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Each species is listed in the morphometrics table in phylogenetic order following nomenclature used by the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds (7th ed., 1998). Perhaps one misgiving is that only English names are included. The table has Adobe PDF bookmarks listed by order, and for Passeriformes, the families are also listed. Species are shown grouped by island, and the sample sizes of all birds measured per island are given. For species inhabiting more than one island, descriptive statistics are given for all islands combined, followed by each island, and further separated by gender and age when available.

Most impressive was the willingness of the authors to openly share their raw data. The individual species' data files consist of Microsoft Excel spreadsheets with the complete set of raw data for each. For those users without this software, this could present a problem. However, Microsoft does offer a free Excel Viewer on their web site. Within each file, records are listed by date, island, banding site, and habitat. The authors do include a summary table in the book listing the islands, banding sites, and major vegetation associations in which the birds were mist netted or collected. It would have been helpful for the authors to include latitude, longitude, and elevation for each site.

The authors acknowledge the lack of data testing gender and age, especially for rare and endangered species, non-forest species, and broad-ranging species. The authors intend to continually to add more data and encourage others to do so as well. With the information age this may become a reality.

Perhaps the next phase of this data set could be completed via a cooperative internet based project such as the Avian Knowledge Network (AKN), an international organization of government and non-government institutions focused on understanding the patterns and dynamics of bird populations across the Western Hemisphere. The AKN is bringing together observational data on birds. This includes data from bird-monitoring, bird-banding, and broad-scale citizen-based bird-surveillance programs.

As the authors readily admit, "...it was difficult for us to standardize everything. Despite the inconsistencies, we hope that researchers will benefit by having the "raw" data to use in analyses of their own." I am certain that we will see this monumental data set cited over and over for many years to come.—KENT MCFARLAND, *Vermont Center for Ecostudies, PO Box 420, Norwich, Vermont, 05055 USA; e-mail: kmcfarland@vtcostudies.org.*

A LA DÉCOUVERTE DES OISEAUX D'HAÏTI.—Florence E. Sergile. 2005. Société Audubon Haiti. 188 pp. ISBN: 99935-2-558-8. \$45; available (payable by check) from Florence Sergile, 3407 NW 54th Lane, Gainesville, FL 32653, USA.

Haiti is arguably in greater dire need of immediate, concerted conservation efforts than any other Western Hemisphere nation. The country's burgeoning human population, fueled by decades of socioeconomic hardship and political instability, has unwittingly brought about massive ecological degradation. The richly diverse avifauna of the island of Hispaniola is relegated in Haiti to a few remnants of intact habitat. To a situation that at times appears hopeless, Florence Sergile's *A la Découverte des Oiseaux d'Haiti* provides an uplifting glimmer of hope. Part entertainment, part teaching tool, part rallying cry for conservation, longtime Haitian bird expert and committed educator Sergile has created a remarkable, inspirational piece of work. Under the aegis of Haiti's leading bird conservation group, Société Audubon Haiti, and with financial support from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, this book promises to change the way Haitians perceive their country's avifauna.

Sergile's engaging, attractive, and sturdy spiral-bound book is aimed primarily at Haitian children, but is designed for use by school teachers and interested adults as well. Written entirely in French, with bird names given in Creole, it is both user-friendly and technically sound. From the front inside cover flap, which briefly and clearly explains how to use the book, to the four pocket-sized inserts of common birds inside the back cover, the book is geared towards being fun and practical to use. It is liberally illustrated with colorful diagrams and sketches, as well as beautifully-reproduced images of birds from the 1998 *A guide to the birds of the West Indies* by Herb Raffaele and others. This blend of informal art with technically accurate, aesthetically striking illustrations of Haiti's birds is effective and instructive.

A textbook this is not. Technical ornithological information is well-integrated with the informal, hands-on "how-to" aspects of the book, in ways that should enable users to learn about avian biology without being overwhelmed or bored by it. Throughout the book, an engaging cartoon *Chingolo* appears to provide useful information and tips on birds, their biology and natural history, and how to observe and appreciate them. This lively *p'tit oiseau* speaks in a first-person voice and addresses its audi-

ence in familiar terms, providing a spark to the pages. In addition to its crucial role of engaging readers, *Chingolo* highlights and summarizes important concepts, allowing readers to easily glean the book's main points.

The book is organized into nine chapters, followed by a brief glossary, bibliography, and index of bird names (scientific, French, and English), ending with a separate index of common Haitian names (mostly Creole). Chapter 1 begins simply with (translated): "Pay attention around you. You will see and hear many birds. This manual will help you discover and better know them." This sets the book's interactive tone. Sergile (and *Chingolo*) then proceed to encourage young readers further in basic concepts of bird identification and appreciation, explaining the different categories of species in Haiti (introduced, migrants, residents, and endemics) and presenting a very basic geography lesson on Haiti with a simple but useful map. Chapter 2 is a primer on ornithology, mainly focusing on classification of the 14 avian orders found in Haiti and their associated families. Each order is described in a single paragraph and illustrated by one or more distinctive representatives. This chapter ends with a brief discussion of optics and a "how-to" of observing birds in the field.

Chapters 3-8 (pp. 35-149) form the heart of the book and are organized to cover the common species in Haiti's major habitat types, enabling readers to learn not only about birds, but also about habitat and geography. Each chapter introduces a specific habitat type and identifies several common features, also depicting the distribution of that habitat on a map of the country. Appropriately, Sergile begins with birds of human-modified habitats, by far the most familiar group to most Haitians. From Cattle Egret to Hispaniolan Woodpecker to Bananaquit, each species is given a full page with a Raffaele *et al.* illustration, brief description of identifying characteristics and voice, its overall status in Haiti, its habitat preferences, its nest and eggs, and at least one interesting fact. This and subsequent chapters conclude with a simple table that outlines the breed-

ing period and clutch size of each species. A cartoon bird above each table proclaims (translated): "Protect my young! Respect the breeding season. Leave my eggs in my nest."

Chapters 4-7 cover birds of coastal habitats, freshwater lakes and wetlands, dry scrub and forests, and mountain forests. Chapter 8, titled "Very special birds," covers ten resident species of conservation concern, explaining some of the factors that influence the conservation status of a species and what can or is being done in Haiti. This chapter concludes with a well-detailed presentation on the migrant birds of Haiti and the phenomenon of migration between North America and the Greater Antilles. A discussion of the mechanics and uses of bird banding follows, and the chapter concludes with brief illustrated species accounts of ten migrant species that overwinter in Haiti.

Chapter 9 is simply titled "Conservation." Here Sergile makes liberal use of *Chingolo*, beginning with an upbeat account of current bird celebrations and festivals in Haiti, then explaining the seven main causes of bird population declines, including a list of ten threatened species and the causes specifically applying to each. The chapter ends with a table of 87 species, presenting a month-by-month calendar of when hunting is permitted (if at all) and prohibited. *Chingolo* concludes by encouraging simple conservation actions that anyone can take, and urging hunters to obey laws. The message is just right—neither shrill nor alarmist, simply positive and straightforward.

Florence Sergile and Audubon Société Haiti have done an extraordinary service to the cause of Haitian bird conservation with *A la Découverte des Oiseaux d'Haiti*. Whereas the book alone will not solve Haiti's severe ecological crisis, it is a strong step in the right direction. Other countries in the Caribbean and elsewhere would do well to emulate Sergile's effort and make available similar resources for succeeding generations of local conservationists.—CHRIS RIMMER, *Vermont Center for Ecostudies, P.O. Box 457, White River Junction, VT 05001; e-mail: crimmer@vtcostudies.org.*