

SENEGAL PARROT, BLUE-CROWNED PARAKEET, OLIVE-THROATED PARAKEET,
AND GREEN-WINGED MACAW: NEW PSITTACINE RECORDS FOR PUERTO RICO

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Abstract.—We report four new psittacine records for Puerto Rico: Senegal Parrot (*Poicephalus senegalus*), Blue-crowned Parakeet (*Aratinga acuticaudata*), Olive-throated Parakeet (*Aratinga nana*), and Green-winged Macaw (*Ara chloroptera*).

Resumen.—NUEVOS RÉCORDS DE PSITTACINE PARA PUERTO RICO. Nosotros reportamos cuatro nuevos récords de psittacine para Puerto Rico: Cotorra de Senegal (*Poicephalus senegalus*), Periquito de Cabeza Azul (*Aratinga acuticaudata*), Periquito de Garganta Verde-Olivo (*Aratinga nana*) y Papagayo de Alas Verdes (*Ara chloroptera*).

Key words: *Ara chloroptera*, *Aratinga acuticaudata*, *Aratinga nana*, *Blue-crowned Parakeet*, *exotic*, *Green-winged Macaw*, *introduced*, *Olive-throated Parakeet*, *Poicephalus senegalus*, *Puerto Rico*, *Senegal Parrot*, *status*

A TOTAL OF 31 SPECIES of Psittaciformes have been recorded from Puerto Rico (Pérez-Rivera and Vélez 1980, Pérez-Rivera 1992). Only two of these species were pre-Columbian, the Puerto Rican Parrot (*Amazona vittata*) and an endemic subspecies of the Hispaniolan Parakeet (*Aratinga chloroptera maugei*), of which, only the parrot is still present, but severely endangered (Forshaw 1977, Pérez-Rivera and Vélez 1980, Biaggi 1997, Raffaele *et al.* 1998). During the last four decades, hundreds of exotic psittacines were imported into Puerto Rico for the pet trade (Pérez-Rivera and Vélez, 1980; Pérez-Rivera, 1992, Raffaele and Kepler 1992). Many of these pet parrots escaped and became established around the island. Here we report four new psittacine records for Puerto Rico: Senegal Parrot (*Poicephalus senegalus*), Blue-crowned Parakeet (*Aratinga acuticaudata*), Olive-throated Parakeet (*Aratinga nana*), and Green-winged Macaw (*Ara chloroptera*).

On 17 September 1992, we observed and photographed a single adult Senegal Parrot, within the University of Puerto Rico's Río Piedras Campus. The parrot was frequently detected by its distinctive high-pitched whistling calls. It followed flocks of Monk Parakeets (*Myiopsitta monachus*) and Red-masked Parakeets (*Aratinga erythrogenys*), and was regularly seen alone until 10 October 1992. On that day, three other Senegal Parrots were present. We believe this group consisted of a pair with their two fledglings. Two birds were smaller in size, duller in color, playful, and showed little flight coordination. All four birds were seen sporadically for about a month after the initial observation, after which three disappeared. Until recently (March 2000), only one individual had been observed around the campus, but

now it appears that a second Senegal parrot is in the area (J. Fumero, pers. comm.). We are not sure if this second bird is from the original group seen in 1992. The Senegal Parrots have been seen eating the fruits and seeds from casoa de Siam (*Cassia siamea* Lam. [Fabaceae]) and the juicy pulp of mango (*Mangifera indica* L. [Anacardiaceae]) fruit. The parrots roost within the Monk Parakeet colony on the highest branches of mahogany (*Swietenia mahogany* [L.] Jacq. and *Swietenia macrophylla* G. King [Meliaceae]) trees on the university campus. These sightings likely represent rare escapees from captivity. Their native range is central-western Africa (Forshaw 1977).

We observed three apparently different pairs of Blue-crowned Parakeets (*Aratinga acuticaudata*). Our first record was on 9 December 1989 in the Cuyey area of San Juan, where a pair was seen flying. The pair was attracted to Salguero-Faría's pet parrots and seemed rather tame. They were seen for several days until they were trapped by a neighbor and traded to a local pet store. A second sighting occurred near Vacía Talega in the Piñones Forest Reserve on 11 November 1993. A pair of parakeets was perched on top of white mangrove (*Laguncularia racemosa* [Combretaceae]), where they remained for approximately 17 min. Blue-crowned Parakeets were seen for a third time near Lago Dos Bocas, Utuado on 20 March 1994. Here, a pair was seen confidently foraging on the ground on the opposite side of the road from some local food establishments. As we got closer, the pair went to a tree and after about 5 min flew into the nearby forest. Because of the birds' indifference towards human presence, we believe these were also escapees. The Blue-crowned Parakeet is

native to eastern Colombia, northern Venezuela (including Isla Margarita), south to Paraguay, Uruguay, and northern Argentina (Forshaw 1977).

The Olive-throated Parakeet is native to Jamaica and the Caribbean slope of southern Mexico and Central America (Forshaw 1977, Raffaele *et al.* 1998), and it was recently reported in the Dominican Republic (Raffaele *et al.* 1998). During late morning on 11 April 1993, a pair of *A. nana* was observed near the Natural Sciences building at the Río Piedras campus of the University of Puerto Rico. The pair landed on a casuarina (*Casuarina equisetifolia* J. R. & G. Forst. [Casuarinaceae]) tree and perched for a few minutes while softly chattering. Then they began to examine an arboreal termite nest for about 10 min, after which they flew off. In their native range, Olive-throated Parakeets breed from March to June (Forshaw 1977, Raffaele *et al.* 1998). The pair has not been seen thereafter and may have escaped from captivity.

Several species of exotic psittacines have been reported from the area of Tintillo, municipality of Guaynabo, including Blue-and-yellow Macaws (*Ara ararauna*), Umbrella Cockatoos (*Cacatua alba*), and Canary-winged Parakeets (*Brotogeris versicolorus*) (Pérez-Rivera and Vélez 1980; Pérez-Rivera *et al.* 1985; Pérez-Rivera 1992, 1998). On one of our visits to the area (17 December 1997), we counted 23 macaws, one of which was a Green-winged Macaw (*Ara chloroptera*). We believe it was a male because of its rather massive head and bill. It had not pair-bonded with any Blue-and-Yellow Macaws and perched and flew alone at the edge of the flock. As of December 1999, the Green-winged Macaw was still alone and accompanying the Blue-and-Yellow Macaw flock, sometimes wandering as far as Trujillo Alto, east of Guaynabo. According to some Cupey residents, earlier unconfirmed sightings were made of a Green-winged Macaw from 1984 to 1986 (Mario L. Salguero, pers. comm.). Recently, a Green-winged Macaw was seen flying near Cupey

on several occasions joined by several Blue-and-Yellow Macaws (Mario L. Salguero, pers. comm.). M. L. Salguero also saw both macaw species over Old San Juan. It is likely that all sightings are of the same individual, since the birds flew toward the Tintillo area just before sundown. These Green-winged Macaws are likely escaped pets. The native range of the Green-winged Macaw is from eastern Panama to northern Argentina, east of the Andes (Forshaw 1977).

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