

FIRST RECORD OF BRIDLED QUAIL-DOVE (*GEOTRYGON MYSTACEA*) FOR ST. MARTIN

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Abstract: We document the first record of Bridled Quail-Dove (*Geotrygon mystacea*) for St. Martin. An adult male was observed on the northwest slope of Pic Paradis on 22 January and subsequently captured and banded on 3 February 2006.

Key words: Bridled Quail-Dove, distributional record, *Geotrygon mystacea*, Lesser Antilles, St. Martin

Resumen: PRIMER REGISTRO DE LA PERDIZ DE MARTINICA (*GEOTRYGON MYSTACEA*) EN ST. MARTIN. Se documenta el primer registro de la Perdiz de Martinica (*Geotrygon mystacea*) para St. Martin. La especie fue observada en las cuevas del noroeste de Pic Paradis el 22 de enero y después fue capturado y anillado el 3 de febrero de 2006.

Palabras clave: Antillas Menores, distributional record, *Geotrygon mystacea*, St. Martin

Résumé : PREMIÈRE OBSERVATION DE LA COLOMBE À CROISSANTS (*GEOTRYGON MYSTACEA*) POUR SAINT-MARTIN. Nous fournissons des informations sur la première observation pour Saint-Martin de la Colombe à croissants (*Geotrygon mystacea*). Un mâle adulte a été observé le 22 janvier 2006 sur les pentes nord du Pic Paradis puis a été capturé et bagué le 3 février.

Mots-clés : Colombe à croissants, distribution, *Geotrygon mystacea*, Petites Antilles, Saint-Martin

THE BRIDLED QUAIL-DOVE (*Geotrygon mystacea*) is considered a species of concern by BirdLife International due to its restricted range from eastern Puerto Rico south to St. Lucia. It is listed as territorially endangered in the U. S. Virgin Islands (Platenberg *et al.* 2005). It is a resident species throughout much of the Lesser Antilles, Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico; however, it is not found on Anguilla, St. Martin, Barbados, St. Vincent, the Grenadines, or Grenada (Seaman 1966, Voous and Koelers 1967, Hoogerwerf 1977, Bond 1987, Blankenship 1990, Chipley 1991, Rivera-Milan 1992, Wauer and Wunderle 1992, Keith 1997, Evans and James 1997, Raffaele *et al.* 1998). The nearest islands to St. Martin where the Bridled Quail-Dove is found are on Saba and St. Eustatius, the islands immediately south of St. Martin. Here we report the first record of the Bridled Quail-Dove for St. Martin.

OBSERVATIONS

On 22 January 2006, Rick Newman (RN) observed a single Bridled Quail-Dove (*Geotrygon mystacea*) within secondary dry forest (approximate elevation 250 m) on the northwest slopes of Pic Paradis, French St. Martin. At approximately 16:30 hr, RN flushed the bird off a rock wall. The bird flew low (<1 m) off the ground and landed approximately 5 m away. RN observed the bird for over 5 min before departing and noted all unique plumage

characteristics.

On 2 February 2006, Bertrand Jno Baptiste (BJB) and Adam Brown (AB) observed a Bridled Quail-Dove at the same location as RN, presumably the same bird. The bird was sitting on a branch of a fig tree (*Ficus* sp.) approximately 2 m off the ground. On 3 February, AB extracted a Bridled Quail-Dove from a mist-net located 5 m to the north of where the Bridled Quail-Dove was previously observed. The bird was banded, measured, and photographed in the hand by BJB, AB, and Jorge Brocca, before being released. The bird was not observed following its release; however, no surveys were conducted after 3 February.

AB banded the dove with a French CRBPO band # GY55814 and recorded the following measurements and observations while the bird was in-hand: wing, 172 mm; tail, 102mm; tarsus, 44mm; and exposed culmen, 8.6mm. The furcular hollow was half full of fat. Weight was not taken. The skull was completely ossified indicating it was an after-hatch year bird while the bird was sexed as a male based on extensive iridescence on the hind-neck and upper back. AB noted slight body and feather wear, and synchronous molt of the third primary, where the feathers had grown back by approximately one-third.

The reddish-brown on the primaries was in stark contrast with its otherwise brown upperparts. There was a white horizontal line below the eye. It also

had a light colored bill tip. The hind-neck was iridescent blue-purple and extended to the upper back. While the crown appeared dark in stark contrast to the white stripe below the eye, it did not appear to contain iridescent coloration. The individual was light buffy-brown below from the throat down.

DISCUSSION

There are no published records of this species moving between islands. However, movements among most Lesser Antillean islands south of St. Martin would be difficult to detect, as the species is found on most islands. Movements of other members of the family Columbidae have been documented and therefore it appears probable that this species occasionally disperses between islands. Rivera-Milan (1995) documented movements of the Scaly-naped Pigeon (*Patagioenas squamosa*) in response to a hurricane on Puerto Rico and particularly on Vieques Island. McNair *et al.* (2006) provided additional information on Bridled Quail-Dove movements, where on St. Croix there is a record of several birds spending a short period within dry forest habitat, then dispersing approximately 15 mi from their normal range within the island's moist forest.

The autumn of 2005 was a memorable one for strong west-northwest moving hurricanes and tropical storms. We surmise that the bird most likely originated from an island in the southern part of the species range, perhaps having been caught in one of those strong systems and subsequently making land-fall on St. Martin. Additional monitoring of this area on St. Martin will take place to survey for additional individuals of this species and perhaps a new breeding population.

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