

past few years by a Pine Bark Beetle infestation. Two flocks of unidentified siskins seen briefly in flight on the outskirts of Punta Gorda on 9 & 15 Nov (LJ) may well have been Black-headed seeking new areas of suitable habitat; however, no natural pine woodlands occur near Punta Gorda. Apparently, no one is studying the effects of this devastating bark beetle disease on bird populations in the M.P.R.; thus it is not known to what extent species such as the siskin, Red Crossbill, Greater Pewee, and other pine-dependent species restricted in Belize to the M.P.R. have been affected. Five House Sparrows were in Tortuguero 1 Sep (DVdB, CR), where they have not been previously reported.

### UNDOCUMENTED RARITIES

A Black-headed Grosbeak in Monteverde near Finca Ecologica 21 Oct has been reported variously as a male and a female. Because of the confusion, and because details in support of this record have not yet surfaced, the sighting should be considered undocumented, at least for now.

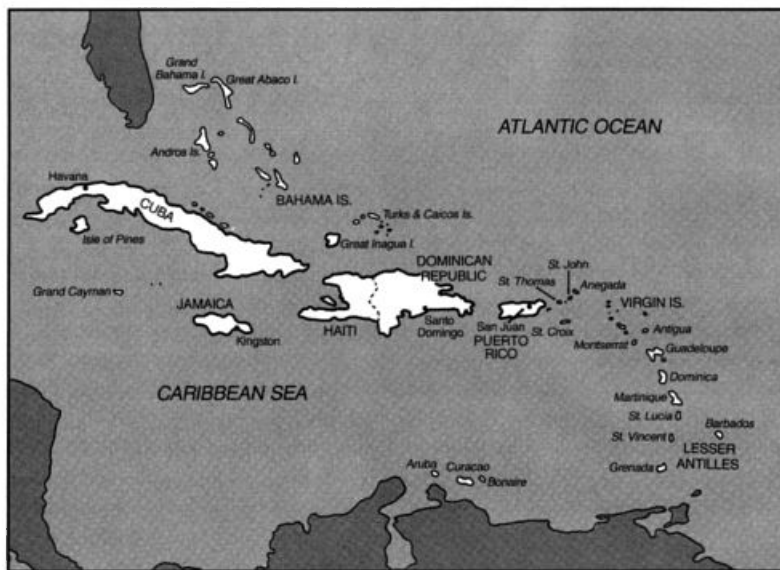
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# West Indies



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**F**or many observers, the fall migration was disappointing in terms of numbers and diversity of birds recorded. Certainly, local and continental factors were not favorable for bringing migrants to offshore areas such as Bermuda, for instance: frontal systems to bring birds from the continent were few and weak, and places such as Warwick and Spittal Pond were full of water all season, with little in the way of muddy margins.

At Bermuda, a number of late-season storms, notably Tropical Storm *Karen*—which became a hurricane as it passed 11-12 October—denuded the island of much vegetation. Salt spray “burned” much foliage, and hundreds of trees were felled by wind and rain. In early December, decaying Hurricane *Olga* brought more wind and rain. Nevertheless, there were some real highlights at Bermuda, including Red-tailed Hawk, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Gull-billed Tern, Red-breasted Nuthatch, two House Wrens, Lark Sparrow, and two White-winged Crossbills.

In the Bahamas, Hurricane *Michelle* passed directly over New Providence on 5 November, causing considerable damage to trees all over the

island. Paul Dean reported soon after the hurricane that birds were back in good numbers despite the damage to his usually well-vegetated back yard.

At Aruba 19-26 October and 12 November, Jan Hein van Steenis reported on resident and migrant birds. In Guadeloupe, the Nature Reserve of Petite-Terre continues to produce a phenomenal diversity of birds, especially Nearctic landbird migrants. Eddie Massiah notes that Grenada Hook-billed Kites are scarce but more widespread on Grenada than previously thought, including in rainforest up to 400 m. He also reported a new breeding species for Grenada Channel-billed Toucan, the result of a Guyanese bird dealer’s release in the early 1990s. Larry Manfredi and Dennis Buss reported on a one-day excursion to Montserrat in search of the endemic Montserrat Oriole. The news is good for the oriole (<<http://sei.org/opva.html>>), but the stoic people who remained on the island to keep the country’s spirit alive are the real story (on the volcanic impact on Montserrat: <<http://sei.org/impacts.html>> and Montserrat Volcano Observatory: <<http://www.geo.mtu.edu/volcanoes/west.indies/soufriere/govt/>>).

**Abbreviations:** BAMZ (Bermuda Aquarium, Museum and Zoo).

### STORM-PETRELS THROUGH TERNS

A Leach’s Storm-Petrel came aboard a tour boat off St. David’s, Bermuda 19 Sep (HW) and was

released the following day. At Trou Caiman, Haïti 17 Nov, JRC ventured into the large, reed-fringed lake by boat and found 6 Least Bitterns, possibly in three pairs. An imm. Least Bittern reported at Bubali, Aruba (JHvS) seen 19-26 Oct is not a species recorded in Voous's checklist of Aruba's birds; the species was also seen here in Mar 2001. A rare occurrence at Middle Caicos was a Glossy Ibis 15 Oct (BM and EG-W). At Trou Caiman, Haïti, JRC found a Roseate Spoonbill 11 Aug. Greater Flamingos numbered about 500 at Trou Caiman, Haïti 22 Sep (JRC). Six Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks and a male American Wigeon were noted at Bubali, Aruba during the week of 19-26 Oct (JHvS). A wild Mallard was reported from the Bahamas (TW) and considered a rarity there. At lake Bois Nef, near Port-au-Prince, Haïti, JRC reported a Ruddy Duck 7 Oct. A Sharp-shinned Hawk reported 10 Oct at Spittal Pond, Bermuda, was the first of several fall sightings (AD). A Red-tailed Hawk reported by DBW and WF 23 Nov is only the 3rd reported from Bermuda in the last 100 years; the others were noted in 1983 and 1929! At Rose I. off Nassau, NM reports a Peregrine Falcon 6 Oct. And at Elbow Cay, Abaco, Bahamas, DC reported seeing a Peregrine 20 Oct for the first time on the outer islands. As many as 3 Peregrines, one each at Spanish Lagoon, Arikok, and San Nicolaas, all on Aruba, were noted 19-22 Oct (JHvS).

A Virginia Rail (DBW) was seen 17 Nov at Devonshire Marsh, Bermuda. Near Kenscoff, Haïti, at 1500 m, JW (*vide* JRC) reports a Limpkin calling at her farm, where it may be feeding on snails. At Bois Cotierre, Arbonite Valley, Haïti, JRC found 6-8 Northern Jaçanas among a dozen Common Moorhens 2 Nov. A Piping Plover (DBW) was an aircraft kill at the Civil Air Terminal, Bermuda 21 Aug. Other Piping Plovers at Bermuda, where now rare, were noted 29 Aug at Elbow Beach (SR), again at the air terminal 7 Sep (SR), and at Cooper's I. 3 Oct (DBW).

A Dunlin was reported by JM on 13 Nov at Daniel's Head, Bermuda. In Barbados, a **Curlew Sandpiper** was found (EM, MF) at Congo Road 30 Nov. A **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper**, originally found on 29 Jul, departed North Pond, Bermuda 6 Aug (EA). Four Pectoral, one Stilt, and 3 **Buff-breasted Sandpipers** were seen at Hewonarra, St. Lucia 22 Sep (JP, FH). A rare visitor to Bermuda, an American Woodcock was found by HW 30 Nov at St. David's, Bermuda.

Nineteen Lesser Black-backed Gulls were recorded 29 Nov at Dockyard, a record count for this species in Bermuda (SR). At Paradise I., Nassau, LG and SB found a rare Great Black-backed Gull 6 Oct. A very late Gull-billed Tern was seen 9 Sep-8 Oct at the Dockyard, only the 4th fall record from Bermuda (AD). A Forster's Tern (EA) seen 22 Oct+ at Castle Harbour,

Bermuda furnished a first record for fall. An imm. Black Tern on Bermuda was taken into the bird rehabilitation facility at BAMZ 13 Sep but perished that day.

### PIGEONS THROUGH FINCHES

At Cormorant Cay, Abaco, Bahamas, SP counted **2,284** White-crowned Pigeons 16 Aug and managed to band about 6% (157). At Lyford Cay, New Providence, Bahamas, TW reports 2 Caribbean Doves 7 Nov. The endemic Aruban Brown-throated Parakeet (*Aratinga pertinax arubensis*) was considered abundant throughout during a visit to Aruba 19-26 Oct (JHvS). A **Long-eared Owl** was found dead 14 Nov at St. George's Cemetery, Bermuda (SR). One Aruban Burrowing Owl (*S. cunicularia arubensis*) was seen in Santa Cruz, with more heard there; it occurs in Noord, in the Hotel Area, along the Spanish Lagoon, and on golf courses, but it can be difficult to locate (JHvS). Fourteen Common Nighthawks were seen 1 Oct at Belmont Golf Course, Bermuda (AD), a high number there. Perhaps late, one was noted in Santa Cruz, Aruba 19-26 Oct (JHvS). At an elevation of 1350 m, JRC noted 12 Antillean Palm Swifts and 2 White-collared Swifts at Fermanthe, Baptist Haïti Mission. A Northern Flicker was noted 3 Nov at St. George's, Bermuda (SR). Two Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were seen 1 Nov at the Arboretum, Bermuda (AD). One to 2 Eastern Phoebes are recorded annually at Bermuda, so the 6 recorded this fall was a high count. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher at Treasure Cay, Abaco, caught EB by surprise 31 Oct, but there is precedent for the species in this area (A. B. 38: 362). A remarkable find was of 8 Eastern Wood-Pewees between 28 Sep and 5 Oct (PD) on South Andros I., where Cuban Pewee is resident. A flock of up to 40 Cliff Swallows at the East End was a maximum for Bermuda 26 Aug (PW). At Fermanthe, Haïti 10 Aug, JRC noted a single Golden Swallow. Mike Pienkowski concluded that Hurricane *Olga*, which moved in unpredictable loops between the Bahamas and Bermuda, was responsible for the appearance of an American Pipit 28 Nov on Middle Caicos. A Blue-headed Vireo was noted on 3 Nov at the Arboretum, Bermuda (SR). A **Red-breasted Nuthatch** at Ferry Point Park 10 Nov (SR et al.) represented only the 6th record in 30 years at Bermuda; more remarkable, 2 House Wrens 4 Nov+ at St. George's Cemetery, Bermuda, were the 5th and 6th records since 1970 (IF).

On Bermuda, 36 warbler species were reported at least once Aug-Nov (all but Townsend's and Cerulean Warbler): among the more interesting records, a Golden-winged Warbler 15 Sep at Horseshoe Bay was the only 2001 report (DW), and a Palm Warbler 7 Sep at Ferry Reach was the



This Short-eared Owl landed on the ship *North Star* while it was under way at 25.7° N, 50. 2° W, or about 1577 km east of Antigua, 11 November 2001, it had been seen the day before in flight. Although known to make water crossings readily, this species has rarely been recorded so far out at sea in the Atlantic Ocean. The bird departed the ship on the 12th, heading eastward (*vide* Hubert Hall).

Photograph by Chief Engineer David Redmond.

earliest record by six days (DBW). Three Swainson's Warblers (DW) 26 Sep at Somerset was most unusual: this usually elusive species was reported from all parts of the Bermuda this fall. A Kentucky Warbler was seen 29 Nov+ at Smiths Hills, also Bermuda (JM). At Guadeloupe, 8 Blackpoll Warblers were noted 7 Nov, and a lingering male Hooded Warbler was observed at the Nature Reserve of Petite-Terre from 7-28 Nov (AL). A Chestnut-sided Warbler, considered rare on the coastal islands of South America, was found at Arikok, Aruba during the 3rd week of Oct (JHvS). Also at Aruba, JHvS found a road-killed Blackpoll Warbler at Rooi Awa Marga, around Cero Arikok, during late Oct; they were locally fairly common along the road to Seroe Colorado at this time. Two Connecticut Warblers were at Montague Foreshore, Nassau 12 Oct (SB).

Nine Scarlet Tanagers 3 Oct at Ocean View Golf Course, Bermuda was a record high count (EA). Three Summer Tanagers 30 Sep at St. George's, Bermuda were unusual (AD et al.). A Chipping Sparrow 13 Nov at St. Cemetery Hill, Bermuda was the only report for this species in 2001 (IF), but Clay-colored Sparrows were seen 18 Sep at Lagoon Park (DBW) and Kindley Field, Bermuda 27 Oct (SR). A Clay-colored Sparrow was reported by PD at South Andros I., Bahamas 28 Sep-5 Oct. The 5th record for **Lark Sparrow** was reported 22 Oct at Ferry Point Park, Bermuda (EA), and

**SA** Dennis Buss and Larry Manfredi reported on a visit to Montserrat to look for **Montserrat Oriole**: "We had heard stories of the volcanic eruption on Montserrat in 1997. And we had heard that the oriole had been reduced in numbers but had survived the destruction. But we did not think travel to Montserrat was possible: no flights were scheduled and no hotels listed. We discovered that it is possible, and indeed very enjoyable, to visit Montserrat. The southern half of Montserrat (the Exclusion Zone) is a ghostly desolation, covered with volcanic ash. But the northern half contains a colorful and determined population of about 4,500 hardy souls, many relocated from the southern half, who are in the process of rebuilding their lives. We were also very happy to learn that the Montserrat Oriole, thanks to the dedicated efforts of 8-10 naturalists in the Forestry Division, is surviving well in the Centre Hills, which are in the secure northern part of the island. We made arrangements with James "Scriber" Daley, a naturalist in the Forestry Division who has been studying Montserrat Orioles for 16 years, to look for the bird. He told us that there are an estimated 2000 orioles in existence, all in the Centre Hills, except for a small, remnant population in an isolated part of forest that escaped destruction in the southern Soufrière Hills. With Scriber on 22 Oct, we saw both male and female Montserrat Orioles readily on Baker Hill along unmarked trails. Later, from the top of Garibaldi Hill, we looked down on Plymouth, the former capital of Montserrat, now buried in pyroclastic lava ash, and we looked up at the cause of the destruction, La Soufrière, still emitting a sinister plume of smoke. Scriber told us nostalgically that his town, St Patrick, was completely buried under 10 m of pyroclastic lava."

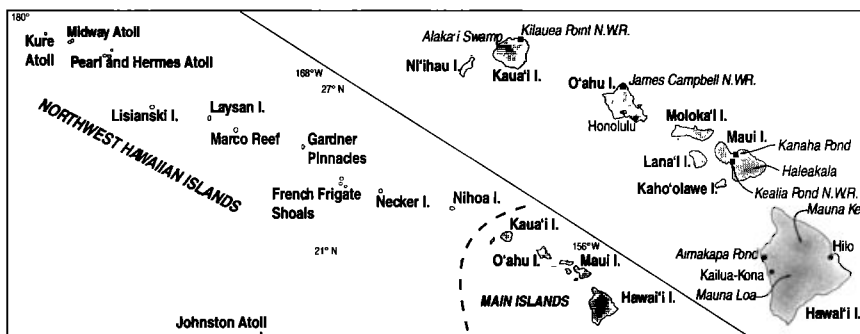
a Song Sparrow 18 Nov at Lagoon Park (SR). A Snow Bunting 14 Nov at Little Head Park, Bermuda (SR) was the only one reported in the fall season. A Dickcissel at Nonsuch I., Bermuda 12 Nov (DBW) was rare if regular, while at West End, Grand Bahama EG and RJ counted up to 14 Bobolinks on 15 Oct. Two Bobolinks were noted at Bubali, Aruba (JHvS) in late Oct.

An imm. Brown-headed Cowbird was noted 6 Oct at East End Dairy, Bermuda (AD et al.). On South Andros I., PD found about 15 Shiny Cowbirds, mostly imms., which is a rather ominous count for resident hosts such as the Black-cowled Oriole. Two—a male and a female—**White-winged Crossbills** were seen 14-17 Nov at Astwood Park, Bermuda, indeed a very rare occurrence in Bermuda (JH, AD). That the local resident who first noted them drinking from the same puddle as a **Purple Gallinule** boggles the mind!

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# Hawaiian Islands



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**M**any areas of the main islands finally got some relief from a protracted drought. A rainstorm in late Oct dumped 33 cm of rain in six hours on the east side of the Big Island of Hawaii. A low aloft in late Nov produced widespread heavy rain but rainfall remained well below normal through Nov in a few areas: southwestern O'ahu, southwestern Moloka'i, and the northwestern part of the Big Island.

**Abbreviations:** E. (endangered species); H (Hawai'i Island); Hakalau (Hakalau N.W.R., Hawai'i Island); Hanalei (Hanalei N.W.R., Kaua'i I.); Honouliuli (Honouliuli Unit of Pearl Harbor N.W.R., O'ahu Island); K. (Kaua'i Island); Kanaha (Kanaha Pond, Maui Island); Kealia (Kealia Pond N.W.R., Maui Island); Kii (Ki'i Unit of Jas Campbell N.W.R., O'ahu Island); K.P. (Kilauea Pt N.W.R., Kaua'i Island); M. (Maui Island); O. (O'ahu Island); Waiawa (Waiawa Unit of Pearl Harbor N.W.R., O'ahu Island); T. (threatened species).

## ALBATROSS THROUGH EGRETS

At least 2 Short-tailed Albatross (E.), one yellow-banded and one red-banded, have appeared on Midway this fall (KL, WS). The yellow-banded bird, a female, was observed building a nest 7 Nov and incubating an egg 9 Nov (KL). This female has been returning to Midway every fall since 1993. She has laid eggs about every two years but has never found a mate.