

(formerly Endangered Species Facility at Olinda, M.) laid 4 clutches and successfully produced five chicks this year, the 2nd productive year for this captive flock. One other chick from another pair died in infancy (RD). The wild crows on Hawai'i I., now estimated at 14 birds, were much less successful. Only one pair produced eggs, only one of which was fertile (RD). This chick was hatched successfully and reared at Keauhou Bird Conservation Center, H. Surveys for the potentially Endangered O'ahu Elepaio recorded 14 birds, including two fledglings, in upper North Halawa Valley July 9, and six birds, including one pair with an active nest, in South Halawa Valley July 26 (EV). Numbers of Elepaio throughout O'ahu remain far lower now than they were a few decades ago.

The team monitoring the *Endangered* Puaiohi in the Alaka'i Swamp, K., found 45 nests constructed this year, attributed to about 30 nesting pairs, a good high count. Pairs were generally successful in fledging young, but vulnerability to predation during the first few days after fledging remains a problem for chick survival (TS). Five Puaiohi eggs from the Alaka'i were sent to the Conservation Center on Hawai'i I. All five chicks hatched successfully and are doing well (TS). Unfortunately, no Kamao, Ou, or Nukupuu have been encountered this year. Neither Kamao nor Ou have been reported since before hurricane *Iniki* struck in 1992. In the Honolulu Zoo, a pair of Apapane laid eggs June 2 & 3. They hatched June 16, the first known successful breeding in captivity.

Three Red-crested Cardinals were observed July 13 at 3100 ft in Koke'e, K., an unusually high elevation for this species. A few Red-crested were seen in the same area at this time last year, perhaps a seasonal wandering (TS). Two ♂ Red Bishops were watched singing near each other at Nuupia Ponds, O., July 22 (MR). Escapes of this species have been noted around Honolulu in past decades, but not in recent years. Orange-cheeked Waxbills continue to be reported occasionally in the c. isthmus of Maui, where a group of nine were found July 3 at Kealia Pond (MN). Elsewhere, established Orange-cheeked are known only from a few localized sites in windward O'ahu.

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# West Indies Region

## ROBERT L. NORTON

Two hurricanes, *Bertha* and *Cesar*, passed through the Region this season, rather early and from unexpected source areas. *Bertha* passed north of the Virgin Islands and curled northwest toward the Bahamas in early June, while *Cesar* raced west along the north coast of South America in late July, eventually passing south of San Andres in the southwestern Caribbean. Precipitation measured at Cruz Bay, St. John, United States Virgin Islands, (100+ yr POR) was 11 percent below average for the period: -71 percent in June and +48 percent in July. The last six-month yield of -20 percent indicates a return to a drought cycle.

A mid-June report from the Turks and Caicos provided the only Antillean report (Bainton, Hallet, and White). What impressed the observers the most there was the "outstanding shorebird and wader habitats, including old salt ponds or salinas." Indeed, the Turks and Caicos contain a recognized wetland of international importance since becoming a signatory—the sole participant in the West Indies—to the RAMSAR Convention in 1990. Resident birders, ornithologists, conservationists, government agencies, and the concerned public greatly contributed to the data base (Aldridge, St. Leger, and Bradley) and ultimate success of the government's proposal in 1987. Many smaller satellite parks and

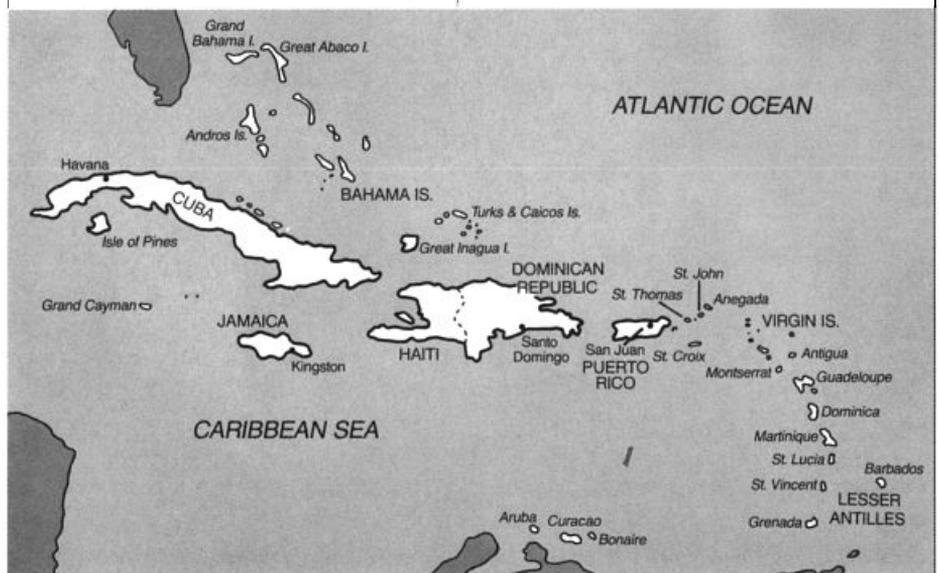
conservation areas have been approved in a larger plan to conserve wetlands.

Abbreviations: GT (*Grand Turk*); Provo (*Providenciales*); T&C (*Turks and Caicos*).

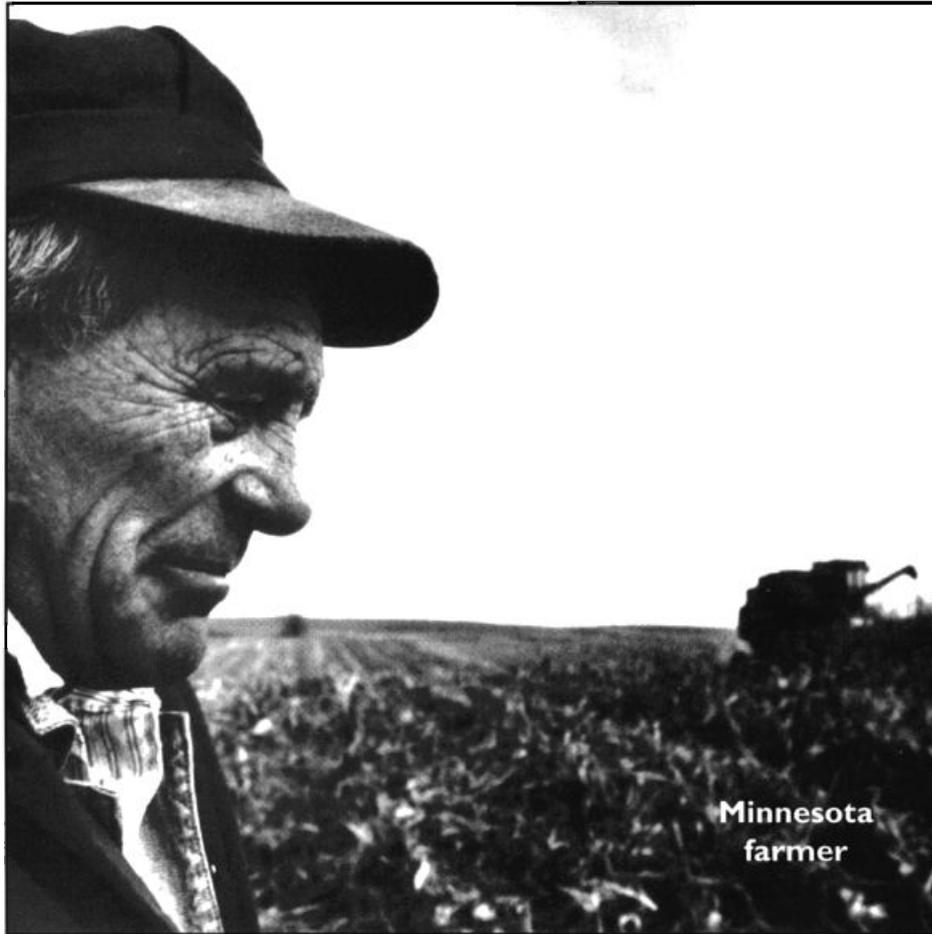
## Grebes to Terns

A Least Grebe nest and juveniles seen June 20 at Provo confirm breeding there. There were 11 Least Grebes at Whitby Salina and one at Cottage Pond June 21, both N. Caicos. Pied-billed Grebes were also present at Flamingo Pond and Cottage Pond, N. Caicos, June 21. White-tailed Tropicbirds at White Sands Beach (one) and North Cr. (three), GT June 7–18 and three at Long Cay and 12 near S. Dock, Provo, June 23, suggested breeding throughout these islands (Buden 1987). An imm. Brown Booby seen at Long Cay off GT June 18 provided only the 2nd report from that area since 1930 (Buden). Two Great Blue Herons seen June 22 at Flamingo Pond, N. Caicos, were probably not breeders. There is no evidence to date of nesting by this heron in the T&C. A Great Egret seen June 17 at GT, and 25 Snowy Egrets seen June 21 between Pumpkin Bluff and Flamingo Ponds, N. Caicos, appear to represent the first records there, respectively (Buden).

Greater Flamingos were seen June 17 at GT (18), at Provo June 20 (two), and at Flamingo Pond June 21 (1200) and Pumpkin Bluff Pond (>200), N. Caicos. These counts were very encouraging, especially on N. Caicos, where residents have been concerned that increased air traffic might prevent the National Bird from nesting there once again. The numbers seen at Pumpkin Bluff Pond suggest that some breeding may have been attempted. An estimated 6000–7000 old mounds



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were found there in early October 1987 (Norton and Clarke 1989). White-cheeked Pintail (ad. female with seven young) were seen June 20 at Provo, representing the first report of breeding. And from New Providence, Bahamas, comes the news of the first known *breeding* of Limpkin (*fide* TW), where LH and SB found two adults with three young June 2 at the Bahama Agricultural Station. The summering shorebirds were well represented in June, with six Black-bellied Plovers off GT and two at Provo June 17 & 19 respectively; four Snowy and five Semipalmated plovers at North Cr., GT, June 17; resident Killdeer everywhere; Greater Yellowlegs at GT June 16 and 10 at N. Caicos June 21. An imm. Willet seen at

Provo June 19 may represent the first breeding record for the T&C. Found Sanderlings were noted at GT June 17. Gull-billed Terns are resident in the T&C and were observed commonly at Provo and N. Caicos. Five Sandwich Terns and four Com. Terns (ph.) on Pine Cay, e. of Provo, June 23 were the first reports from that cay. Sooty (>75) and Bridled terns (>25) and Brown Noddy (>200) were nesting at Long Cay, off the s. tip of GT, June 18. A Bridled Tern seen off Chalk Sound, Provo, June 22 may represent nesting on the w. Caicos Bank.

#### Pigeons to Grassquits

The fact that White-crowned Pigeon was not seen during June at GT says more

about geographic isolation from common breeding areas to the west and north, *i.e.* Provo and N. Caicos, than any other potential determinant. A White-winged Dove near South Cr., GT, June 17, however, is interesting because nesting of this columbid has not been proven for this Bank (Buden 1987). It is becoming very common on the less or uninhabited islands of Middle and East Caicos (Norton and Clarke 1989). The Zenaida Dove seen at GT June 17 was apparently the first for that island (Buden 1987). Two Smooth-billed Anis at Provo Golf Course June 20 represent the first records for that island (Buden 1987). A Bank Swallow observed for 10 minutes, occasionally at close range June 16 at the Town Salina, GT (TW, BH), is the first record for the T&C Banks and an exceptionally early date for the Region. Pearly-eyed Thrashers were not seen in June at GT or Provo, although fairly common (10) at NC June 21 and heard on Pine Cay June 23 (TW). Although Thick-billed Vireos were common on the Caicos Bank in June, this vireo has yet to be recorded from the Turks (Buden 1987). Similarly, the Black-faced Grassquit has yet to be recorded from the Turks Bank, but is common elsewhere in the Caicos. New survey work of these banks after close calls from this season's hurricanes may provide new inter-island distributions.

#### Addendum

A serious decline is occurring in the number of nesting Brown Boobies at Cayman Brac, from about 190 pairs in 1983-86 to about 60 pairs in 1995-1996, according to Bainton. A small population of St. Lucia House Wrens (*Troglodytes aedon maesoleocos*) was discovered (DA) on the Union Nature Trail, well apart from the n.e. coastal and s.w. Pitons groups. A Tropical Kingbird was reported (PB) from the Cayman Islands in October 1995. A late report of a Hooded Warbler from Guadeloupe April 26 (GJ, MA *et al.*, *fide* AK) was fairly late itself. Breeding Am. Redstarts have been quietly invading Cuba since at least 1989, as reported by AD, OG in the latest *El Pitirre* 9(3):5. A report of redstarts breeding in Jamaica at about the same time period has also been mentioned in this column.

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