

HOUSE SPARROWS ON NORTH ANDROS ISLAND, BAHAMAS

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The House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) is listed as a rare migrant on Andros Island, Bahamas (Dean and Osborne 1992). However, recent observations and conversations with people on the island indicate that the species is locally established as a permanent resident on Andros. During a survey of North Andros on 30 July 1995, Matt Voelker, Ben Frazier, and I observed a small flock of 12 House Sparrows (4 males and 8 females and immatures) in the settlement of Cargill Creek. We watched the flock and individuals with binoculars for approximately 20 mins. to within 15 m in good light. Although we did not see evidence of nesting, Clarence Abedi and Chuck Cavender, employees at the U. S. Navy's Atlantic Undersea Testing and Evaluation Center (AUTC) in nearby Fresh Creek, informed me that House Sparrows are common nesters on the base, having been present since approximately 1978. It is not clear if the Cargill Creek flock represents an expansion of the Fresh Creek population or is of independent origin.

House Sparrows probably arrived in the Bahamas as strays on ships coming from Florida (Brudenell-Bruce 1975). The first recent record for the species in the archipelago was in 1959 on New Providence (Bond 1963). Since then the House Sparrow has been documented or become established on several islands in the northern Bahamas, including Bimini (Norton 1988), Grand Bahama (Bond 1965), Abaco (Norton 1984), Eleuthera (Weiss 1993), the Berry Islands (*vide* T. White), and Andros, all of which are frequented by cargo and pleasure boats from the United States. On North Andros, House Sparrows are limited to AUTC sites frequented by ships from Florida (Cargill Creek is adjacent to an off-base AUTC installation). As populations have become established in the Bahama islands, it is possible that dispersal between islands has occurred via inter-island shipping traffic. On North Andros, at least, this does not appear to have been the case, since populations only occur on or near AUTC sites.

Regardless of the means by which House Sparrows arrived on the different islands of the Bahamas, there is legitimate concern over the impact they may have on native birds. On Walker's Cay, House Sparrows destroyed a Common Ground-Dove (*Columbina passerina*) nest by stealing nesting material

(Jackson and Jackson 1985). Of greater concern however, is the potential effect on cavity-nesters in the Bahamas (Jackson and Tate 1974). As evidence of this, nest boxes erected for the endemic Bahama Swallow (*Tachycineta cyaneoviridis*) on Andros were used by House Sparrows (C. Cavender, pers. comm.). Currently, House Sparrows are apparently confined to the environs of the AUTC base and off-site installations on Andros, whereas the Bahama Swallow naturally nests in pine forests on the island. Nevertheless, the House Sparrow populations on North Andros and other islands are worth watching for evidence of expansion.

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CAPTURA DE UN COCO ROJO (*EUDOCIMUS RUBER*; AVES: THRESKIORNITHIDAE) AL NORTE DE CIEGO DE AVILA, CUBA

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El Coco Rojo (*Eudocimus ruber*) es un hermoso ciconiforme representado de forma natural en varias zonas de la costa atlántica sudamericana y que vive casi siempre en lugares costeros cercanos a estuarios manglares y ciénagas (Palmer

1962). Es muy parecido al Coco Blanco (*E. albus*) en tamaño, habitat y estructura, fácilmente identificable por su color rojo.

En Cuba existen algunos reportes visuales de ejemplares