. The legs were yellow but with definite black claws. Based on its large size it was identified as a female. The larger size and lack of distinct facial markings distinguish it from American Kestrel (*F. sparverius*)



Fig. 7. Immature Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*) at Buccoo, TOB, 30 December 1996. Photo by Peggy Keller.

and the black claws distinguish it from the female Lesser Kestrel (*F. naumanni*).

This is the first documented record of this species for South America. Other South American records include an undocumented sight record from French Guiana (Tostain *et al.* 1992) and an immature subsequently photographed in the Archipelago of São Pedro and São Paulo, Brazil, 19-21 January 2005 (Bencke *et al.* 2005). The only other record from the Caribbean was a specimen taken on Martinique on 9 December 1949 (Pinchon and Vaurie 1961).

SPOTTED REDSHANK (*TRINGA ERYTHROPUS*)

A basic plumaged bird was seen and well described by David Fisher at Bon Accord Lagoon, TOB, on 13 February 1983, representing the first sight record for T&T and South America (Fisher 1998).

Elsewhere in the Caribbean there are single records from Puerto Rico and Guadeloupe, and four from Barbados (Buckley *et al.* 2007). There are no records from elsewhere in South America.

WOOD SANDPIPER (*TRINGA GLAREOLA*)

A basic plumaged immature was found by Doug McRae *et al.* at Buccoo, TOB, on 30 December 1996 (Petersen and McRae 2002) and photographed by Peggy Keller (Fig. 7), representing the first record for T&T and South America. It lingered until at least 27 February 1997 (Hayes and White 2000).

Elsewhere in the Caribbean there is one record from Guadeloupe and five records from Barbados (Buckley *et al.* 2007).

TEREK SANDPIPER (*XENUS CINEREUS*)

An individual initially found by Peter Wild at Waterloo, TRI, on 28 June 1999, provided the first accepted sight record for T&T (Taylor 2001).

There is only one previous photographic record from elsewhere in the Caribbean in Barbados (Buckley *et al.* 2007), and two sight records for South America in Argentina (Pugnali *et al.* 1988) and Brazil (Mazar Barnett 1997).

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT (*LIMOSA LIMOSA*)

A basic-plumaged adult was seen by F. E. Hayes and M. Kenefick *et al.* at Caroni, TRI, during 14-16 September 2000, and photographed 20 km away at Orange Valley, TRI, on 17 September 2000 and 21 January 2001 (Hayes and Kenefick 2002), representing the first record for T&T and South America.

There is only one other record from elsewhere in the Caribbean from St. Christopher (Steadman *et al.* 1997) and none from elsewhere in South America.

CURLEW SANDPIPER (*CALIDRIS FERRUGINEA*)

On 1 May 2002, M. Kenefick found an adult half molted into alternate plumage at Caroni, TRI. It was subsequently seen by other observers including F. E. Hayes, Brett D. Hayes and Graham White, and was last seen by M. Kenefick on 5 May. It was a fairly small shorebird rather attenuated in shape, with a long, black, rather decurved bill, especially near the tip. The crown and face were buff brown with a white comma over the eye, an ill-defined whitish loreal area and lower forehead, and dense dark streaking on the crown. The throat, side of the neck and upper breast were reddish-orange with very faint vermiculations on the sides of the neck. The lower breast and belly were grayish-white with heavy dark brick-red blotches, especially on the fore flanks. The rear flanks and ventral area were grayish-white. The mantle and fore-scapular feathers were gray with black centers and pale fringes; the rear scapulars were coppery-tinger with black centers but contrastingly white fringes, and the coverts and tertials were gray with paler fringes. The underwing was white. Both faint white wing bars and an obvious white rump patch were noted while the bird was in flight. This sight record is the first for T&T.

Although there are several records from elsewhere in the Caribbean, including at least 12 from Barbados (Buckley *et al.* 2007), there are only two previous records from South America in Ecuador (Ridgely and Greenfield 2001) and Peru (Graves and Plenge 1978).



Fig. 8. Immature male (left) Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*) at Orange Grove, TRI, 8 December 2000, and immature female (right) at Lowlands, TOB, 22 December 2000. Photos by Floyd E. Hayes.

RUFF (*PHILOMACHUS PUGNAX*)

An alternate plumaged adult male seen and photographed by Michael Gochfeld at Laventille, TRI, from 30 April to 12 May 1965, provided the first record for TRI (Gochfeld 1973; unpublished photograph not seen by TTRBC). The first record for TOB was of an individual of unreported age or sex

seen by M. Archer *et al.* at Buccoo on 27-30 August 1974 (ffrench 1977). We have compiled a total of 19 records from T&T, including 12 records of single birds from TRI and seven records including two records of two birds each from TOB (Table 1). Several have been photographed (e.g., Fig. 8). All but two records appear to be of fall transients or winter-

Table 1. Records of Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*) in Trinidad and Tobago.

Location(s)	Date(s)	Details	Record	Source
TRINIDAD				
Laventille	30 Apr - 12 May 1965	1 ad. ♂	photo	Gochfeld 1973
St. Augustine	4 Oct 1971	1	sight	R. G. Gibbs; ffrench 1973
Caroni	1 May 1982	1 ♀?	sight	ffrench and Manolis 1993
Port of Spain	14 Dec 1990	1	sight	B. Soderstrom <i>et al.</i> ; ffrench 1993
Caroni	25-27 Aug 2000	1 ad. ♂	sight	M. Kenefick <i>et al.</i>
Caroni	30 Sep - 1 Oct 2000	1 ad. ♀	sight	F. E. Hayes, B. D. Hayes
Caroni / Orange Grove	7-14 Dec 2000	1 imm. ♂	photo	F. E. Hayes, B. D. Hayes
Caroni	23-28 Sep 2001	1 imm. ♀	photo	F. E. Hayes <i>et al.</i>
Caroni	14 Oct 2001	1 ad. ♂	sight	M. Kenefick
Caroni	19 Oct 2001	1 imm. ♂	sight	M. Kenefick
Caroni	28 Dec 2002 - 25 Jan 2003	1 imm. ♀	sight	M. Kenefick
Caroni	9 Dec 2005	1 ad. ♀	photo	J. Dunn and B. Prescott
TOBAGO				
Buccoo	27-30 Aug 1974	1	sight	M. Archer <i>et al.</i> ; ffrench 1977
Buccoo	1-10 Dec 1981	2	sight	J. M. Wunderle; ffrench 1983
Buccoo	28 Jan 1982	?	sight	ffrench 1993
Buccoo	mid-Jan 1989	?	sight	ffrench 1993
Buccoo	11-14 Aug 1990	2 imm.	photo	G. White; Hayes and White 2000
Lowlands	22 Dec 2000	1 imm. ♀	photo	F. E. Hayes <i>et al.</i>
Lowlands	23 Oct 2003	1 ♀	sight	N. Hacking



Fig. 9. Adult Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*) at Store Bay, TOB, 4 July 1994. Photo by Floyd E. Hayes.

ing birds, ranging from 11 August (G. White *in* Hayes and White 2000) to 28 January (ffrench 1993). Two records are clearly of spring transients, ranging from 30 April to 12 May (Gochfeld 1973; Table 1). Seven of 12 individuals identified to sex were female and six of 11 identified by age were immature (Table 1).

This species frequently occurs as a vagrant elsewhere in the Caribbean (e.g., Ebels 2002, Buckley *et al.* 2007). Although a trade specimen has been taken from South America, its location from “Bogotá,” Colombia (Hellmayr and Conover 1948), is questionable, although it is almost certainly from northern South America. There are sight records from elsewhere in South America in Peru (Oatman *et al.* 1980), Venezuela (Altman and Parrish 1978), and Brazil (Pacheco 2000).

BLACK-HEADED GULL (*LARUS RIDIBUNDUS*)

Two individuals of unreported age or sex were found by David Fisher *et al.* at Pointe-a-Pierre, TRI, on 3 October 1976 (ffrench 1977), providing the first record for TRI and South America. The first for TOB was an immature seen at Turtle Beach on 28 January 1978 (Bull 1978). We have compiled 11 records including eight records of up to two birds from TRI and three records of single birds from TOB (Table 2). The only photographic record is of a worn alternate plumaged adult at Pigeon Point, TOB, 4-14 July 1994 (Fig. 9; Hayes 1996, Hayes and White 2000). All but two records appear to be of migrants or wintering birds between the dates of 3 October (ffrench 1977) and 18 May (Table 2). Two records appear to be of summering individuals ranging from 4 July to 13 August (Hayes 1996, Hayes and White 2000; Table 2). Five of nine individuals identified to age were adult (Table 2). We are aware of other reports for which details have not been submitted to the TTRBC and we encourage submission of such details.

This species frequently occurs as a vagrant elsewhere in the Caribbean (e.g., Ebels 2002, Buckley *et al.* 2007). Although reported previously from Suriname (Davis 1979), Bonaire (Voous 1983, 1985; unpublished photograph examined by Voous), and French Guiana (Tostain *et al.* 1992), there are no previously published photographic records from South America.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (*LARUS FUSCUS*)

An adult seen by Bill Clark *et al.* at Claxton Bay, TRI, 25 August to 9 September 1978, provided the first record for South America (ffrench 1979). The

Table 2. Records of Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*) in Trinidad and Tobago.

Location	Date(s)	Details	Record	Source
TRINIDAD				
Pointe-a-Pierre	3-26 Oct 1976	2	sight	ffrench 1977
Pointe-a-Pierre	May 1978	?	sight	ffrench 1988
Port of Spain	< 1988	?	sight	ffrench 1988
Port of Spain	13 Aug 1992	1 ad.	sight	W. L. Murphy
Waterloo	12 Feb - 11 May 2000	2 imm.	sight	G. L. White, F. E. Hayes
Waterloo	1 Mar - 18 May 2000	1 ad.	sight	G. L. White, M. Kenefick
Waterloo	3-17 Feb 2001	1 ad.	sight	N. Lallsingh <i>et al.</i>
Waterloo	26 Feb 2003	1 ad.	sight	N. Lallsingh
TOBAGO				
Turtle Beach	28 Jan 1978	1 imm.	sight	Bull 1978
Pigeon Point	4-14 Jul 1994	1 ad.	photo	Hayes 1996
Bon Accord	21 Nov 2003	1 imm.	sight	E. Garcia

first for TOB was an adult seen by David Fisher at Buccoo on 14 January 1988 (ffrench 1991). Hayes *et al.* (2002) summarized data for 35 records of an estimated 49 individuals (71.4% immature, 28.6% adult) in western TRI (45 individuals) and southwestern TOB (four individuals) up through April 2002. Although most records were from the winter months, especially January-February, four lingered in TRI throughout the summer of 2000. A few individuals that first appeared in March-April may have been northbound migrants wintering farther south. Up to 13 different individuals occurred during autumn-spring in TRI and up to two in TOB. Maximum daily counts included eight for TRI and two for TOB. All T&T records pertain to the southern subspecies *L. f. graellsii*, the most common form occurring in the New World (Post and Lewis 1995).

This species is often reported from elsewhere in the Caribbean (e.g., Post and Lewis 1995, Ebels 2002, Buckley *et al.* 2007), but there are few records from elsewhere in South America, including the Netherlands Antilles (Voous 1983), Venezuela (Hilty 2003), and Ecuador (Ridgely and Greenfield 2001), plus a specimen from Argentina whose identification has been queried (Post and Lewis 1995).

HYPOTHETICAL PALEARCTIC SPECIES

Three additional species of birds breeding primarily in the Palearctic have been reported from T&T, but although the reports are highly credible, they have not been sufficiently documented to our satisfaction.

COMMON RINGED PLOVER (*CHARADRIUS HIATICULA*)

One captured by Richard ffrench *et al.* at Pointe-a-Pierre, TRI, on 31 October 1962, was examined in hand and subsequently released. It was adjudged to be this species rather than the abundant Semipalmated Plover (*C. semipalmatus*) by “the comparative absence of webbing between the toes” (ffrench 1973:141), which was apparently thought to be the only criterion for separating the two taxa. Another captured on 4 September 1960 was also suspected of being this species (ffrench 1973). Given the suite of subtle morphological and vocal differences between the two taxa (Hayman *et al.* 1986) and the absence of a photograph or a specimen, we consider these records to be insufficiently documented.

The only other record of this species from the Caribbean was an extant specimen taken from Barbados in 1888 (Buckley *et al.* 2007). There are no records from elsewhere in South America.

COMMON GREENSHANK (*TRINGA NEBULARIA*)

One was well described and apparently photographed by John Bull and others at Buccoo, TOB, on 7 July 1977 (Bull 1978); however, no photos have been examined by the TTRBC and a search for it among the AMNH photographic archives failed to find it (Paul Sweet pers. comm.). Another Common Greenshank was reportedly seen at Waller Field, TRI, in early 1987 by Jogie Ramlal *et al.* (ffrench 1988), but no further details have ever been received. We request further information from anybody who has first-hand knowledge of these records or who has access to the photograph(s).

Elsewhere in the Caribbean this species has been recorded once in Puerto Rico and five times in Barbados (Buckley *et al.* 2007). There are no records from elsewhere in South America.

WHITE WAGTAIL (*MOTACILLA ALBA*)

One was seen by many observers and photographed at Waller Field, TRI, from 26 December to 2 January 1988 (Frank Oatman *in* ffrench 1991). Alström and Mild (2003) regarded the bird as belonging to the northeastern Palearctic race *ocularis*. However, no photos have been examined by the TTRBC and efforts to contact Frank Oatman, who may have taken the photos, have been unsuccessful. We request further information from anybody who has first-hand knowledge of these records or who has access to the photograph(s). Although ffrench (1991) accepted this record and the TTRBC later adopted this decision (Hayes and White 2000), we feel the record should be treated in the same manner as that of the Common Greenshank (see above).

An individual in Barbados in January 1987 was thought to belong to the nominate race *alba* of the western Palearctic rather than either *ocularis* or Black-backed Wagtail (*M. lugens*), both recorded in eastern North America only from North Carolina (Buckley *et al.* 2007). There are no other records from elsewhere in the region.

PALEARCTIC BREEDING POPULATIONS OF WIDESPREAD SPECIES

Individuals derived from Palearctic breeding populations of two widespread boreal species have also been recorded from T&T. Such individuals of these and other widespread species probably visit T&T more frequently than the few records suggest, but they are either indistinguishable from Nearctic populations or differ so slightly that they are generally overlooked.

WHIMBREL (*NUMENIUS P. PHAEOPUS*)

The three Palearctic subspecies of Whimbrel are phenotypically distinct from the Nearctic subspecies *hudsonicus* (a common migrant in T&T), and are sometimes considered to be a distinct species (e.g., Hayman *et al.* 1986, Zink *et al.* 1995).

The three previously published sight records from T&T presumably belong to the nominate race of the western Palearctic. Three were seen by J. D. Danzenbaker *et al.* at Caroni, TRI, on 6 July 1975 (ffrench 1977), one was seen by John Bull at Buccoo, TOB, on 30 December 1975 (Bull 1978), and one (or more?) was seen by R. Forster at Caroni, TRI, on 14 February 1984 (ffrench 1991).

On 8 October 2001, an unusually washed out individual was scrutinized for 20 min at Turtle Beach, TOB, by Newton George, F. E. Hayes, M. Kenefick, and William L. Murphy. Although paler than nearby individuals of *hudsonicus*, it was identical in size and shape but had a clean white rump patch extending as a wedge up onto the back, and clean white underwing linings. Subsequent efforts to relocate this individual were unsuccessful.

There are several previous records from elsewhere in the Caribbean, with up to eight in Barbados (Buckley *et al.* 2007). In South America there are several records from Venezuela (Hilty 2003) and one from French Guiana (Ingels *et al.* 2003).

COMMON TERN (*STERNA H. HIRUNDO*)

The nominate race breeds on both sides of the Atlantic (Nisbet 2002); thus, individuals breeding on opposite sides of the Atlantic are phenotypically indistinguishable and can be identified only by band recoveries.

An individual banded as a chick at Trutgrund, Korpo, Finland, on 2 July 1968 was recovered by Joseph Nandalal at Chaguanas, TRI, on 8 February 1970 (ffrench 1975).

The only other record of trans-Atlantic vagrancy from populations breeding in the Palearctic is the recovery in Brazil of four birds banded as chicks in the Azores (Hays *et al.* 1999).

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