Sociedad de la Ornitología Caribeña

EL PITIRRE

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Tyrannus dominicensis

Pitirre, Gray Kingbird, Pestigre, Petchary

The Society of Caribbean Ornithology is a non-profit organization whose goals are to promote the scientific study and conservation of Caribbean birds and their habitats, to provide a link among island ornithologists and those elsewhere, to provide a written forum for researchers in the region (refereed journal—Ornitología Caribeña, published in conjunction with the Puerto Rico Ornithological Society) and to provide data or technical aid to conservation groups in the Caribbean.

La Sociedad de la Ornitología Caribeña es una organización sin fines de lucro cuyas metas son promover el estudio científico y la conservación de la avifauna caribeña, auspiciar un simposio anual sobre la ornitología caribeña, publicar una revista profesional llamada Ornitología Caribeña (publicada en conjunto con la Sociedad Ornitológica de Puerto Rico), ser una fuente de comunicación entre ornitólogos caribeños y en otras áreas y proveer ayuda técnica o datos a grupos de conservación en el caribe.

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PEDRO BLANCO RODRIGUEZ[1], ALEJANDRO LLANES SOSA[1] Y RON RIDOUT[2]
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El surgimiento de dos nuevas razas o hibridos: la Bijirita de Brewster y la Bijirita de Clarence, como resultado del cruzamiento en estado silvestre entre las especies neárticas migratorias de la familia Parulidae: la Bijirita de Alas Azules (*Vermivora pinus*) y la Bijirita de Alas Doradas (*V. chrysoptera*) en territorios del noreste de Canadá y Estados Unidos, es un hecho muy conocido, aunque durante la época de cría en dichos territorios, estos individuos no se les suele observar con facilidad ya que no son muy abundantes.

En territorios de invierno en el Caribe, particularmente en Cuba, *V. pinus* y *V. chrysoptera* están consideradas como transeuntes migratorios raros y sobre los hibridos de estas especies, no se conoce de la existencia de algún registro en el país que demuestre la observación de alguna de las dos razas referidas inicialmente en este trabajo.

En febrero de 1992, durante el desarrollo de un proyecto cooperativo internacional entre el Laboratorio Cubano de Aves Migratorias (MIGRALAB) y el Servicio de Vida Silvestre de Canadá, dirigido al estudio y anillamiento de aves neárticas migratorias en ecosistemas boscosos cubanos, se capturo en las redes ornitológicas en la localidad de El Brinco, en la Ciénaga de Zapata, un individuo de la raza Brewster con las siguientes medidas morfométricas: ala — 57 mm, cola — 45 mm, tarso — 8.5 mm, pico — 9.1 mm y peso — 7 g y se le tomó además una foto en material de diapositivas (35 mm). Éste registro constituye el primer reporte de esta ave para el territorio cubano.

NUEVO REGISTRO DEL FRAILECILLO SILVADOR *CHARADRIUS MELODUS* (AVES: CHARADRIIDAE) EN CUBA

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El Frailecillo Silvador (*Charadrius melodus*) es una especie migratoria néartica declarada en peligro de extinción a nivel mundial a consecuencia de la alarmante disminución detectada en sus poblaciones en Canadá y Estados Unidos en los últimos años (Sidle 1985). Por tal motivo, varias organizaciones científicas internacionales realizan multiples y prioritarios esfuerzos dirigidos fundamentalmente hacia la ubicación y conservación de sus habitats de cría e invierno, situados en América del Norte y el Caribe.

En Cuba, esta especie ha sido considerada un raro visitante invernal (Garrido y García Montaña 1975), sin embargo, estudios ornitológicos recientes realizados con la especie, demuestran que este chorlo utiliza el territorio del archipiélago cubano como sitio de tránsito cada año durante el invierno (Blanco et al. 1993). De igual forma, los resultados obtenidos en el censo internacional de invierno del Frailecillo Silvador desarrollado en 1991, situan a Cuba entre los paises de mayor importancia en el área del Golfo de México y el Caribe con mayor numero de individuos registrados (Haig y Plisner, en prensa). Es por ello que en la actualidad la obtención de nuevos registros de esta especie en territorio cubano, constituyen un elemento básico de importancia en la delimitación y conservación de sus sitios de invierno en el país.

Durante un censo de aves acuáticas realizado el 22 de octubre de 1994 en el sector costero norte de Cayo Santa María, se registraron cuatro individuos del Frailecillo Silvador los que se alimentaban cerca de la orilla conjuntamente con seis individuos de la especie Títere Playero (*Charadrius wilsonia*). Este reporte constituye el registro numero 18 de ésta especie neártica en ecosistemas costeros cubanos durante el período de 1965-1994 y el noveno reporte realizado en los últimos cinco años.

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THE EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE REACHES THE LESSER ANTILLES

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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.

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

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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 Pájaro Vaquero involucrada en la expansión en el Caribe es *M. b. minima*, confinada orignalmente 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 Pájaro Vaquero se ha convertido rápidamente en una especie

común, detectándose con mayor facilidad los machos debido a su canto melodioso. Se tienen noticias de que actualmente se encuentra en todo el território nacional, incluyendo a la Isla de la Juventud donde se capturaron dos hembras con jaula de trampa en los alrededores del poblado La Victoria y fueron llevadas a la localidad Los Indios en 1988. Es frecuente encontrar esta especie en lugares relativamente urbanizados cercanos a la Ciudad de la Habana como son: Parque Lenin, Finca La Chata (donde se encuentra ubicado el Instituto de Ecología y Sistemática), Jardín Botánico Nacional, Santa María del Rosario. Tambien es encontrar en zonas de la provincia La Habana dedicadas fundamentalmente a la agricultura y ganaderia como son: Tapaste, Punta Brava, Güines y San José de las Lajas, así como en zonas conservadas que albergan alguanas de las mayores riquezas ornítcas de nuestro país como son: los bosques entre el poblado de Buenaventura hasta Santo Tomás incluyendo este último, Soplillar, alrededores de la Boca de Guamá en al Ciénaga de Zapata, en los pinares al sur del centro turístico La Güira en Pinar del Río y en el cuabal La Olla situado a 12 km al este de la ciudad de Santa Clara.

Garrido (1984) anticipó que las especies natives *Icterus dominicensis melanopsis*, *Agelaius assimilis*, *A. humeralis*, *Quiscalus niger gundlachi* y *Q. n. caribaeus* podrían ser fuertemente parasitadas por el Pájaro Vaquero en Cuba. Hasta el momento sólo se ha reportado el parasitismo de esta ave en el Solibio (*Icterus dominicensis*). Acosta y Mugica (1990) encontraron cinco parejas de esta especie alimentando a sus crías, compuestas en total por nueve Pájaros Vaqueros y un Solibio.

En la mañana del día 9 de junio de 1994 en la Finca La Chata escuchamos un sonido fuerte y repetitivo al pasar por debajo de un flamboyán (*Delonix regia*), emitido por un ave relativamente grande comparada con la que la alimentaba. Al observar los individuos en cuestion con prismáticos 8 x 30 pudimos comprobar que era una pareja de Bien Te Veo (*Vireo altiloquus*) que estaba alimentando a un juvenil de Pájaro Vaquero. El pichón, de color pardo grisáceo con el pico pardo amarillento y el área loral y la parte superior del ojo más claros, producía sonidos procurando alimento constantemente. Una vez alimentado persequía a sus padres adoptivos hasta la percha en la que uno de los dos se posaba, produciendo el mismo sonido solicitando más alimento, a su vez una hembra adulta del parásito se acercaba al pichón al parecer atraida por el llamado del juvenil de su misma especie y la misma fue atacada por la pareja de Bien Te Veo en cuatro oportunidades hasta sacarla del lugar. En 1992 en esta zona se observó a *Molothrus bonariensis* parisitando un nido de Solibio (D. Rodriguez, B. Sanchez y H. Gonzalez, com. pers.).

La conducta de persecusión de los juveniles de Pájaro Vaquero a sus padres adoptivos fue observada tambíen en Santa María del Rosario en junio de 1989, pero en este caso, el juvenil del parásito era alimentado por un Solibio, a 20 m aproximadamente del observador, que a pesar de la distancia que lo separaba, se percató del sonido producido por el pichón y al acercarse al lugar pudo ver la forma en que el padre adoptivo era perseguido hasta la percha donde se posaba. Esto coincide con lo expuesto por Gochfeld (1978) y Acosta y Mugica (1990) en cuanto a la forma de perseguir y reclamo de alimento por parte de los pichones a sus padres adoptivos.

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EL GAVILÁN COLA DE TIJERA *ELANOIDES FORFICATUS FORFICATUS* (LINNEO, 1758) EN CUBA

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Acerca del Gavilán Cola de Tijera (*Elanoides forficatus forficatus*) Garrido y Garcia Montaña (1975) dicen es un "Visitante invernal muy raro" y citan la observación de tres ejemplares para Cuba, uno en 27 Octubre, otro en Agosto y el tercero colectado por A. Naranjo en la zona de Govea, Carretera de San Antonio de los Baños en 21 Febrero de 1970. Pero la história de ésta especie en Cuba, se remonta a las acertadas investigaciones de Gundlach (1873), "Hace más de 20 años que vi un individuo sobre una Laguna Grande en Cardenas. Después me regaló un amigo una piel de un individuo matado en Bahía Honda de una bandada como de 50. Más tarde se observó un ejemplar sobre la Ciénaga de Zapata. En 1856 llegó una bandada a las cercanias de la Habana y se mataron algunos. En 1861 en Agosto, fué

matado un ejemplar no muy lejos de la Habana y en 1866 me regalaron un par (ambos aún vivos con el ala rota), cazados al este de la Habana, donde había muchos volando sobre una laguna." Más tarde, Gundlach (1893) repite lo mismo que en 1873, solo que agrega los habitos alimenticios de la especie, que los ignoraba en 1873.

En la colección histórica de las aves de Gundlach, obran tres ejemplares montados por el mismo, pero sin localidad precisa, aunque las etiquetas dicen Cuba. En la colleción básica del Instituto de Ecología y Sistemática se hallan dos pieles de estudio, una reportada por Garrido y García Montaña (1975) y la segunda colectada por G. Alayón, en Tumbadero, San Antonio de los Baños, Provincia Habana, en Septiembre de 1974.

El autor de estas lineas ha observado o ha recibido testimonios de varios ejemplares volando sobre Cuba en los últimos 50 años. El primer ejemplar fué visto por R. Hernández Martell y el autor en 16 Febrero 1951, en la Peninsula de Hicacos, Varadero Matanzas, volaba a unos 35 m de altura con rumbo N. En el Jardín Zoológico de la Habana, se han exhibido tres ejemplares. Uno entró en el Zoológico en 16 Septiembre 1982, fue capturado en la Korea, cerca del Puente Almendares, Ciudad de la Habana, tenía un ala rota, vivió solo nueve días (D. Legón Boada, com. pers.). Otro entró en 12 Septiembre 1984, fue capturado en Santa Fe, Ciudad de la Habana, vivió hasta Marzo de 1985, soportó el cautiverio por seis meses. El tercero fue colectado dentro de una casa en el Malecón, Ciudad de la Habana, en 14 Septiembre 1985; lieva como residente del zoológico más de nueve años. M. Acosta (com. pers.) observo un ejemplar en octubre de 1988, a las 09:00 hr en el Calvario, Ciudad de la Habana, a la altura de 30 m.

El autor observó, en 22 Enero 1990, un ejemplar en la Costa Sur del Cayo Santa Maria, Cayeria de Caibarién, Provincia de Villa Clara, lievaba rumbo ENE iba a 40 m de altura; también en 16 Marzo 1993 a las 17:45 hr observó tres ejemplares sobre el Reparto La Coronela, Lisa, Ciudad de la Habana, llevaban rumbo NE. J. P. Soy Cayhuelas (Com. pers., en prensa) observó en 9 Marzo 1995, nueve ejemplares que volaban a más de 100 m de altura sobre el área infantil y la micropresa del Parque Zoológico Nacional, a las 10:30 hr con rumbo N iban emitiendo sonidos. A. Llanes, C. Mancina, E. Reyes, A. Hernández y el autor vieron en 9 Marzo 1995 a las 11:35 hr dos bandadas de 21 y 17 individuos respectivamente; la primera sobrevolaba el monte central de la Finca La Chata, sede del Instituto de Ecología y Sistemática, en Boyeros, Ciudad de la Habana, a una altura de 30 m; la segunda volaba sobre el edificio de Colecciones Zoológicas del propio Instituto, a unos 40 m de altura. Las dos bandadas se dirigían hacía el N planeando pausadamente, contra las fuertes rachas de viento. El día estaba nublado y lluvioso. Ese mismo día 9, a las 13:00 hr, A. Llanes, observó un ejemplar, volando a 40 m de altura, con rumbo, sobre la propia Finca La Chata y el día 10 a las 08:30 hr en la misma localidad A. Llanes, C. Mancina y el autor observaron un individuo volando a 30 m de altura, sobre el edificio de colecciones, con rumbo N.

En éste siglo se han registrado 62 ejemplares de ésta especie en Cuba. Tres de ellos por Garrido y García Montaña (1975) y 59 por el autor y colaboradores. La especie ha sido observada en Cuba en los meses de Enero, Febrero, Marzo, Agosto, Septiembre y Octubre, pero solamente en Marzo la hemos visto asociada en bandadas volando con rumbo Norte, de retorno a sus cuarteles de primavera, verano y otoño, en los Estados del Sur y Suroeste de Estados Unidos, después de heber pasaso el invierno en Suramérica. Los individuos observados en los restantes meses andaban solitarios, descarriados, explorando. La amplitud geográfica de las observaciones abarca desde Hahía Honda (Gundlach 1873) hasta Cayo Santa María, Villa Clara (presente trabajo). Garrido (com. pers.) considera la probabilidad del estableciemiento de dicha especie en Cuba.

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A SUMMARY OF CARIBBEAN BIRD SPECIMENS IN THE CARNEGIE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

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Like all curators of museums with large collections of bird specimens, I receive many requests each year from colleagues for loans of or data on specimens in our collection. Sometimes the letter is a preliminary request to determine how extensive our material may be, either of the taxon or from the area being studied. This will give the person an idea as to whether, for example, we have enough specimens to justify their trip to Pittsburgh to examine them, or to ask to borrow key specimens.

There are only two museums in the world, to my knowledge, that come close to having specimens of every species and

subspecies of bird in the world, the British Museum in Tring and the American Museum of Natural History in New York. Smaller museums, such as ours, have definite strengths and weaknesses in our holdings, and these are usually geographic. The bird collection at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History was founded at the end of the last century by W. E. Clyde Todd, and like many other bird collections, its contents reflect the particular geographic interests of its long-term curator. Mr. Todd was primarily interested in birds of the Western Hemisphere, especially those of north-central and north-eastern Canada, and those of the neotropics. Todd directed more than 20 expeditions to Canada, and accompanied many of them, from 1901 to 1955. He did not, however, take part in any neotropical field work. Before he came to Carnegie, he had a job with the old Bureau of Biological Survey, the predecessor of today's U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in Washington, D. C. During his residence in Washington, he picked up a case of malaria. His doctor at the time told him that after he recovered, he should never visit a tropical country for fear of a recurrence. Modern antimalarial drugs would undoubtedly have made it possible for Todd to have ventured to the tropics, but he had undying faith in the advice of his 19th Century doctor, and never got farther south than the western panhandle of Florida.

This meant that he had to turn to other collectors to get neotropical specimens for our museum. Some collections were made by Carnegie staff members, but the majority of our neotropical specimens were obtained from professional collectors, such as Samuel Klages in Venezuela, French Guiana and Brazil, and the Steinbachs, father and son, in Bolivia and Argentina. The late Melvin A. Carriker, Jr., who also collected for the museums in Philadelphia and Washington, was of a different sort. He collected birds under contract for a living, but was a scientist in his own right, and published many papers; one, co-authored with Mr. Todd, "The Birds of the Santa Marta Region of Colombia," won the prestigious Brewster Award of the American Ornithologists' Union. The majority of Carriker's specimens at Carnegie came from Costa Rica, Colombia, and Venezuela, but of interest to the Society of Caribbean Ornithology is the fact that he also collected birds in Trinidad and Tobago and in Curaçao.

Our specimens from the Caribbean islands came to us in various ways. Some were collected during expeditions of Carnegie Museum itself. Some were obtained from professional collectors. The Cuban collection was obtained from the Cleveland Museum of Natural History when that museum divested itself of many of its scientific collections around 30 years ago. Several islands are represented in our holdings only by small numbers of birds obtained in specimen exchanges with other museums.

In order to help colleagues who may be thinking of either visiting us or writing for loans or data, I present here a summary of our holdings. These figures refer only to study skins, not skeletons or alcoholic specimens, for which published inventories are available.

One of our major collections consists of birds of the Bahama Islands, with 954 specimens. Most of these were taken by the well-known professional collector W. W. Worthington, with additional specimens taken by Arthur C. Twomey, a former curator of ornithology at Carnegie. Some years ago we planned a major expedition to the Bahamas, led by Dr. Mary Clench, then Associate Curator of Birds at the Carnegie, and her late husband, Herry Clench, an authority on the Lepidoptera of the Bahamas. We had chartered a boat, and Mary Clench's objective was to visit as many islands as possible to try to find wintering Kirtland's Warblers. Although it was known that this endangered species winters in the Bahamas, the actual records were few and scattered, and we had a theory that there might be a core island in the Bahamas where the majority of the warbler population concentrated in winter. Mary had permits to obtain a general collection of Bahamian birds, and we already had requests from some colleagues for specimens of particular species that we could exchange with them. One of the expedition members was Christopher Fichtel, who had been our bird preparator for some years. Unfortunately, Chris turned out to have ear problems that made life absolutely impossible for him on a boat at sea, so had to go back to Pittsburgh. Mary collected a few birds, and those were kept frozen and not prepared until the expedition returned.

One of our most important Caribbean collections is that from Cuba, totaling 1058 bird skins. Of these, 800 were collected by Gustav A. Link, Senior, a Carnegie taxidermist, in 1912-1913, on the Isle of Pines, now the Isle of Youth. Data from these and all previously known specimens were included in a paper by W. E. Clyde Todd, "The birds of the Isle of Pines," published in the Annals of Carnegie Museum in 1916. Most of the specimens from mainland Cuba were collected by W. H. Corning, R. J. Kula, and P. N. Moulthrop in 1941 for the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, and obtained by us in a major exchange whereby we sent them exhibit materials in exchange for scientific specimens.

Our only other major collection from the Greater Antilles is from Puerto Rico. These total 604 specimens, of which most were obtained from the professional collector W. W. Worthington in 1912. Among those not collected by Worthington are the two paratypes of *Dendroica angelae* Kepler and Parkes, the Elfin Woods Warbler.

The specimens collected by M. A. Carriker, Jr., in Trinidad and Tobago in 1909 and 1910 are especially valuable because, like most Carriker specimens, the labels are carefully annotated with the soft part colors — eyes, bills, feet, and any naked skin. Such annotations are all too rare in museum collections. We have 522 specimens altogether from Trinidad and Tobago. Our 236 specimens from Curaçao have the same careful Carriker labeling.

The avifauna of the islands on the east coast of the Yucatán

Peninsula of Mexico have a significant Caribbean element. Arthur Twomey obtained a few birds on Isla Cozumel, although I understand that these were brought to him while he was aboard a yacht in the harbor; the specimens have only the basic information of sex, date, and collector, and the locality for all is given just as "Cozumel Island." I participated in 4 collecting trips on Isla Cozumel; 4 days in January 1965, 15 days in November 1965, 3 days in April 1968, and 11 days in November 1971. We also spent one day collecting on Isla Mujeres in January 1965. Except for the November 1965 visit, these were joint expeditions; specimens collected by other participants have been widely dispersed and are now in the collections at Cornell University, the University of Minnesota, the National Museum of Canada, the Royal Ontario Museum, and the Delaware Museum of Natural History. These specimens carry full information on gonad size, skull pneumatization, molt, fat, and weight, as well as the exact locality on Cozumel where they were collected.

From the rest of the islands in the Caribbean, we have only representative specimens obtained by exchange with other museums in order to have examples of endemic species and subspecies, so it is a forgone conclusion that any specimens we have from these islands come from larger series in other museums such as the U. S. National Museum, the Museum of Comparative Zoology, the Field Museum, the American Museum of Natural History, and the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia. I would expect that most workers would need to borrow such specimens from us only if they wanted to put together the largest possible series for their studies.

Localities represented by such exchange specimens include Anguilla (3 specimens), the Cayman Islands (25 specimens), Dominica (7 specimens), the Dominican Republic (108 specimens), Grenada (8 specimens), the Grenadines (3 specimens), Guadeloupe (10 specimens), Haiti (45 specimens), Jamaica (62 specimens), Martinique (11 specimens), St. Kitts and Nevis (6 specimens), St. Lucia (11 specimens), St. Vincent (11 specimens), and the Virgin Islands (6 specimens).

With this information I hope that anyone doing specimen-based research will avail themselves of the material housed in the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, and by the same token, will know when not to write us because our holdings represent just a few birds extracted from larger series at other museums.

COMMENTARY

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS: IDEAS FOR EXPANDED SOCIETY COLLABORATION

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The theme of partnerships was discussed by the Society membership at the annual meeting held in Trinidad. The focus was on how the Society might expand collaboration with other institutions and individuals both through modifying elements of the annual meeting and by other means. No attempt was made to reach a consensus on specific steps to be taken. Rather, this brainstorming exercise served to explore ideas for future consideration and possible action by the executive committee. Suggested actions from the discussion are presented in two categories — those associated with the annual meeting and those independent of it.

COLLABORATION ASSOCIATED WITH ANNUAL MEETING

- Allow local students and conservationists to attend meeting for free.
- Have a specific day of the annual meeting that incorporates local participation.
- Conduct more outreach to involve local students and institutions.
- Conduct a contest on the island where the annual meeting is to take place and have appropriate officials attend to present awards.
- Have selected Society of Caribbean Ornithology (SCO) meeting participants give presentations to local schools and organizations during or following the annual meeting.
- Piggyback the SCO meeting with that of other groups. Suggestions included CCA, CANARI, UNICA, NAAEE.
- Assign someone to handle public relations to better involve the media and other groups.

COLLABORATION APART FROM THE ANNUAL MEETING

- Create an inventory of bird conservation organizations in the Caribbean.
- Become a member of the Caribbean Conservation Association and attend meetings.
- Take our resolutions to the CCA.
- Develop technical exchanges between SCO members.

ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS SUBMITTED FOR PRESENTATION AT THE 1995 ANNUAL SCO MEETING, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

A Preliminary Review of the Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus* complex in the Greater Antilles

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In historical times, the Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus* was reported in the islands of Hispaniola and Puerto Rico as two breeding subspecies, *A. f. dominguensis* (Müller), 1776 and *A. f. portoricensis* Ridgway, 1882. Although reported from Cuba by Lembeye (1850), Gundlach (1876), Barbour (1923), Bond (1956, 1984), Garrido and Garcîa Montaña (1975), Garrido (1984) and Repilado (1983), its subspecific status was either not mentioned or it was considered as the continental race *A. f. flammeus* (Pontopiddan) 1763. During the past two decades, due to the increase of rice, sugar and citrus fields, Cuban populations (previously considered very rare and non-breeding) underwent a spectacular demographic explosion, being reported from practically every province. Individuals from Key West (specimens examined) and presumably the sighting from Cayman-Brac, are attributed to this explosion. To date I have examined 315 specimens belonging to all known described taxa, including taxa from islands: *snafordi* (Falkland Islands), *sandwichensis* (Hawaiian Islands), *ponapensis* (Ponapé, Caroline Islands), *galapagoensis* (Galapagos Archipelago), *dominguensis* (Hispaniola), *portoricensis* (Puerto Rico and Cuba). Island specimens are smaller than continental forms. As in continental forms, populations from islands other than the West Indies have a shorter tarsus, smaller feet, smaller bill and, especially, more densely feathered tarsus and toes. In contrast, West Indian populations (including specimens from Key West) have bigger feet, larger tarsi and bill, and much less feathered tarsus and toes. Furthermore, continental birds lay larger clutches (4 to 9 eggs), whereas West Indian birds (Cubans) lay smaller clutches of 3 eggs. Also, eggs of West Indian birds are larger: 44.1 mm X 33.5 mm compared with 39.0 mm X 31.0 mm in continental *flammeus*. West Indian birds are much darker on the upperparts, with the exception of the race *bogotensis* and *galapagoensis*, and show a different pattern and apparently exhibit different vocalizations. West Indian birds were represented by relict populations, whereas Cuba recently exhibited an "abnormal" increase due to the increase of suitable habitats plagued with rodents *Rattus* spp. and *Mus musculus*. In conclusion, birds from Cuba (including Key-West stragglers), Puerto Rico, and Hispaniola are indistinguishable in size (conventional measurements), color, and pattern, and therefore they should be designated *Asio dominguensis*, different from continental *Asio flammeus*.

Enseñanza De La Conservación A Traves De Las Plantas Y Las Aves Silvestres

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Se describen las actividades de un programa de educación ambiental fundamentado en la importancia de la conservación de las plantas y los animales silvestres. El programa incluye charlas a estudiantes de la escuela primaria, acompañadas de pequeños censos de aves silvestres en el área verde de la escuela y siembras de plantas nativas de las que producen alimento para la fauna. El programa se extiende a la Escuela Nacional de Ciegos y al Cengtro de Rehabilitación de Inválidos. Como parte del proyecto se contempla la arborización de los parques urbanos con plantas nativas, reproduciendo en uno de ellos la vegetación representativa de algunos de nuestros parques nacionales, creando dentro del área mini-reservas de vida silvestre. Finalmente, se muestran fotografías de las portadas de los directorios telefónicos de una compañia local, en las que aparecen seis aves endémicas de la Hispaniola. Esta campaña forma parte del programa de educación en torno a la importancia de la conservación de la fauna autóctona.

A Land Manager's Guide To Point Counts Of Birds In The Southeast

Paul B. Hamel, Winston Paul Smith, Daniel J. Twedt. James R. Woehr, Eddie Morris, Robert B. Hamilton, and Robert J. Cooper

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Current widespread concern for the status of neotropical migratory birds has sparked interest in techniques to inventory and monitor populations of these and other birds in southeastern forest habitats. Members of the Southeast Management Working Group, Partners in Flight, have developed a guide for land managers that gives detailed instructions for conducting point counts of birds. It further presents a detailed methodology for design and conduct of inventorial and monitoring surveys using point counts, including discussion of sample size determination, distribution of counts among habitats, cooperation among neighboring land managers, vegetation sampling, standard data format, and other topics. Appendices provide additional information making this guide a stand-alone text for managers interested in developing inventorial information for bird populations on their lands. The methodology developed by the Southeast Management Working Group is applicable to inventory and monitoring tasks for resident and migratory landbirds in Caribbean countries.

Status, Ecology And Behavior Of The Threatened White-tailed Sabrewing, *Campylopterus Ensipennis*, On Tobago, West Indies: Preliminary Report

F. E Hayes, A. L. Bullard, D. R. Hardy, D-A. D. Wilson, D. J. Wilson, T. O. Garnett, M. V. Bernard, B. Y. Y. Wong, H. S. Gurley, V. L. Joseph, and M. F. Hayes
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The White-tailed Sabrewing (*Campylopterus ensipennis*) is a threatened species whose distribution is restricted to montane forest on two coastal ranges in Venezuela and Tobago. It was considered a common resident in Tobago until Hurricane Flora destroyed most of its habitat in 1963. Afterward it was feared extinct until its rediscovery in 1974. During 20-24 March 1995, we located about 32 sabrewings along approximately 17.5 km of trails in the Main Ridge Forest Reserve of northeastern Tobago, indicating that the population is recovering. We studied the behavior of two singing males defending adjacent territories of roughly 90 m² in tall, dense forest. Both males spent most of their time perched and alert on thin, midstory branches. Preening was most frequent during the late morning and early afternoon. The rate of calling was highest in the early morning and late afternoon. The rate of foraging was highest in the early morning and lowest in the late afternoon. More than half of their foraging sallies covered a distance less than 1 m. More than 95% of their foraging time was spent capturing insects (mostly mosquitoes), with less than 5% feeding on nectar from bromeliads. No heliconias were present within their territories, but elsewhere we often saw sabrewings feeding from heliconias. Intraspecific interactions were most frequent during the early morning. Subsequent funding from the Conservation Expedition Competition of British Petroleum, BirdLife International, and Fauna and Flora International will enable us to continue this study.

A Comparison Of Bird Populations In Exotic Caribbean Pine And Native Montane Forest At Mount Saint Benedict, Trinidad

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Monoculture stands of exotic Caribbean pine (*Pinus caribaea*) have been planted extensively on the southern slopes of the Northern Range in Trinidad. During the dry season of 1995, we compared bird populations in a 172-ha stand of pine forest, planted in 1972, with an adjacent stand of native montane forest at Mount Saint Benedict, Trinidad. Forty-five fixed-radius (25 m) point counts, each of 10 min duration, were conducted in each habitat; birds seen flying above the canopy were excluded. Species richness was significantly higher in the native forest; of 48 species recorded during the counts, 41 (85%) were found in native forest whereas only 25 (52%) were found in pine forest (chi-square test, $X^2 = 10.91$, $P = 0.001$). Species diversity was higher in native forest (Shannon index of diversity, H' = 2.51) than in pine forest (H' = 2.35). The mean number of birds/count was significantly higher in native forest (= 8.11) than in pine forest (= 5.22; Mann-Whitney U test, $z = 2.57$, $P = 0.01$). The mean number of species/count was significantly higher in native forest (= 6.00) than in pine forest (= 4.13; $z = 2.65$, $P = 0.008$). These results document a general reduction in the number of birds and species of birds in exotic Caribbean pine forest.

Datos Preliminares De La Expansión Geográfica Del Gorrión Inglés, *Passer Domesticus*, En El Oeste De Puerto Rico

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En Puerto Rico el Gorrión Inglés *Passer domesticus* se observó por primera vez a finales de la decada de los 60, convirtendose en un ave exótica de la cual se conoce poco. En este estudió se describió la dinámica de la expansión geográfica, el hábitat utilizado y el período de reproducción de ésta ave. Utilizando el método muestreo de punto, se realizaron rastreos sistemáticos en 27 municipios al oeste de Puerto Rico. Se encontró que estas aves prefieren las áreas litorales donde se localizan los grandes asentamientos humanos y que construyen sus nidos en cavidades artificales. El ciclo de reproducción se extiende a lo largo de todo el año, pero con una mayor actividad de marzo a septiembre. Esto tiende a indicar que *P. domesticus* utiliza recursos alimentarios y refugios disponibles en los asentamientos humanos, lo que hace su distribución paralela a la dispersión del ser humano.

Conservation Of The Black-billed Parrot And Yellow-billed Parrot In Jamaica

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Jamaica hosts two native Amazona parrots that are found nowhere else; the Yellow-billed Parrot, *Amazona collaria*, and the Black-billed Parrot, *Amazona agilis*. Although the other islands composing the Greater Antilles have resident Amazon parrots, Jamaica is unique in being the only island to presently support two endemic Amazon parrots. The conservation of both species has been a concern for many years, as both are considered threatened or at risk and yet neither has been the subject of a comprehensive biological research program. Available information suggests that both species still face significant problems with habitat destruction and harvest for

Swamp, Trinidad's largest freshwater ecosystem, as a prohibited area was a direct result of their efforts.

Predicting Population Changes From Habitat Change In Belize

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Systematic banding and point count surveys of major forest and agricultural habitats throughout the Belize lowlands were used with vegetation maps and satellite imagery to map relative abundance and to estimate national populations of many species. These baseline data will be used in conjunction with satellite imagery to predict changes in bird abundance as habitats change. Species estimated as most abundant (millions) in the Belize lowlands during the northern winter are: Red-capped Manakin, 3.3; Red-throated Ant-Tanager, 3.1; Rufous-tailed Hummingbird 2.9; Gray Catbird, 2.8; Ochre-bellied Flycatcher, 2.0; Tawny-winged Woodcreeper, and Ovenbird, 2.0. Wood Thrushes, ovenbirds, waterthrushes, antbirds, woodcreepers, and furnariids are especially vulnerable to population declines as a result of habitat changes; Magnolia and Black-and-white Warblers, American Redstarts, and Ochre-bellied Flycatcatchers are less habitat specific.

Biology And Conservation Of Psittacids In Venezuelan Islands

F. Rojas-Suárez, M. Albomoz, D. Carnilo, A. Rodriguez, and V. Sanz Provita

We present the status of research and conservation of three psittacid species in Venezuelan Islands. We have studied *Amazona barbadensis* in Margarita Island since 1989 including its basic reproductive parameters and its success, development of fledglings, relative availability, and characteristics of tree holes used as nests by the parrots and other species. In 1989, the population size was estimated at 750 individuals. Current population estimates indicate a minimum size of 1580 birds. On La Blanquilla Island we estimated the current population size breeding biology habitat use, and identification of the factors that threaten *A. barbadensis*. Population size is below 80 individuals. In 1991 we began a study of *Aratinga acuticaudata neoxena* (endemic to Margarita Island), including population size, habitat use, basic reproductive parameters and the factors that threaten it. In 1993 the population size was 180-200 individuals. The following year it declined to less than 100 birds. The related *Aratinga pertinax marganitensis* (Coche, Cubagua and Margarita Islands) is not endangered in spite of the sustained poaching pressure on the nestlings. We have compiled information about breeding, nestling growth, predators, and potential threats. The subspecies *A. p. tortuguensis* (endemic to La Tortuga Island) could be in jeopardy. Preliminary information shows low population levels, poaching of nestlings, and habitat destruction. Our conservation programs have focused on *A. barbadensis* and *A. acuticaudata*, and include strategies to improve juvenile recruitment, effectively protect the breeding areas, monitoring of population size, captive maintenance and liberation of confiscated birds, use of "foster nests," design of protected areas, and environmental education essays of sustainable development. As a result of the management plan, the number of fledglings recruited into the population and active nests have increased.

Predation Of Artificial Nests Of West Indian Whistling-Ducks On Long Island, Bahamas

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The West Indian Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna arborea*) is a non-migratory species of waterfowl found only on the islands of the West Indies. Although little is known about this species, most sources believe its numbers are declining, and recently the IUCN categorized *D. arborea* as a rare and endangered species. The reasons for this species' drastic decline are unknown, but are usually attributed to predation, hunting, and habitat destruction. Since hunting and habitat destruction do not appear to be major factors on my study site, I decided to test whether predation, specifically nest predation, could be a significant factor affecting West Indian Whistling-Ducks on Long Island and adjacent Hog Cay, Bahamas. This summer, I am using artificial nests to study nest predation rates of the ground-nesting West Indian Whistling-Duck. I am testing whether these rates differ among 1) artificial nests on Hog Cay and artificial nests on Long Island and 2) artificial nests in two different habitat types on Long Island. I am also using automatic cameras randomly placed at nests to determine which species act as nest predators on these islands. My objectives are to determine if nest predation could be an important factor in the decline of the West Indian Whistling-Duck, and to identify species that prey on duck eggs.

Populations Of Orangequits In A Mid-Level Limestone Woodland, Jamaica, 1991-1994

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Very little is known about fluctuations in populations of Jamaican endemic birds. Following sporadic banding in the 1970's and 1980's, a constant effort banding programme began at Marshall's Pen in the 1990's to generate such data. The Orangequit, *Euneornis campestris*, a Jamaican endemic species belonging to a monotypic genus, was among the most frequently caught species. Therefore preliminary data analysis has been focused on this species. Monthly and annual fluctations in Orangequit populations as suggested by banding data were examined. Results of banding were compared with

point counts and both were interpreted in relation to rainfall data for Marshall's Pen. Recapture rates were examined with reference to sex and age. Data on longevity were generated.

The Dickcissell: A Neotropic Migrant In Trouble

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Like many neotropical migrants, Dickcissels (*Spiza americana*) have been declining. We studied Dickcissels throughout their Nearctic breeding range and Neotropical wintering range. Breeding Bird Surveys show that Dickcissels have declined by over 35% since 1968. We found no reproductive problems; instead nesting success was normal for a small passerine. We found no shortage of nesting habitat; instead Dickcissels are below the carrying capacity of their large breeding range. But, over-winter survival is abnormally low. Dickcissels are considered an agricultural pest in Venezuela, where most birds winter. Since the 1960s, rice growers have killed millions of Dickcissels each year by spraying huge nocturnal roosts with pesticides.

Estrategia Educativa Con La Participación Comunitaria Para La Protección De La Cotorra Y El Perico En República Dominicana (Proyecto Cotorra Libre)

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La Cotorra de la Hispaniola, *Amazona ventralis*, y el Perico, *Aratinga chloroptera*, son especies endémicas de nuestra isla. Estas se encuentran bajo presión debido a su valor comercial como mascotas y a la destrucción de su ambiente. a) Ejecutar planes de protección de estas especies conjuntamente don instituciones públicas y privadas. b) Implementar estragias de educación para la protección, autosurgeridas por las comunidades (partiendo de la aplicación de grupos focales). c) Elaborar materiales educativos que faciliten la comprensión y adopción de actitudes positivas hacia la protección de estas especies en sus habitates. Una fase inicial incluye estudios cualitativos (grupos focales) a fin de elaborar la estrategia para la campaña educativa. La investigación permite identificar contenidos para elaborar los materiales educativos y las dificultades para su inserción, divulgación y distribución. Los grupos focales incluyen la participación de personas representantes de organizaciones comunitarias. La creción de redes de "Amigos de las Cotorras Libres". Integrar la participación de sectores gubernamentales y privados. a) fomento de associaciones comunitarias pro-protección de las cotorras y pericos en sus habitates. b) Mayor incidencia en la Campaña Nacional para la Protección de la Fauna en Peligro de Extinción. c) Adecuar el diseño de materiales educativos a la realidad social de los habitates que tienen poblaciones de cotorras y pericos. d) Incorporación activa del sector escolar a las actividades de protección.

Habitat Use And Nest Habitat Structure Of The Puerto Rican Nightjar

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I studied the reproductive ecology of the Puerto Rican Nightjar, *Caprimulgus noctitherus*, at Guánica Forest, southwestern Puerto Rico. I used multivariate analysis on structural habitat data collected at nests (n = 23) and random sites (n = 103), and found that nesting sites had larger amounts of leaf litter biomass, more overhanging nest cover, and more openness of the understory and midstory than randomly selected sites. However, within the forested upland areas found at higher elevations, the openness of the lower layers of the forest appeared to be the main factor to which nightjar pairs were responding when selecting a nest site. The loss of leaf litter from the forest floor during years of high precipitation probably negatively affected reproductive output due to nest substrate loss, nest washouts, and increased predator activity. The main factors associated with the use of some areas by breeding nightjars in the upland regions of the forest were the presence of dense, tangled vegetation within 2-3 m of the ground. However, these results were used in an exploratory way to illuminate ecologically meaningful relationships and serve as a basis for future experimental work. Thus, further research should concentrate on experimental testing of the hypotheses raised by this study.

Flux Genitique Entre Populations Et Fidelite Des Couples Pour Une Especie Endemique Et Insulaire, Le Pic De Guadeloupe

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Pendant 16 mois, l'écologie et la biologie du Pic de Guadeloupe, *Melanerpes herminieri*, ont été étudiés. Des mesures morphologiques et la pose de bagues colorées ont été effectuées sur 52 adultes capturés sur les deux principales files de Guadeloupe (connectées par un pont). Les individus provenant de Basse-Terre sont plus grands que ceux de Grande-Terre. 1) S'agit-il de deux populations distinctes ou bien certains individus se déplacentils d'une île à l'autre? Pour répondre à cette question, il faudrait disposer de plusieurs centaines de pics marqués et poursuivre l'étude pendant plusieurs années. Ce qui permettrait peut-être d'observer un individu sur l'autre île que celle où il a été marqué. Les couples restent ensemble toute l'année et défendent un territoire. Durant la péruide de travail de terrain, seulement 2 accouplements ont pu être obserés (il s'agissait d'oiseaux

non marqués). 2) Est-ce que les femelles s'accouplent avec d'autres mâles que celui attitré? Une technique d'analyse de l'ADN (fingerprinting) a été employée pour permettre de répondre à ces 2 questions. Les 3 premiers mois de laboratoire ont permis de tester la méthode et de voir qu'elle pouvait être utilisée avec les échantillons de pic. Actuellement plus d'échantillons de sang sont collectés. Trois mois seront ensuite nécessaires pour terminer le travail de laboratoire et effecturer l'analyse des résultas obtenus.

Genetic Structure Within And Among Populations And Patterns Of Mating In An Endemic Island Species, The Guadeloupe Woodpecker

Pascal Villard

The ecology and the biology of the Guadeloupe Woodpecker, *Melanerpes herminieri*, have been studied for 16 months. Measurements were made and split plastic rings were placed on 52 adult birds caught on the two main islands of Guadeloupe (connected by a bridge). The birds coming from Basse-Terre are bigger than those from Grande-Terre. 1) Are there two "distinct" populations or are some birds moving from one island to another? To answer this question we need to have several hundred birds banded and to continue the study many more years to have the opportunity to watch a bird on the island other than the one on which it was banded. The pair remains bonded through the year defending one territory. During the field work only two copulations (unbanded birds) were observed. Perhaps females have extra copulations with males other than their mates. DNA analysis (fingerprinting) was applied to answer those two questions. The first three months of lab work showed that the technique can be used with our woodpecker samples. At the present time, more blood samples are being collected. Three more months will be needed to process all the samples (about 100) and to do the analysis.

Red-footed Boobies Nest At White Cay, San Salvador

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On 28 April 1995 we observed and photographed a pair of adult Red-footed Boobies (*Sula sula*), a subadult, and a downy chick on White Cay north of San Salvador, Bahamas. A. Sprunt, IV, sighted and photographed a pair of adult Red-footed Boobies on the same cay on 16 May 1988, but did not publish his observations. These records are the first sightings and nesting records of Red-footed Boobies in the Bahamas and the northernmost nesting record for this species in the Atlantic and Caribbean regions.

Contribución Del Dosel A La Abundancia Y Diversidad De Aves En Cafetales De Sombra En La Republica Dominicana

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Plantaciones de café de sombra con un dosel de Inga vera fueron caracterizadas con un abundancia de nectívoros, un radio de sexo inclinado hacia los machos en dos especies de aves migratorias nearcticas (*Dendroica caerulescens* y *Setophaga ruticilla*) y un mayor número de especies comunes en bosques latifolios. Por el contrario, el café de sol posée más frugivoros, un radio de sexo inclinado hacia las hembras en las mismas especies de aves migratorias, y especies típicas de un ambiente de matorral. La riqueza de especies fue casi igual en los dos plantaciones. La diversidad de las especies (H') fue similar en los contéos en punto en los cafetales, pero un "sobrepredominio" se hizo evidente en las muestras con redes en los cafetales de sombra. El café de sombra contribuye a la biodiversidad en los regiones agrícolas al proveer hábitat para las especies de bosques latifolios en contraste al café de sol, que puede proveer hábitat para algunas especies de matorral.

Contribution Of The Shade Overstory To Avian Abundance And Diversity In Dominican Coffee Plantations

Joseph M. Wunderle, Jr., and Steven C. Latta

Shade coffee plantations with an overstory of Inga vera were characterized by an abundance of nectarivores, male-biased sex ratios in two nearctic migrants (*Dendoirca caerulescens*, *Setophaga ruticilla*) and species common in broadleaf forest. In contrast, plantations without a shade overstory (i.e., sun coffee) had more frugivore/seedeaters, female-biased sex ratios in the two nearctic migrants, and species of open brushland ("matorral"). Species richness was similar in the two plantation types as was species diversity (H') in point counts but not net samples in which overdominance was evident in shade coffee. The shade overstory was important because more birds fed in the overstory than in the coffee understory. Shade coffee contributes to biodiversity in agricultural regions by providing habitat for broadleaf forest species in contrast to sun coffee which may provide habitat for some "matorral" species.

PROJECTS IN THE BAHAMAS

CAROLYN WARDLE
Coordinator of Ornithology Group of the Bahamas National Trust

The Ornithology Group was formed early in 1994 through the broader Wildlife Committee of the Bahamas National Trust (BNT). The Group participated in the 1993 BirdLife International event in October and the BirdLife Pan American event in 1994. Our first Christmas Bird Count for New Providence and nearby islands was organized in December 1994 by Sandy Sprunt. Ninety-six species were identified. This gives us a starting point for future bird counts in this area.

Already a partnership agreement has been signed between Partners-in-Flight (PIF) in the United States and (1) The Ministry of Agriculture of the Bahamas, (2) The Bahamas National Trust, and (3) The College of the Bahamas (COB). It is now time for these three agencies, together with the PIF input, to help the Bahamas identify the way ahead.

Paul Allen (Cornell University) is conducting research on the Bahama Swallow (*Callichelidon cyaneoviridis*), including a re-evaluation of the species' status by estimating total population size. Since the species may be limited by a lack of nesting sites, the Ornithology Group has started a nest box program in the hope of enticing the birds to increase their nesting efforts. Boxes have been placed on New Providence, Andros, Grand Bahama, and Ship Channel Cay. The Group sought the help of Dr. Patrick Balfe, who made over 20 nest boxes. Committee members are placing them in suitable habitats and monitoring their use. Nest boxes may be sponsored by BNT members for $10 per box. If a member's box attracts a nesting pair, that person will be notified.

Other than scientific projects undertaken in the Bahamas by visiting scientists and students, there are no projects presently under way by local COB students. It is important for the PIF agencies to try to identify, at least initially, modest projects that COB students could undertake.

One exciting piece of news for the Bahamas is that Tony White, a participant in the Trinidad meeting, is currently writing a book, "Birding Guide to the Bahama Islands," which he hopes to publish within the next two years. Tony plans to spend the majority of his time in the Bahamas from now on and is a great asset to the Group.

PROJECTS IN ST. LUCIA

DONALD ANTHONY
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry Department, Gabriel Charles Forestry Complex, Union, Castries, St. Lucia, West Indies

1. Observation platform and parrot nest improvement projects.—In September 1994, assistance was received from the International Institute of Tropical Forestry, U.S.D.A.—Forest Service, to construct observation platforms and train local biologists. Three platforms were constructed and one nest improvement was done together with the construction of one blind as part of the conservation program for the St. Lucia Parrot (*Amazona versicolor*).

2. As a result of Tropical Storm Debbie in September 1994 the main nature trail in St. Lucia suffered severe damage. A new nature trail was desperately needed and with assistance from RARE a new nature trail was constructed and will be officially opened soon.

3. In May 1995, 7 pairs of the St. Lucia whiptail (*Cnemidophorus vanzoi*) were translocated from Maria Major (the larger of the Maria Islands) to Praslin Island 11 km (7 mi) to the north. In 1993 Praslin Island there was a successful rat eradication program.

4. Funds were received from ICBP-PACS and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service for work on the White-breasted Thrasher (*Ramphocinclus brachyurus*) in St. Lucia. A distribution survey found the birds further south of their historical range. Now they can be found from Louvet to Praslin, mainly in riparian habitats on the east coast. A number of nest observations were made revealing that nest predation is a major problem. Of 5 nests monitored, only 1 chick fledged. The fledglings spent a lot of time on the ground, making them easy prey to mongooses, snakes, rats, and opossums. The thrasher feeds on a variety of food items, including frogs, lizards, fruits, and insects.

5. A big reforestation project is on the way in St. Lucia. With the advent of Tropical Storm Debbie, much of our forest was lost to landslides. Funds from CIDA are assisting in reforesting these areas. As much as possible, indigenous tree species are used in the reforestation program.

6. Parrot Project.—In 1993, a project to study the ecology and conservation of the St. Lucia Parrot was initiated by the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust International (JWPT). This project was taken over by the Wildlife Preservation Trust (WPTI) in 1994. The objectives were two-fold: (1) to examine the breeding biology and parental behaviors of the St. Lucia Parrot during nesting; and (2) to study the phenology of plants that may be important as food to the St. Lucia Parrot. Over 10,000 hours of work were accrued by personnel on the project in 1994. The field team located 18 cavities that were suspected of being used by parrots as nest sites. Only six nests were active, however, and the chicks fledged. All the nests that were monitored had Pearly-eyed Thrashers (*Margarops fuscatus*) that molested the nesting parrots. In one nest as many as 75 interactions were recorded between the parrots and the thrashers during one nesting season. A total of 10 plant species are used by the parrot as food.

THE LARID SEABIRD BREEDING POPULATIONS OF THE SAN NICOLAS BAY CAYS, ARUBA

ROELAND E. DE KORT
Aruban Foundation for Nature and Parks
Seroe Colorado #87, Aruba

The San Nicolas Bay cays, off southeastern Aruba, have harbored a larid breeding population for many years. Records of nesting Roseate (*Sterna dougallii*) and Bridled (*S. anaethetus*) terns go back as far as 1892. Since then profound changes in San Nicolas Bay have occurred, including: (1) the establishment and growth of one of the largest crude oil refineries in the western hemisphere, the Exxon affiliated Lago Oil and Transport Co. Ltd.; (2) the blasting of two channels through the reef (1937 and 1969) to broaden the original natural channel between the bay and open sea to accommodate large oil tankers; and (3) the re-activation of the oil refinery by the Coastal Aruba Refining Co. N. V. in 1991, after the former refinery ceased operation in 1992.

Despite these changes, several nesting bird species managed to survive, return annually, and have actually increased both in number and diversity. Today nine species nest on the cays: the Cayenne Tern (*Sterna eurygnatha*), Roseate Tern, Common Tern (*S. hirundo*), Bridled Tern, Sooty Tern (*S. fuscata*), Least Tern (*S. albifrons*), Brown Noddy (*Anous stolidus*), Black Noddy (*A. tenuirostris*), and Laughing Gull (*Larus atricilla*).

The Aruban Foundation for Nature and Parks (FANAPA) is charged with enhancing, conserving, and protecting, in its widest sense, the natural environment of the land, water, air, and its living flora and fauna, as well as the natural scenery of Aruba. In 1984, the FANAPA implemented a conservation program to conduct research, to protect the nesting seabirds from disturbance by humans (e.g., egg collectors, boaters), and to prevent marine pollution. This was realized with the help of the World Wildlife Fund, the International Council of Bird Preservation (now BirdLife International), the HRH Prince Bernard Fund, and several other organizations and institutions. The main objectives, performed annually during the breeding season (from April to August), of the conservation program are:

- wardening of the cays
- censusing of the nesting population
- monitoring kleptoparasitic behavior of Laughing Gulls on especially Cayenne and Sooty tern eggs and chicks
- monitoring habitat availability to extend nesting potential
- educational publicity

Older legislation (dating from 1926) only protected species, prohibiting disturbance of birds, along with their eggs and chicks. Their habitat, however was not protected by law. Parliament has just approved new conservation legislation through which effective protection of is possible. With this new law, the FANAPA hopes to finally obtain the official protected status it has pursued for so many years for the San Nicolas Bay cays.

RESULTS OF 1995 ELECTION OF SOCIETY OFFICERS

PRESIDENT:	Joe Wunderle
VICE-PRESIDENT:	Roland de Kort
SECRETARY:	Marcia Mundle
TREASURER:	Rosemarie Gnam will continue to serve in this office through 1996

1996 MEETING SITE

The 1996 annual meeting of the SCO will be held in the Bahama Islands. Further information will appear in *El Pitirre* and members will receive direct mailings of details.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEW BOOK FROM CBE—LATIN AMERICAN RESEARCH LIBRARIES IN NATURAL HISTORY: A SURVEY

The Council of Biology Editors announces the publication of *Latin American Research Libraries in Natural History: A Survey*. Second edition. 1994. Compiled by Neal Woodman, Marion A. Jenkinson, and Mercedes S. Foster. vi+260 pp.—The Survey was carried out to facilitate the exchange and donation of publications among scientific institutions in the United States, Middle and South America, and the Caribbean. The second edition of the Survey contains entries describing 241 libraries in 29 countries, including the name of a contact person, and an institutional address, fax, and telephone number. It also provides information about library holdings and usage, research activities, and areas of interest for literature donations. ISBN: 0–935868–74–7. Order from CBE, P. O. Box 109069, Chicago, Illinois 60610, U.S.A. $24.95 – nonmembers; $19.95–CBE members, bookstores, and other resellers; $3.50 shipping and handling per order.

CHECKLIST AVAILABLE: OISEAUX DE GUADELOUPE ET DE MARTINIQUE

A new checklist of birds of Guadeloupe and Martinique, "Oiseaux de Guadeloupe et de Martinique," produced by the Association pour L'Etude et la protection des Vertébrés des petites Antilles (AEVA), is available free of charge from:

Philippe Feldmann
CIRAD–CA
station de Roujol
97170 Petit Bourg
Guadeloupe
French West Indies
e-mail: feldmann@antilles.inra.fr

The AEVA is eager to receive observations and records of birds and other vertebrates gathered by visitors to Guadeloupe and Martinique. If you have such information, please pass it along to Philippe Feldmann, as above.

Society of Caribbean Ornithology T-Shirts Available

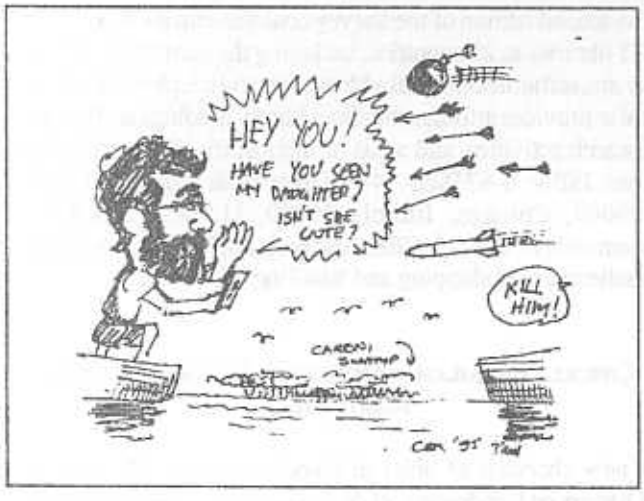
The SCO has produced a t-shirt to promote the Society and help raise much needed funds toward the Society's annual operating costs. The t-shirt depicts the Society's logo, the Pitirre or Gray Kingbird, on a light blue shirt. Large and X-large shirts are available. The cost of the shirt is $15 (U.S.), which includes shipping costs. Please purchase a shirt today and help support the Society! The shirt will make a great Christmas gift for Caribbean birdwatchers. Send your order and a check or postal money order made payable to the Society of Caribbean Ornithology to Rosemarie Gnam, Treasurer SCO, 13 East Rosemont Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22301, U.S.A. Please don't miss out on this opportunity to promote the Society!

REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE

Wanted: Tissue samples of the Cuban Green Woodpecker, Jamaican Woodpecker, Antillean Piculet, Fernandina's Flicker, *Hyetornis* cuckoos, Hispaniolan Lizard-Cuckoo, and Jamaican Lizard-Cuckoo for a large molecular biogeography study of the endemic todies, cuckoos, and woodpeckers of the Greater Antilles. I will pay for shipping. If you would like to help or know where I can get samples of these species, please contact Lowell Overton, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Arkansas 72701, U.S.A. (Telephone: 501-575-7539 [Office]; 501-575-4756 [Lab]; e-mail: loverton@comp.uark.edu).

I would be grateful for study tapes of Loggerhead Kingbird (*Tyrannus caudifasciatus*) songs from the Bahamas, and breeding season songs or calls from Masked Duck (*Oxyura dominica*), male and female, from anywhere, especially the West Indies. George B. Reynard, 105 Midway, Riverton, New Jersey 08077-1012. Many thanks.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS YEAR'S SCO MEETING



THE SOCIETY OF CARIBBEAN ORNITHOLOGY ANNUAL MEETING, TRINIDAD 28 JULY TO 2 AUGUST 1995

CHANDRA DEGIA
Grambling Cooperative Wildlife Project
Grambling State University, Grambling, Louisiana 71245, U.S.A.

The SCO held its annual meeting in Trinidad from 28 July to 2 August last. Some 47 persons attended, representing 13 countries. Participants hailed from the French-, Spanish-, Dutch-, and English-speaking Caribbean islands, as well as the mainland Americas, United Kingdom, and Venezuela. Presentations were made on Ecology, Behavior, Conservation, Taxonomy, Phylogeny, Biogeography, and Population Monitoring. Aside from these papers, island reports were made by representatives from the Greater and Lesser Antilles.

Of particular interest were the round-table discussions. The first such discussion was "The future of the Society of Caribbean Ornithology." During this discussion, several persons stressed the need for local participation at SCO meetings as they pointed out the relatively low turn-out of Trinidadians. Several suggestions, for example contacting media houses, were made as to how Island Representatives and Local Committees could improve attendance at future meetings. Some SCO members voiced the concern that annual meetings were often "too ornithological" and that little attention was being paid to socioeconomic factors, sustainable development, ecotourism, habitat conservation, and conservation education.

The second round-table discussion was entitled "Partnerships for Conservation." The first part of this discussion was on "Building Partnerships." Here several participants echoed their belief that a lack of communication between the Caribbean territories is a problem frequently discussed, yet is far from resolved. The session on "Wildlife Legislation and Conservation" revealed a great concern among SCO members for hunting laws and the enforcement of these laws. The day terminated with a thought-provoking discussion on ecotourism.

The Resolutions were another highlight of the meeting. This section of the meeting demonstrated the potential the SCO has to facilitate positive change for ornithological issues in the Caribbean Basin. As the SCO grows and continues to spread its wings, it will certainly fulfill this potential.

Participants were able to take part in two field trips, a full day one to Asa Wright Nature Centre, followed by the Caroni Swamp; and an afternoon at Mount St. Benedict. The first was delightful, as members were permitted (unusual for day visitors to the Centre) to visit the Oilbirds. Following that visit a delightful lunch was provided by the hosts. In the afternoon, there was a boat trip through the mangroves of the Caroni Swamp to see the Scarlet Ibis come in to roost. A walk through the grounds of the spectacularly situated Mount St. Benedict Guest House was followed by tea (provided by the host) at which participants partook of all home-made delicacies.

The Society's banquet was the occasion for presentation of the annual award, received this year by Richard ffrench, author of "A guide to the birds of Trinidad and Tobago." The Society made sure that Richard was able to attend the meeting, and he was tireless in assisting many persons to recognize and identify many of the species observed on the field trips.

This year saw a change of the Executive body, the previous one having served two terms. The full Executive Committee for 1995-97 is: Joseph Wunderle, Jr., President; Roeland de Kort, Vice-President; Marcia Mundle, Secretary; Rosemarie Gnam, Treasurer; Jim Wiley, Editor of *El Pitirre*; Catherine Levy, Immediate Past President.

CARIBBEAN POSTERS AVAILABLE

The CITES Conservation Treaty Support Fund (CTSF) has just published a beautiful poster entitled "Wild Treasures of the Caribbean," depicting sea turtles, birds, coral, and other endangered species of the Caribbean. The poster ties in with a brochure published by World Wildlife Fund/TRAFFIC USA as part of the "Buyer Beware" campaign that urges tourists and others not to buy endangered species or their products. The poster depicts Caribbean wildlife in a natural setting. Its design was done by the renowned wildlife artist, Mary Helsaple.

The Society of Caribbean Ornithology helped fund the production of this poster as part of the Society's public education effort. The idea for the poster and brochure was conceived at the 1992 CITES Training Workshop for English-speaking Caribbean nations.

Posters are free to the CITES Management Authorities on each Caribbean island. SCO Island Representatives can contact the CITES Management Authority on their island to help with distribution of the posters. A limited number of posters is available to the public to help raise funds for CITES and our Society. Our Society will receive a 10% profit from sales of the poster. SCO members can obtain the poster by sending a check or postal money order for $25 (U.S.) to the Conservation Treaty Support Fund (CTSF), 3705 Cardiff Road, Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815 U.S.A. Please indicate that you are a SCO member on your order. Discounts are available for wholesale purchases (20 posters or more). For further information, contact George Furness, Jr. at (301) 654-3150 or by fax at (301) 652-6390. PLEASE HELP SUPPORT THE SCO IN THIS FUND-RAISING PROJECT!!!!

SOCIETY OF CARIBBEAN ORNITHOLOGY

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President:
Dr. Joseph Wunderle, Jr.
Vice President:
Mr. Roeland E. de Kort
Secretary:
Dr. Marcia Mundle
Treasurer:
Dr. Rosemarie Gnam
Editor, *El Pitirre*
Dr. James W. Wiley

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Aruba
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Bahama Islands
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Mr. Donald Anthony
St. Vincent
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Trinidad and Tobago
Mr. Gerard Alleng

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR U. S. REPRESENTATIVE

At the Annual Meeting in Trinidad, the Executive Officers of the Society of Caribbean Ornithology decided to hold an election for a representative to its Executive Board who will represent the continental United States. The by-laws and constitution of the Society provide that each country be represented on the Executive Board. In the past, there have been representatives for the Caribbean Islands, Puerto Rico, and Canada. Those persons represent the interests and conservation areas of the geographic areas for which they are responsible. Representatives serve two-year terms on the Board. In the past, there has not been a U. S. representative.

The Executive Officers are calling for nominations for the U. S. representative. Candidates must be members of the Society in good standing (annual membership dues paid), have participated or be willing to participate in annual meetings, be willing to make a financial commitment to attend the annual meeting where the Executive Board meets, reside in the continental United States, be knowledgeable about ornithological and conservation issues in the U. S., and be willing to work at helping the Society achieve its goals. **Before nominating someone to serve as the U. S. representative, please confirm that the candidate is indeed willing to serve if elected.** Ballots will be mailed in December to all U. S. members who have paid their 1995 membership dues. These ballots will be included in the 1996 membership dues notice.

Nominations should be sent no later than 15 November 1995 to Rosemarie Gnam, 13 East Rosemont Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22301.

CONTENTS (continued)

Dr. James W. Wiley
2201 Ashland St.
Ruston, Louisiana 71270, U.S.A.

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