

lands are expected to be included as part of the Morne Diablotin National Park.

BIRD NEST MONITORING

Bird nest monitoring was conducted by Benito Espinal and Bertrand Jno Baptiste, who expect to publish their data later this year. This research activity has resulted in an exciting discovery for Dominica; i.e., it has been confirmed that the Bare-eyed Thrush (*Turdus nidigenis*) is a resident breeder in an area known as Pentiwax. This study also confirmed that both the Bare-eyed Thrush and the Red-legged Thrush (*Turdus plumbeus*) are using soil in the construction of their nest. Several other bird nests were observed (including Barn Owl *Tyto alba*, House

Wren *Troglodytes aedon*, Broad Wing Hawk *Buteo platypterus*, and Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola*).

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Overseas visit – November 1998, Trinidad – FAO Workshop on Management of wild bird population in the West Indies.
- Training for Tour Guides in Fauna and Flora of Dominica.
- Participation in International Migratory Bird Day and World Birdwatch Day.
- Search for Bare-eyed Thrush in several habitats around the island.

ISLAND REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

ST. LUCIA

DONALD ANTHONY

ISLAND REPRESENTATIVE—ST. LUCIA

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This report is a summary of the main activities within the Wildlife Section of the Forestry Department in St. Lucia from August 1998 to July 1999.

PARROT PROJECT

Before the parrot breeding season, all known and climable St. Lucia Parrot nests trees in the Quilese and Edmund area were inspected. Most of the nests inspected were dry and ready for the nesting season. A few had to be drained of water and in some nests inspection doors had to be replaced. In March alone, over 25 climbs were made to inspect parrot nests and to verify activity. Wild honey bees occupied some parrot nest sites or cavities near nesting sites, making occupation by parrots and inspection by humans impossible. Nest monitoring continued this year and we found that nest success was particularly poor, with seven active nests failing.

Parrots are increasing their range into new areas like Forestiere and La Sociere in northern St. Lucia, we interpret as a sign of population growth. Nest searches in the Forestiere area were fruitless, but it is possible that parrots will be nesting there soon.

Three tree top observation platforms were replaced in Quilese. They had been in place since September 1994, but succumbed to the elements in the forest canopy.

For the first time ever the fully decomposed remains of an adult parrot were found in the wild. Only the bones and feathers were found at Parrot Hill in Quilese, and apparently the bird died from natural causes.

ST. LUCIA WHIPTAIL TRANSLOCATION PROJECT

Monitoring of the translocated population of the St. Lucia whiptail lizard (*Cnemidophorus vanzoi*) from Maria Island Major to Praslin Island is continuing. From the original seven pairs translocated to Praslin Island in 1995, today there are over two hundred whiptails on the island. Trapping of rats that apparently swim across to Praslin Island is ongoing. In the dry season the whiptails can be easy prey for American Kestrels (*Falco sparverius*), as most trees shed their leaves and the forest on Praslin Island becomes quite dry. Presently, the Whiptail population on Praslin Island is healthy and there have been no signs of rats for some time.

TRAINING ACTIVITY

A training programme was conducted for forest officers to identify migratory and local bird species. Two training sites were used, Boriel's pond in the south and WASA water treatment ponds in the north. A rotational programme was in place for the officers to visit the sites on a weekly basis from January to April.

MIGRANT SPECIES SURVEY

From January to April three wetland areas were visited; i.e., WASA Sewage treatment ponds at Bella Rosa in Gros-Islet in the north, Boreil's pond in the south, and Bois D'orange swamp, also in the north of St. Lucia. The survey was carried out either early morning from 07:00-09:00 hr or 15:00-17:00 hr. Surveys were conducted twice a week and times were alternated for each site.

A total of 10 species were recorded, including:

- Green Heron
- Solitary Sandpiper*
- Common Moorhen
- Lesser Yellowlegs*

- Little Blue Heron
- Snowy Egret*
- Great Blue Heron
- Tri-colored Heron
- Belted Kingfisher*
- Little Egret*

* = migrant

The most common among the migrants were the Lesser Yellowlegs and Great Blue Heron

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Many local and visiting groups were taken on educational tours to nature reserves and wildlife sanctuaries around St. Lucia.
- Six agoutis were born in the Mini Zoo this year.
- Responded to requests to remove several wild bee swarms from homes near the Castries.
- Assisted Dr. Ethan J. Temeless from Amherst College, USA, in research on hummingbirds and flowers in St. Lucia entitled "evolution of bill and flower curvature: a test of hypothesis."



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