

THE EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE REACHES THE LESSER ANTILLES

P. WILLIAM SMITH

South Florida Research Center, Everglades National Park,
40001 State Road 9336, Homestead, Florida 33034, USA

In 1986, I helped prove that a burgeoning population of supposedly domestic "Ringed Turtle-Doves, *Streptopelia risoria*," in southern Florida and the northern Bahamas instead was the Eurasian Collared-Dove, *S. decaocto*, a species originally native to western Asia which had colonized western Europe mainly since World War II (Smith and Kale 1986). A year later, I published color photographs showing how to distinguish the two species, with text discussing their origins and prospects in the New World (Smith 1987). My prediction that they would succeed in North America has thus far proven correct. Their population now extends west at least to Louisiana, and possibly it already exceeds a million individuals in the New World. Eurasian Collared-Doves also have reached Cuba (Garrido and Kirkconnell 1990), but until recently I was unaware of any other sites in the Antilles where it occurred.

On 23 May 1995 I learned from James Daley, a member of the Montserrat Forestry Department, that "Ringed Turtle-Doves" had been present near Plymouth since 1990. We visited the site and I determined them to be *S. decaocto* based on appearance and voice. On 26 May 1995, I was told by Bertrand Jno. Baptiste, a member of the Dominica Forestry Department, that similar doves had been in Roseau since 1987. Again, I was able to confirm *S. decaocto*. Both Daley and Jno. Baptiste had recently discovered nests on Montserrat and Dominica, respectively.

Eurasian Collared-Doves typically establish outpost populations hundreds of kilometers or more from their source,

then slowly backfill the intervening region over time. The fact that the species has not, to my knowledge, yet been reported from Hispaniola, Puerto Rico, or elsewhere in the Antilles is not unexpected. Even if present, a small population may be overlooked or be misidentified. However, the natural adaptability of this species, and its remarkable reproductive capability, almost guarantees that in time it will occupy most or all the inhabited West Indies. It is not a wilderness species but instead is mainly commensal with man. I am not aware of any evidence that it interferes with native species.

I still have a modest supply of reprints of my 1987 paper. It should help anyone unfamiliar with this species to identify it and to learn its history and something of its ecology. I will be happy to send a copy (while my supply lasts) to any offshore SCO member. Please write me at P.O. Box 901341, Homestead, Florida 33090, USA.

LITERATURE CITED

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NUEVO HOSPEDERO DE *MOLOTHRUS BONARIENSIS* (FAMILIA EMBERICIDAE) PARA CUBA

ALEJANDRO LLANES SOSA Y JESÚS HERNÁNDEZ DE ARMAS
Instituto de Ecología y Sistemática, Academia de Ciencias de Cuba

El Pájero Vaquero (*Molothrus bonariensis*) es un parásito de nidos, que se encuentra distribuido en la zona tropical y subtropical, norte de Venezuela, sur y norte del Amazonas, este de Panamá a Chile, Argentina y Trinidad y Tobago (Meyer and Phelps 1978). Debido a la gran cantidad de hospederos y a la presencia de habitats disponibles creados por la actividad agrícola y ganadera, el mismo ha expandido su rango de distribución en América del Sur y el Caribe (Johnson 1967, Bond 1973).

La raza del Pájero Vaquero involucrada en la expansión en el Caribe es *M. b. minima*, confinada originalmente al norte de Brasil, Guyana y Trinidad y Tobago (Post y Wiley 1977). En

Cuba esta especie se reportó por primera vez en 1984 en los alrededores del Central Progreso en Cárdenas donde se capturaron tres individuos con jaula de trampa y se sitúa como fecha probable de llegada a nuestro país en 1980 (Garrido 1984). La presencia de esta ave en la mayor de las Antillas fue pronosticada por Post y Wiley (1977). Ésta era inminente teniendo en cuenta la rápida expansión de la misma en las Antillas Mayores: Puerto Rico en 1955, Isla Mona en 1971 y en Santo Domingo sólo un año más tarde (1972).

Desde su primera aparición en Cuba hasta la fecha, el Pájero Vaquero se ha convertido rápidamente en una especie