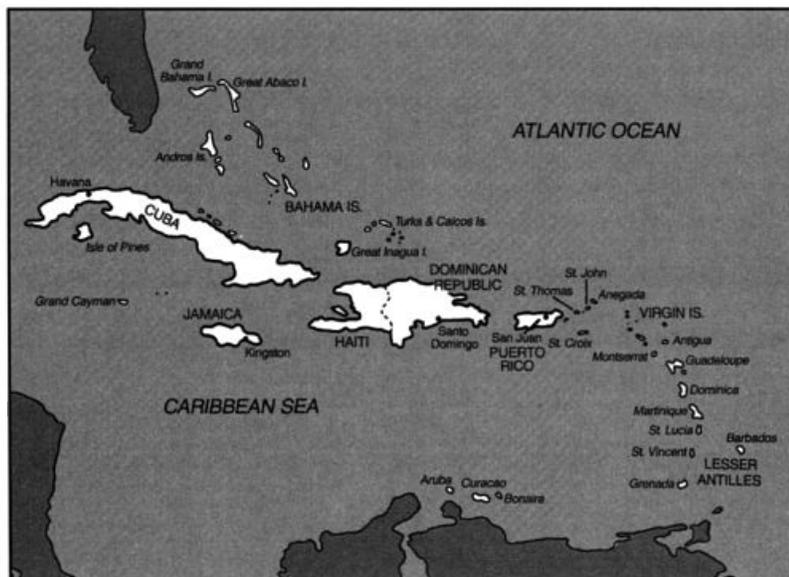


West Indies



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The Region was more broadly represented this season than in recent years, with reports from Bermuda, the Bahamas (Andros, Grand Bahama, New Providence), Cuba, Haïti, and many of the Lesser Antilles (Anguilla, St. Martin, St. Barts, Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and Barbados). A report from Isle of Youth (once the Isle of Pines), Cuba during the second week of February (SN) is greatly appreciated. Larger than any of the islands east of Puerto Rico, the Isle of Youth's isolation from mainland Cuba accounts for subspecific endemism in Cuban Lizard-Cuckoo, Cuban Pygmy-Owl, Bare-legged Owl, Cuban Trogon, Cuban Green Woodpecker, West Indian Red-bellied Woodpecker, Rufous-throated Solitaire, and Greater Antillean Grackle.

Steve Mlodinow reports on a new record for Andros and Grand Bahama, and Hallet and Bracey found large numbers of gulls using the dump and pond nearby at Grand Bahama. The

port at New Providence similarly attracts large concentrations of nearctic gull species, including many Lesser and Greater Black-backed Gulls (TW). The Barbados report contained many a West Indian rarity, including a vagrant gull and a Eurasian duck. Migrant warblers made an impressive showing through the period, with large numbers and variety invading Bermuda and the northern Bahamas, but very few warblers were noted in the Lesser Antilles. At Haïti, a mix of high elevation forest cover (> 4,500 ft) and terraced slopes for fruit trees appears to harbor several neotropical migrant warblers during winter.

Perhaps 20 years ago, reports of Eared Dove on Barbados would have been considered unusual, but C.B.C.s there have demonstrated an expansion and retraction of that species's range in the Lesser Antilles. On a conservation note, EM conducted surveys and a late-night vigil in February on Dominica in search of a faint cry of Black-capped Petrels. The steep, wet slopes of Morne aux Diabes, named for the sound of breeding devil-birds, was the last nesting site in the Lesser Antilles in 1882. Although unsuccessful this year, EM plans to keep trying.

Abbreviations: Be. (Bermuda) E.F.R. (Edmond Forest Reserve), S.P.L. (Syndicate Parrot Lookout); V.F.R. (Vermont Forest Reserve).

Petrels Through Terns

At Be., the Cahow remains found 2 Dec (DBW, MW) near the airport have conservation managers concerned; the predator is presumed to have been a Peregrine Falcon. Only once before, with a Snowy Owl in 1987, has there been documented predation on Bermuda Petrels. Three Cory's Shearwaters were seen 2 mi off Great Guana Cay, Abaco (WB). On a crossing from Crooked Island to Long Cay, Bight of Acklins, Bahamas, SL & ML counted as many as 100 Audubon Shearwaters off South Point, Long Island, Bahamas. Red-billed Tropicbirds were fairly evident around Anguilla's Little Bay on 4 Feb, where nesting is likely at cliffs there (DJ). On a cruise from St Martin to Anguilla, DJ noted a Masked Booby on 4 Feb. Masked Boobies were also noted near Ile Fourchue off St. Bath's on 9 Feb (DJ). This species may be moving about in the n. Lesser Antilles. A medium-sized colony of 50 Brown Pelicans found at Fort Alexander, St. Martin had mostly fledged young, but three nests still had eggs and chicks on 11 Feb (DJ). A Great Cormorant first noted on 19 Dec at Mangrove Bay, Be. was present through most of the winter (AD).

An American Bittern was seen at a small pond near the Grande Case airport, St. Martin 7 Feb (DJ) for one of the very few reports from the n. Lesser Antilles. A **Least Bittern**, rarely reported from the Lesser Antilles, was noted 17 Feb at Cabrits Swamp, Dominica (EM), where it may be breeding. Single **Gray Herons** were found at Golden Grove, St. Philip, and Graeme Hall 1 Jan during the Barbados C.B.C. (EM MF). Remarkably, 22 Little Egrets were counted at Barbados that day as well. This is probably the highest single-day count in the the New World. At least 4 imm. Black-crowned Night-Herons were present through the period at Stokes Point Reserve, Be. (PW). A White Ibis on 14 Dec at Buccaneer golf club was a good find at Grand Bahama (BH et al.). Crouse counted 300-400 Greater Flamingo at Trou Caiman, Haiti on 9 Dec. Approximately 200 Greater Flamingos were counted on 26 Feb at the Acklins (JK).

We invite the readers to Kurt and Cindy Radamaker's website (at www.javaswift.com/floridabirds/Bahama%204.html), which has a narrative about their rescue of a family of West Indian Whistling-Ducks at Crossing Rock, Abaco. The continued loss of habitat and taking of birds threaten the long-term survival of this species throughout the Bahamas and elsewhere in the West Indies. Six West Indian Whistling-Ducks were noted 20 Jan at Tarpon Ponds, Androstown, Andros (SM), and a Fulvous Whistling-Duck was found on the

Grand Bahama C.B.C. on 15 Dec (TW). At Bahama Reef golf course, Lucaya, Grand Bahama, SM found 4 immn. Snow Geese 28 Jan. A single juv. *hrota* **Brant**, a hold-over from the fall period, remained at East End Dairy, Be. through Feb (LG, DBW, PW, AD, m.ob.). Three drake Wood Duck were noted on Jubilee Road, Be. 7 Jan. A pair of American Wigeon was noted at Tarpon Ponds, Androstown, Andros 20-24 Jan (SM). An imm. drake and 2 female American Wigeon were Gachet, Port-Louis, Guadeloupe (AL). A female **Garganey** in fresh plumage, a second Barbados record, was found at East Point, St. Philip 17 Dec (EM) and again 21 Jan (MF, EM). A drake Northern Pintail, initially found 27 Dec, shuttled between Seymour's Pond and Spittal Pond, Be. over the period. A pair of Northern Pintail was at Androstown, Andros 21 Jan (SM). A Bufflehead remained at Seymour's Pond, Be. through 7 Jan. As many as 8 Ring-necked Duck at Barbados 4 Dec into Feb was the largest winter count EM and MF have observed to date. A female Hooded Merganser was noted at Treasure Cay Golf Club on 3 Dec and remained through Jan. On 31 Jan, a Red-breasted Merganser was seen at Green Turtle Cay, Abaco (WB). A Masked Duck was located at Gachet, Port-Louis, Guadeloupe (AL).

A **Bald Eagle** was reported many times at Abaco, Bahamas from 30 Dec to at least 20 Feb (RP, CJP, BB, YL, BN, *vide* WB), but it eluded being photographed. This species is extremely rare anywhere in the West Indies or on Bermuda. Common Black-Hawk was evident at V.F.R., St. Vincent, with a maximum of 8 on 8 Dec (DC). During the week 6-12 Feb, SN et al. recorded an impressive 35+ Crested Caracaras on the Isle of Youth, Cuba. A Peregrine was noted at Rivière Salée, Guadeloupe (AL) on 3 Jan. Also at the Gachet reservoir, Guadeloupe 26 Feb was a pair of American Coots with 2 chicks, providing the first breeding for that island (AL *vide* FH). Purple Gallinules were seen regularly in winter this year at Pembroke (EA) and Devonshire Marshes (JM) and Jubilee Rd. (BL), Be., a testament to their wandering ability. Two Piping Plovers were at Lucaya, Grand Bahama 29-30 Jan, and 4 were noted at High Rock, Grand Bahama 31 Jan (SM). The high count of 18 Piping came from Green Turtle Cay, Abaco 11 Feb (WB, BH). Unseasonable were 7 Least Sandpipers at Westover Farm, Be. 27 Dec (DBW). A Reeve 5-9 Dec and a Ruff 19 Dec and 19 Jan (EM, MF) were found at Barbados; they have become almost routine visitors in recent years.

On 18 Feb, 6 Pomarine Jaegers and a Parasitic Jaeger were noted by Sperm Whale

watchers off the w. coast of Dominica (MF, EM). Four Ring-billed Gulls were seen at Rivière Salée, Guadeloupe (AL) 22 Dec-3 Jan. A second-year Herring Gull at Canefield, Dominica 13 Dec may be the first reported from that island (DC). The gull of the season was an adult **Kelp Gull** at North Point, St. Lucy, Barbados (MF, EM), the first record from the West Indies. More details are expected to be published elsewhere. Lesser Black-backed Gulls made an impressive move to the Bahamas. Forty Lesser Black-backed were counted 13 Dec (WB, BH) at the Freeport dump site. Another Lesser Black-backed Gull, the 3rd record for Barbados, was found at Six Mens, St. Peter 7-22 Jan (EM, MF). On 26 Jan, SM found 14 at the Freeport dump. A Great Black-backed Gull was seen by SM at West End, Grand Bahama 2-3 Feb. A Common Tern was seen on 4 Feb at Treasure Cay, Abaco (WB). Two Forster's Terns were at West End Harbour, Grand Bahama 14 Dec (BH), and another pair was noted at the Dockyard, Be. 19 Dec+. Two Black Skimmers were at Sandy Point, Abaco 2 Jan (WB) for one of the few reports from the Bahamas.

Doves Through Orioles

Three Plain Pigeons were noted near Gonaives, Haïti 23 Jan (JRC), one of the few reports of this threatened species in Haïti. The numbers of Eurasian Collared-Dove in the n. Bahamas is alarming. On the Grand Bahama C.B.C., 1163 were counted 15 Dec (TW), and 391 were counted on the New Providence C.B.C. on 17 Dec (TW). The expansion has reached as far s. as Dominica, where 10 were seen near Canefield airport on 13 Dec (JC), but it has yet to be recorded from Jamaica or Hispaniola. This large, somewhat aggressive dove could impact indigenous populations of columbiforms. A White-winged Dove came to CW's feeder at New Providence 19 Dec, and another at Orient Beach, St. Martin on 11 Feb was a good find (DJ) this far e. of the Greater Antilles. The Barbados C.B.C. (EM, MF) reported 15 Eared Dove. Bond (1988) reported only two records from Barbados last century. Cuban Parrots (30) were noted at the Isle of Youth 6-12 Feb (SN). Eight Cuban Parrots of the Bahamian form were found 5 Feb at Abaco (WB). On the Coopers' Lesser Antillean excursion, they managed to find four of the endemic parrot species: 30 Red-necked Parrots

11 Dec. at SPL, Dominica; 10 St. Lucia Parrots at E.F.R. 7 Dec; 20 St. Vincent Parrots at V.F.R. 9 Dec; 3 Imperial Parrots at S.P.L., Dominica 12 Dec (JC) & 15 Feb (EM, MF). A Cuban Screech-Owl was noted during 2nd week of Feb at the Isle of Youth (SN). A pair of Ringed Kingfishers was found regularly between Woodford Hill beach and Woodford Hill River, Dominica 4-18 Feb (EM, MF). Five Cuban Green Woodpeckers were seen at Isle of Youth (SN) during the 2nd week of Feb.

Eastern Phoebe were good finds at Devonshire 30 Nov (DBW, ESB) and at Mid-Ocean Golf Course, Be. 22 Feb (IF, PW), but they were outdone by the continued presence of an **Ash-throated Flycatcher** at Southside, Be through Feb (MW, DBW, m.ob.). A Western Kingbird was noted at San Andros airport, Bahamas 23 Jan (SM). Five Western Kingbirds and 2 Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were at New Providence 17 Dec (AB, TG, LH, BH), a nice late-afternoon addition to the C.B.C. there. A single Loggerhead Kingbird was seen at San Andros airport 23 Jan. Cave Swallows (12) were seen near St. Marc, near Port-au-Prince, Haïti (JRC) on 24 Feb, but it is not clear whether they were resident or migrant birds. A **Northern Shrike** was found at the Bermuda airport 27 Dec and remained through Feb (SD). A Blue-headed Vireo was seen at Taino Beach, Grand Bahama 31 Jan, and another was seen at West End on 2-3 Feb (SM). A Yellow-throated Vireo near Stokes Point Nature Reserve, Be. was a good record 1 Dec (B&MS). The St. Lucia form of the House Wren was seen on 6 Dec (DC) near Chaubourg Forest Reserve. This pale-colored form has become very scarce and is considered threatened **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were noted at Port Royal golf course on 14 Jan (AD, BM) and apparently also overwintered at Spittal Pond, Be., where first found 30 Nov (ESB, DBW)



This adult Lesser Black-backed Gull was noted among others at Nassau, Bahamas, 18 December 2000. Photograph by Bruce Hallett.

Rarely seen or reported, 3 Forest Thrushes were found at the Emerald Pool, Dominica 12-13 Dec (*vide* FH). A White-breasted Thrasher was noted in dry forest along the Fox Grove Inn trail, St Lucia 6 Dec (JC). Three American Pipits were at Big Bird Poultry Farm, Treasure Cay, Abaco (WB).

As AD points out, the neotropical migrant warblers that could not normally survive winters on the mainland at Bermuda's latitude do so on Bermuda as a result of the milder climate afforded by the Gulf Stream. Therefore, Prothonotary (AD,BM), Orange-crowned (AD,BM), and Kentucky Warblers (JM) were among the 24 species of warblers recorded this winter. As many as 8 Cape May Warblers were noted at Guadeloupe 31 Dec-3 Jan (AL). Mlodinow recorded 14 species of migrant warblers in the Bahamas during his visit to Andros and Grand Bahama 21 Jan-3 Feb, including Blue-winged, Orange-crowned, and Nashville (2), and a Swainson's on North Andros. As many as 7 Wilson's Warblers were studied at several locations on Grand Bahama, and 4 at New Providence were unprecedented (CG et al.). A Louisiana Waterthrush was noted at Fermanthe, Haiti, at 4500-ft elevation 16 Dec (JRC). On St. Vincent, the Coopers found 6 Whistling Warblers on the V.F.R. trail 9 Dec. A single bird of the Cuban endemic Yellow-headed Warbler was noted during the 2nd week of Feb on the Isle of Youth (SN). Female and male American Redstarts were noted at Cabrits swamp, Dominica 17 (EM) & 19 (MF) Feb, respectively. A Yellow-breasted Chat was at Nicholls Town, Andros 24 Jan (SM). Summer Tanagers were seen at New Providence 17 Dec (BH et al.), Garden of Groves, Grand Bahama 26 Jan, and 2 at Taino Beach, and West End, Grand Bahama 3 Feb (TW). On the V.F.R. trail, St. Vincent, FH counted 3 Lesser Antillean Tanagers 9 Dec. Among the highlights of the Dominica visit was a single Antillean Euphonia seen feeding in mistletoe at Syndicate Estate 11 Dec (JFC).

The "Patagonia Picnic Table Effect" was in force 3 Dec at Bermuda's airport, where birders gathered to admire the Ash-throated flycatcher found one Vesper and one Grasshopper Sparrow (both rare on the island) among small numbers of Savannah Sparrows—as well as a nearby flock of 17 Snow Buntings (AD, DBW, ESB, MW, Field Guides, Inc. tour et al.)! Three other remarkable sparrow records at Be. were single Swamp Sparrows at the Biological Station 2 Dec (ESB et al.) and at Bartram's Pond 1 Jan (AD), a Lincoln's Sparrow at Warwick Pond 4 Jan (AD), and a Fox Sparrow (AD, BM) at Port Royal Golf Course 14 Feb. A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was seen near Owens

Town, Andros (SM) as was as a Grasshopper Sparrow. A Lincoln's Sparrow was noted at Fresh Creek Township dump, Andros, 21 Jan, with 2 at the dairy near Dover Sound Park, Grand Bahama 1 Feb (SM). Ten Cuban Eastern Meadowlarks were noted during the week at the Isle of Youth 6-12 Feb (SN). To round out a remarkable two weeks in the Bahamas, SM found and described in fine detail a female **Bullock's Oriole** at West End, Grand Bahama 2 Feb. This would represent the first report from the Bahamas and a new West Indian record.

Addenda

The Cuban Solitaires reported from Pinares de Mayari on 10 Apr should read Playa Pesquero 9 Apr (*NAB* 54: 332).

Corrigenda

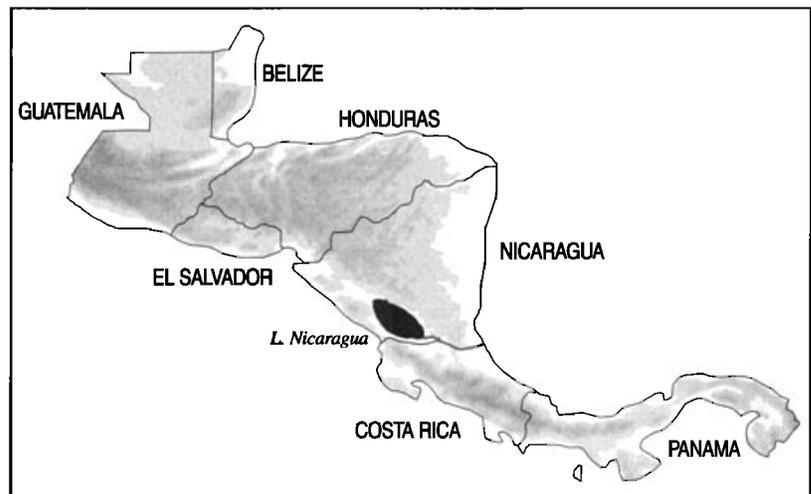
A report of Swinhoe's Storm-Petrel (*NAB* 54: 329) should read "a possible Swinhoe's Storm-Petrel." Double-crested Cormorant and Red-billed Tropicbird reported in *NAB* 54: 223-224 on 24 Dec were actually noted 24 Feb 2000. SC

observed Little Egret at Puerto Rico, not Western Reef-Heron, as reported in *NAB* 54: 110.

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Central America



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The winter season produced perhaps as many as five first, two second, and three third country records, yet one cannot help but wonder if 20 years from now someone will read this column and pronounce the 2000-2001 winter season rather uneventful. If Central America had the birding coverage of New York or California, for instance, many of these records