

## LEUCISM IN CRESCENT-EYED PEWEE (*CONTOPUS CARIBAEUS*) IN WESTERN CUBA

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*Resumen.*— LEUCISM EN EL BOBITO CHICO (*CONTOPUS CARIBAEUS*) EN EL OESTE DE CUBA. Leucism se reporta en dos individuos del Bobito Chico (*Contopus caribaeus*) de la Ciénaga de Zapata y Pinar del Río, Cuba.

*Key words:* coloration, *Contopus caribaeus*, *Crescent-eyed Pewee*, Cuba, leucism, plumage

LEUCISM AMONG PEWEES of the genus *Contopus* appears to be virtually unknown. Kimball Garrett (*in litt.*, February 2000) has drawn our attention to a leucistic specimen of Western Wood-Pewee (*Contopus sordidulus*), in the Los Angeles County Museum (LACM 46036), with typical plumage except for a pure white chin and throat, and numerous pure white primaries (p4–10 on the right wing and p8–10 on the left wing). It was taken in Orange County, California, USA, in September. In addition, George Wallace (*in litt.*, February 2000) noted the presence of a leucistic Eastern Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*) wintering in Florida in 1999–2000, and reports that the only other known instance of such aberration in this species was also recorded in Florida in winter.

We possess extensive experience with the Crescent-eyed Pewee (*C. caribaeus*), having observed probably over 1000 individuals over the years, and have not noted any instances of albinism or leucism in the species. Neither Wallace, nor Allan Keith, who shared the observations below, is aware of any instances of leucism in *C. caribaeus*.

On 10 February 2000, in an area of Ciénaga de Zapata, Matanzas Province, western Cuba, known as La Majagua, ca. 5 km east of Soplillar, we noted a striking individual of *C. caribaeus*. It had a gleaming white crown, streaked darker, forehead and supraloral, whereas the majority of the underparts from the chin to the belly were off-white, with tiny dark

streaks. The tertials were broadly fringed creamy-white (but asymmetrically patterned), extending narrowly onto the greater coverts, as well as onto at least one primary. The rectrices were also extensively fringed and, with the exception of the two outermost pairs, tipped creamy-white. It was very approachable, although this behavior is entirely “normal,” and it continued to feed unconcernedly despite our presence. On 16 February 2000, at Parque Nacional La Güira, Pinar del Río Province, we found a second leucistic individual, although it was substantially less marked than the first. This individual was much less well marked, with the wing and tail markings being more normal, and the leucistic coloration being largely confined to the head and underparts.

We consider it extraordinary to have discovered two leucistic individuals within a matter of days when such an aberration appears unknown within the species, and is apparently extremely rare for the genus.

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