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Summer 2006 was a slow season in the Region, but surveys of American Flamingo and Bahama Parrot provided encouraging results. Anhinga and Yellow-billed Cuckoo may have nested in the Bahamas, and an American Robin provided possibly the first summer record for the country. Several species of shorebird showed early on Vieques, Puerto Rico, where Daphne Gemmill, who has monitored birds here for many years and is working on a monograph and database on the island's avifauna, found a good variety of uncommon visitors. Conditions at salinas at Inagua, Bahamas were quite wet, leading to a marvelous nesting season for flamingos, but ponds in Puerto Rico, including Vieques, were very dry until the arrival of late-summer rains. Anyone who thinks summer birding in the West Indies is dull should try a seawatch: Levesque is turning up some remarkable pelagic species with relatively modest effort.

## WATERFOWL THROUGH TERNS

Vieques, Puerto Rico remains an important location for White-cheeked Pintail; Gemmill found 21 here at Puerto Ferro Lagoon 15 Jul. Gaschet Res., Guadeloupe had a peak count of 30 Ruddy Ducks 4 Jul (AL). A Crested Bobwhite was seen in a flock of Northern Bobwhite near Stanniard Creek, Andros 31 Jul (WP). During 16 hours of seawatching at Petite-Terre Nature Reserve during Jun, Levesque tallied a Bulwer's Petrel, an unidentified gadfly petrel, 58 Cory's Shearwaters, 379 Greater Shearwaters, 2 Manx Shearwaters, 10 Audubon's Shearwaters, a Wilson's Storm-Petrel. In 13 hours' seawatching in Jul here, a Cory's Shearwater, 134 Greater Shearwaters, and a Wilson's Storm-Petrel were not-

ed (AL). On 9 Jul, 65 Brown Pelicans were present at Ste. Anne, Guadeloupe (AL). At least six pairs of White-tailed Tropicbirds were nesting on Shroud Cay, Exuma Cays Land and Sea Park in early Jun (LG). Two pairs of Red-footed Boobies were observed nesting on Catto Cay, San Salvador 20 Jun, and 77 Magnificent Frigatebird chicks were also there; about 300 Brown Boobies were in the area, but most Brown Booby chicks had already fledged by that time (WH). Brown Boobies were seen from El Morro, San Juan, Puerto Rico 8 Jul (KS). Anhinga may nest in the Bahamas: a pair that summered at Lake-view Pond, Paradise I. (CW) was observed gathering nesting material 1 Jul (PD), and another pair summered at Cable Beach Pond, New Providence (PD).

Bermuda's first live Gray Heron, initially discovered 22 Apr, was present through year's end (AD). Two Great Egrets and 2 Little Blue Herons also summered in Bermuda (EA). A Tricolored Heron was seen in the East End, Bermuda 24 Jul (PW). On 17 Jun, an ad. Black-crowned Night-Heron and 3 juvs. were found at Le Gosier, a first record of breeding for Guadeloupe (AL, AM, FD). Two Glossy

rains finally returned to Great Inagua I., Bahamas, creating ideal nesting conditions for American (Greater) Flamingos. Aerial photos showed 8654 nests (NC), and the preponderance of young fledged successfully. There were few flamingos on other islands, e.g., the high count on Andros 19-28 Jun was just 107 birds (MB). A late Swallow-tailed Kite was seen at various locations in Bermuda 12-23 Jun (BL, PH). A Purple Gallinule at Reef G.C., Grand Bahama I., Bahamas 3 Jun (EG et al.) was an unusual find. At Gaschet Res., Guadeloupe 4 Jul, Levesque had counts that included 495 Common Moorhens, 18 Caribbean Coots, 5 American Coots, and 5 apparent hybrid coots.

In Bermuda, returning shorebirds were at least one week later than usual, appearing in the 3rd week of Jul (EA, AD). Five Black-bellied Plovers summered in Bermuda (PW). At Sombe Lagoon, Vieques, a Black-bellied and 16 Semipalmated Plovers were noted 14 Jul (DG). Wilson's Plovers were common at Sombe Lagoon, Vieques 14 Jul (DG). A Semipalmated Plover at Long I., Bermuda 25 Jun (PW) provided an unusual summer record. On 31 Jul, 2 Piping Plovers, 5 Sanderlings, a



On Mount Pirata, Vieques Island, Puerto Rico, Oscar Diaz and team banded a Ruddy Quail-Dove 18 July 2006. The only previous documented record of the species here was of a dead bird. Photograph by Daphne Gemmill.

Ibis were still present on Jubilee Rd., Bermuda 5 Jun (DBW). An airboat tour around Flamingo Cay, Andros I., Bahamas 25 Jun yielded 6 White Ibis (5 imm.), 7 Roseate Spoonbills, and a Black-crowned Night-Heron (MB). Two imm. Roseate Spoonbills were at Stanniard Creek, Andros in mid-Jun (WP, MB). After five years of drought, the

Spotted Sandpiper, 2 Semipalmated Sandpipers, and 5 Ruddy Turnstones were at Sandy Pt., Abaco (EB, J&DH). Some 23 Black-necked Stilts were at Sombe Lagoon, Vieques, Puerto Rico 14 Jul (DG). An ad. Spotted Sandpiper was noted at North Pond, Bermuda 9 Jun (DBW). Two Solitary Sandpipers at St François, Guadeloupe 21 Jul (AL) were the

first southbound birds of the season recorded there. On 16 Jul, 2 Whimbrels were foraging in Boca Quebrada on the w. end of Vieques, and on 17 Jul, a Whimbrel was at Playa Grande, Vieques (DG). A Whimbrel summered in Bermuda as well (PW). At Sombe Lagoon, Vieques, 6 Western Sandpipers, a Least Sandpiper, and 4 Short-billed Dowitchers were seen 14 Jul, and at nearby Puerto Ferro Lagoon the next day, 2 Lesser Yellowlegs were present; at Boca Quebrada, Vieques, a Willet appeared 3 Jul (all DG). On Leaf Cay, at the s. end of Andros, 2 Willets were observed 27 Jun (MB).

A **South Polar Skua** was seen in Bermuda at Cooper's Point 31 May and 6 & 10 Jun (PW, AD), at Elbow Beach 2 Jun (GA), and off Horseshoe Bay 21 Jun (PW), possibly all different birds. At Guadeloupe, 4 Pomarine Jaegers and a Parasitic Jaeger were noted on the Jun seawatch, plus one Pomarine Jaeger in Jul (AL). A Caspian Tern at Jubal Pt. Salina, Providenciales, Turks & Caicos Is. 23-24 Jun was unexpected (ph. SW). A Sandwich Tern was considered unusual at Reef G.C., Grand Bahama 3 Jun (EG et al.). In Bermuda, a Sandwich Tern was off Spanish Pt. and a Roseate Tern off North Shore 20 Jun (PW). Two Roseate Terns were noted at Guadeloupe 4 Jun (AL). Leaf Cay off Andros held six pairs of nesting Least Terns 27 Jun (MB). The species is an uncommon breeding resident at Vieques, Puerto Rico, but 46 were in the Sombe Lagoon area 14 Jul (DG). Least Terns were noted at a lagoon in the Condado district, San Juan, Puerto Rico 8 Jul (KS). Approximately 200 Bridled Terns were counted 1 Jun at Peterson Cay N.P., Grand Bahama. Nests were well hidden, and only 13 were found (EG, BR). In three visits during the summer, 15 Bridled Tern nests were located on Goulding Cay, w. of New Providence (CW, O.G.B.N.T.). A Sooty Tern was seen at Boca Quebrada, Vieques, Puerto Rico 13 Jul (DG), and a Brown Noddy was in the Hog Fish Channel, Bermuda 15-17 Jun (BL).

## PIGEONS THROUGH ORIOLES

"Thousands" of White-crowned Pigeons were roosting on cays in Fernandez Bay, Cat I., Bahamas in Jul (MR); 12 were counted at Providenciales, Turks & Caicos, where they are not considered common, 9 Jun (EGi). On Mt. Pirata, Vieques, Puerto Rico, 3 **Bridled Quail-Doves** were photographed 16 Jul (DG, OD)—the first firm records on that island since about 1975. A Bridled-Quail Dove was subsequently banded at Mt. Pirata 20 Jul (OD). Also on Mt. Pirata, a Ruddy Quail-Dove was banded and photographed 18 Jul (DG, OD); the only previous documented record from

Vieques was of a dead bird. On the w. end of Vieques, 3 Key West Quail-Doves were heard at Puerto Mosquito 19 Jul (DG). Several others have reported hearing birds from this area. Puerto Rico is the only place where these three *Geotrygon* species coexist, with Bridled being scarce and little known there.

The population of Bahama Parrots on Great Inagua was estimated in Jul at 6353 birds (FRM). If one adds to this the estimate from the spring survey on Abaco, the total population of this taxon stands at about 9552. Three Bahama Parrots also summered on New Providence, observed through the season (PM, JB). On Grand Bahama, single Mangrove Cuckoos were seen at Bahamas Beach 4 Jul and North Riding Pt. Club 6 Jul (WH), and a Yellow-billed Cuckoo was seen and heard at Lucayan Estates 4 Jul (WH). Antillean Nighthawks were nesting on the Camp Garcia runway, Vieques, Puerto Rico in late Jun (DG), with 2 photographed 14 Jul (DG, OD). At Leaf Cay, a pair of Antillean Nighthawks nested (MB), and on 21 Jul, one was seen at St. François, Guadeloupe (AL). The Chuck-will's-widow at Coral Harbour, New Providence was last heard on 11 Jul (CW), and another was heard at Stanniard Creek, Andros 15 Jun (MB). A Belted Kingfisher at Abaco N.P. 31 Jul was early (EB, J&DH).

Six West Indian Woodpeckers were seen along Jake Jones Rd. and 2 along Linepole Rd., San Salvador 28 Jun (WH). A Black-whiskered Vireo, the 2nd for San Salvador, was singing at Gerace Research Center 21-24 Jun (WH). A Black-whiskered Vireo at Mt. Pirata, Vieques 16 Jul (DG) seemed a low tally there. On 25 Jul, 724 Caribbean Martins were counted at Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe (AL). An early Bank Swallow was at East End Dairy, Bermuda 31 Jul (PW); a Barn Swallow at Gerace Research Center, San Salvador 1 Jul (WH) was likewise somewhat early. An **American Robin** was at Warderick Wells, Exuma Cays Land and Sea Park ca. 1-20 Jul (JEB, LD), apparently furnishing the first summer record for the Bahamas. Late spring migrants at Stanniard Creek, Andros included a Cape May Warbler 16-20 Jun, a Black-throated Blue Warbler 21 Jun, a Black-and-white Warbler 22 Jun, and an American Redstart 16-17 Jun (WP). An early American Redstart was in downtown Nassau 31 Jul (SB, MK). A Louisiana Waterthrush at Pitman's Pond, Bermuda 23 Jul (DW) was the first migrant warbler of the season there. A female **Common Yellowthroat** at Petite-Terre Nature Reserve 6-7 Jun (B. AL) provided an exceptional summer record for Guadeloupe.

**Common Grackle** is very rare in Bermuda, so one seen on Nelly's I. 31 Jul (PW) may

have summered. The w. coast of Andros is predominately salt lake/dwarf mangrove habitat; the only Greater Antillean Orioles seen in a ten-day survey there were a pair nesting in ornamental palms at the Flamingo Cay Rod & Gun Club 18 Jun (MB).

**Addenda:** A Lesser Antillean Bullfinch 30 Jan was photographed on the e. end of St. Thomas, nicely documenting a westward expansion from St. John, U.S. Virgin Is. (SC-L, LM). Two Anhingas were photographed 1 Feb at Graeme Hall Swamp, Barbados (SC-L, LM). On Dominica, a rare spring Chimney Swift was seen 29 Apr at Rosalie; Masked Duck and Little Egret were recorded at Antigua 2 Apr (both NL). A tour of the Dominican Republic in late Mar yielded Hispaniolan Parakeets at a hotel in Santo Domingo 25 Mar; Hispaniolan Lizard-Cuckoo and Black-crowned Palm Tanager in the Botanic Gardens of the capital 25 Mar; Plain Pigeon, Ashy-faced Owl, Ridgway's Hawk, and White-necked Crow at Los Haitises N.P. 26 Mar; Hispaniolan Parrot at Rabojo Gato 27 Mar; Gray-headed Quail-Dove, Hispaniolan Emerald, and Hispaniolan Trogon about 5 km above Zapoten 27 Mar; Golden Swallow, La Selle Thrush, Palm Crow, Flat-billed Vireo, Green-tailed Ground Warbler, White-winged Warbler, and Western Chat-Tanager at Sierra de Bahoruco 28 Mar; Eastern Chat-Tanager at Cachote 29 Mar; and Hispaniolan Crossbills and the 3rd country record of **Wilson's Warbler** along Alcoa Rd 30 Mar (DG, KW et al.).

**Observers:** Gary Allport, Eric Amos, Michael Baltz, Judy Estep Barbernitz (JEB), Johnny Bethell, Elwood Bracey, Sylvia Brown, Nancy Clum, Sergio Colon-Lopez, Paul Dean, Oscar Diaz, Andrew Dobson, Larry Dougan, Frantz Duzont, Lynn Gape, Erika Gates, Daphne Gemmill, Ethlyn Gibbs (EGi), Jan & Dick Hartley, William Hayes, Tony Hepburn, Peter Holmes, Maxine Kerr, Niels Larsen, Anthony Levesque, Bruce Lorhan, Alain Mathurin, Lydia Medina, Paulette Mortimer, Ornithology Group of the Bahamas National Trust (O.G.B.N.T.), William Pinder, Frank Riveramilan (FRM), Macgregor Robertson, Bernie Russell, Kit Struthers, Ann Sorensen, David Wallace (DW), Kate Wallace, Carolyn Wardle, Paul Watson, Stu Wilson, David B Wingate (DBW). 📷

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