

Fronts, depressions, and tropical cyclones produced fascinating avian fallout on Bermuda and the Bahamas, as well as on islands farther south. Veteran birders on Bermuda lamented that the fall migration over the Western Atlantic was one of the poorest in 32 years—until the front of 21 October, when it apparently rained Blackpoll Warblers by the hundreds, if not thousands onto the island. In the end, Bermuda's cumulative seasonal tally of 37 warbler species was remarkable, as only 38 species have been documented there ever! Fall Blackpoll Warblers migrate over open ocean and are sporadic in their appearance in the Bahamas, but this year good numbers were seen on Eleuthera and Crooked and Acklins Islands, which front the open Atlantic. In the Cayman Islands, where some migrants take a cross Gulf-Caribbean route, certain warblers were recorded early there, and other species were reported for the first time in several years (cf. Bradley 2000). The highlights of the fall in the Bahamas were the return of the Kirtland's Warblers to the site discovered by Paul Dean last spring, and the two Caspian Terns seen on New Providence. Flycatchers and warblers, perhaps the most beguiling and sought-after migrants during fall migration, were widespread and, in many instances, provided new location records and early arrival dates.

On a more sobering note, Nancy Norman reports (*vide* Bruce Hallett) widespread shooting of Cuban Parrots by orchard farmers on the Cayman Islands and a total lack of response by law enforcement. As yet, there have been no reports of unexplained mortality of birds from the Antilles that could indicate a Caribbean presence of West Nile virus.

Abbreviation: U.S.V.I. (United States Virgin Islands).

SHEARWATERS THROUGH TERNS

Ten Greater Shearwaters were seen 5-8 km e. of St. Lucia 20 Jun (DLS, DD); though certainly a regular late-spring migrant here, reports are few. The first fall record of Red-billed Tropicbird for Bermuda occurred 14 Aug off Non-such I., only the islands' 4th (DBW). A juv. Northern Gannet was off St. David's Head, Bermuda 17 & 26 Nov (ESB, JM). A banded imm. American White Pelican at North Pond on 6-30 Nov+ (DO, m. ob.) furnished the first record for Bermuda. At the golf course on Paradise I., New Providence, 60 Neotropic Cormorants were counted on 5 Oct (LG, SBu, R&SBo). Green Heron was confirmed as breeding for the first time at Bermuda 30 Jul (DBW). An ad. Black-crowned Night Heron at Sugar Bay, St. Thomas 3-24 Nov (FH) may indicate a local expansion from St. Croix or Puerto Rico. A rare American Bittern was reported from Barbados 12 Oct (MF). Fifty-five White Ibis at Diamond Farms, New Providence 12 Oct is believed to be the high count for the Bahamas (AB, BH).

At Trou Caiman, a shallow lake near Port-au-Prince, Haiti, a native boatman on 19 Oct man-

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aged to find for JRC only a single West Indian Whistling-Duck, probably the most threatened species of waterfowl on Hispaniola. On 24 Sep, a high count of 14 was observed on the driving range at AUTECH Base, Andros (CC). A pair was photographed at Carambola Resort on St. Croix 25 Oct for the first documented report from the V. I. since 1941 (FH). At Barbados, 12 Black-bellied Whistling-Duck ducklings provided evidence of the first breeding there 29 Sep (MF). By 16 Nov, there were 10 ducklings still at The Hope Pond (MF). On 17 Nov, White-cheeked Pintails numbered 48 (including 6 ducklings), while another 45 were at Sapphire Beach, e. St. Thomas 17 Nov (FH). On a 5 Oct duck count (LG, SBu, R&SBo) at Paradise I., Nassau, 32 White-cheeked Pintails and 7 Ruddy Ducks were recorded. In Saint Martin, HVB's study of wintering Blue-winged Teal showed a peak of 69 birds on 26 Oct. At Barbuda, DK found a Ring-necked Duck on 5 Nov, for perhaps the first record there. An imm. Surf Scoter on Mangrove L., Bermuda 31 Oct (SR, DE) provided the only fall report this year and the first in seven years. Three Ruddy Ducks were noted at Trou Caiman, Haiti 14 Sep (JRC).

Five Swallow-tailed Kites were seen at the

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SA From Guadeloupe, a **Marsh Harrier** (*Circus a. aeruginosus*) was seen and photographed 11 Nov+ at Grand Cul-de-Sac-Marin (LM, GB; AL). Some authorities recognize two species within the complex, namely Eastern Marsh Harrier (*C. spilonotus*) and Western or Eurasian Marsh Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*), which has strayed as far as Iceland on several occasions but has not figured prominently in rosters of anticipated Old World vagrants to the New World. If confirmed from photographs, the Guadeloupe bird would constitute the first indubitable New World occurrence. There is only one other New World report of this species, a juv. female at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, Virginia 4 Dec 1994 (Shedd et al. 1998); in that case, photographs were not deemed sufficient to place the species in Category 1 of the state's list, but descriptions and sketches were accepted for Category 2 (and for the Appendix of the American Ornithologists' Union's *Check-list*; cf. A. O. U. 2000).

Bond's (1985) old report of Eurasian Kestrel from Martinique (9 December, no year) was for years the only Caribbean report of an Old World raptor, and it is undocumented. But as Black Kite has been recently documented at Dominica 16 April 1999 (D. McRae, ph. C. Braun, m. ob.) and in mid-October 1999 in the British Virgin Islands (Mazar Barnett and Kirwan 2002), observers in the Lesser Antilles and elsewhere should keep an eye skyward—even if some of these birds are assisted by trans-Atlantic vessels, their presence in the Region is of great interest. The number and diversity of Palearctic vagrants to the Caribbean region grow steadily, as catalogued in a recommended recent paper in *Dutch Birding* (Ebels 2002).

agricultural grounds at Cayman Islands on 7 Sep (NN, TB), and another 5 accompanied 2 Mississippi Kites there on 2 Oct.

On Antigua, an undetermined mixture of 9 American and Caribbean Coots were at Jolly Harbor 1 Sep (FH); on the same date at St. Croix, Floyd Hayes found 6 American-type with 3 Caribbean-type coots showing signs of pairing and possibly hybridization.

On 1 Sep, PD and TW found 4 Piping Plovers, 10 Semipalmated Plovers, and 40 Black-bellied Plovers on South Beach, New Providence. A lone Piping Plover was on the Atlantic side of Elbow Cay, Abaco 12 Oct (RP). Snowy Plovers numbered 10 at Trou Caiman, Haïti 14 Sep (JRC). At St. John, U.S.V.I., a Whimbrel was at Francis Bay 2 & 6 Oct (LB). A seasonal high count of 4 Solitary Sandpipers was noted at Turpentine Run golf course 21 Oct (FH). Among a large fallout of shorebirds at the Bermuda airport following the merger of Tropical Storm *Cristobal* with a frontal trough 7-8 Aug was a Buff-breasted Sandpiper 9 Aug, possibly the earliest date for that island (DBW), with 36 Semipalmated Plovers, 22 Lesser Yellowlegs, 54 Semipalmated Sandpipers, 133 Least Sandpipers, 18 White-rumped Sandpipers, 24 Pectoral Sandpipers, and 46 Short-billed Dowitchers. On Guadeloupe, a Wilson's Phalarope was found among hundreds of shorebirds at La Grande Saline 1 Sep (AL). Wilson's Phalarope was noted at Jubilee Road, Bermuda as early as 2 Sep (EA), with 3 there 13 Sep. A **Northern Lapwing** at the Bermuda airport 25-30 Nov+ provided the 3rd record there (DW), previous records being from 1957 and 1987.

A Great Black-backed Gull at the Nassau Sailing Club, Bahamas 3 Oct was early (JB). At Lashings Lagoon, Antigua, DK recorded 2 Lesser Black-backed Gull 3 Nov, for one of the few reports from the n. Lesser Antilles. On 10 Aug, JRC recorded 5 Gull-billed Terns at Trou Caiman, Haïti. Six Forster's Terns at the Midland Pond at Cayman Islands were unexpected 31 Aug (NN, TB). A Least Tern at the Bermuda airport 9 Aug (DBW) was the season's only fall report there. At Trou Caiman, JRC found 2 Black Terns 10 Aug, with 17 there 14 Sep. Two Caspian Terns at Diamond Farms, New

Providence 2 Nov were noteworthy (PD).

PHEASANTS THROUGH ICTERIDS

A Ring-necked Pheasant, introduced to Eleuthera as a game species, was collected (*vide* EP) this fall and indicates they are still surviving in less-than-optimal habitat.

White-winged Doves appear to be expanding into the Lesser Antilles, where Frost has noticed them for several years. On St. Thomas, FH found 7 on 22 Sep and 6 on St. John 13 Oct. A White-winged Dove, rare on New Providence, returned for the 3rd year to CW's feeder at Coral Harbour 26 Nov. Klauber found pairs of

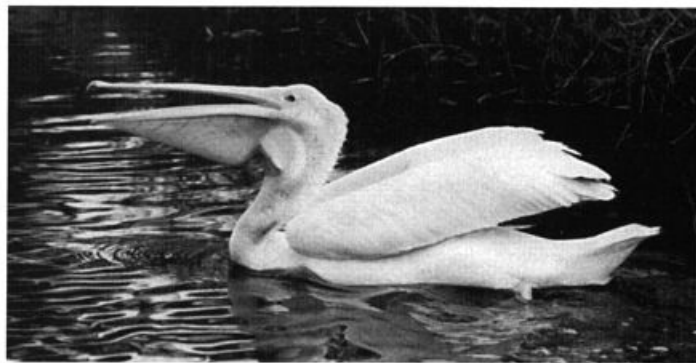
Red-necked and an Imperial Parrot at the Syndicat reserve, Dominica 7 Nov; elsewhere, he also located two pairs of St. Lucia Parrots 30 Oct and several St. Vincent Parrots 2 Nov. At an orange and coffee grove under a variety of shade trees at Haut Savanne, Haïti, JRC noted 4 Hispaniolan Parrots

24 Nov. A Black-billed Cuckoo at Harrington Hundreds, Bermuda 3 Aug (DBW) was one of the earliest recorded there, while one at Wights Garden, Cayman Islands 22-24 Sep after Tropical Storm *Isidore* was both rare and early there (NN, TB), with only one previous record. A Short-eared Owl was noted at Las Mareas, Salinas, Puerto Rico 5 Oct (LS). On Dominica, BJB (*vide* DK) states that Barn Owls may be found near Coulibistrie, s. of Portsmouth, where he has seen 4-5 birds foraging over fields. A Chimney Swift seen at Port Royal Golf Course, Bermuda 9 Sep (AD) was the earliest of the fall and probably linked to the passage of Subtropical Storm *Gustav* (8-10 Sep), which brought swallows and warblers as well. A roosting Long-eared Owl at Fort Scaur 18 Nov (SF) was a great rarity there; there have been records of

just 2 live birds on Bermuda since the 19th century! The first Burrowing Owl reported in years was found on the Bridle Trail, Lucaya, Grand Bahama 5 Sep (Linda Buchanan).

A single Eastern Wood-Pewee at Little Cayman 23 Nov was a remarkable local find (NN, TB). An Eastern Phoebe, an Eastern Wood-Pewee, and a late Gray Kingbird were at Shannon Golf Course, Grand Bahama 15 Nov (BH, GB). A Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was noted 22 Sep at Port Royal Golf Course, Bermuda (EA). A rare occurrence of Acadian Flycatcher was noted on 28-30 Oct in the near White's Garden Development, Grand Cayman (BH, NN, TB). A Great Crested Flycatcher seen well (NN, TB) at Patrick's I., Cayman Islands 29 Sep provided a new record there. An outstanding find at Ferry Point Park was an Olive-sided Flycatcher on 4 Oct (EA), which proved to be the earliest fall date for Bermuda. On 30 Nov, a juv. male Scissor-tailed Flycatcher provided only the 3rd record for Cayman Islands in West Bay, Grand Cayman near the Hell Post Office. A Northern Mockingbird found at the Bermuda Biological Station 20 Nov was the first there since 1996 (EA).

Of the five vireo species noted at Bermuda, a very early migrant [North American] White-eyed (EA), a Yellow-throated (PW), and a Warbling (PW) were all seen on 12 Sep, while a Philadelphia was seen there 19 Sep (EA). On 3



Bermuda's first American White Pelican turned up 6 November 2002 (here 15 November at Mid-Ocean Golf Course) and remained through the fall period, to the delight of local birders and golfers! Photograph by Edward S. Brinkley

Nov, a Yellow-throated Vireo, very rare in the Dominican Republic, was noted at the Santo Domingo Botanical Gardens (PGR, KW, LML, SMB). A single Blue-headed Vireo on 28-30 Oct provided a first record for Cayman Islands across from Truman Bodden Field, Grand Cayman (ph. BH, NN, TB). At Trou Caiman, 11 Hispaniolan Palm Crows were seen 30 Nov, while White-necked Crows numbered as many as 10 at Port Morgan resort on Ile-a-Vache, off Port-au-Prince, Haïti 19 Sep (JRC). A Red-breasted Nuthatch 18 Oct at Sears Cave, Bermuda (JM) was the only one reported for the season and all the more remarkable in a year that saw almost no migrants to the Midwest or East. A Golden-crowned Kinglet noted at Bermuda 30 Oct was also the season's first recorded (AD et al.). A Northern Wheatear was

at Castle Harbour, Bermuda 20 Oct (JM), where rare. A Veery at Great Head Park 14 Sep furnished the only record from Bermuda this season (DBW), whereas one at Patrick's I., Cayman Islands 24 Sep provided a new early arrival date (NN, TB).

Among warblers found at the Santo Domingo Botanical Gardens, Dominican Republic 27 Oct by PGR, KW, LML, and SMB were a Blue-winged, a Chestnut-sided, and a Kentucky; plus 4 Swainson's 27 & 29 Oct. A Tennessee Warbler recorded following passage of a cold front 18 Sep on Grand Cayman provided a new early arrival date (NN, TB). Thirty-seven species of warblers, one hybrid form, and one distinctive vagrant subspecies were recorded from Bermuda between 9 Aug (Yellow Warbler) and 16 Nov (Audubon's Warbler); the total of 21 warbler species at Port Royal Golf

Course 24 Nov (SR) gives a good indication of how rich the diversity of warblers can be on Bermuda, but veteran observers Amos and Wingate attest that the numbers of migrants are much reduced overall from the 1960s. Among the mix on Bermuda was a Brewster's Warbler at Riddell's Bay 10-14 Aug, with another 21 Sep at Fort Scaur (AD; SR); a Cerulean Warbler 25 Aug (EA), the first of 3 birds of the season; a Connecticut Warbler 3 Oct seen at Port Royal Golf Course (AD); and an Audubon's Warbler at the same location 16 Nov (ph. ESB et al.), the latter only the 3rd Bermuda record for this distinctive w. subspecies. At least 4 of the 6 Kirtland's Warblers banded in Eleuthera last spring returned to the same site, and 4 more have been banded there (JW). A team from Nassau led by PD visited the site 19-20 Oct and saw 2 Kirtland's Warblers as well as a 3rd being banded. On 19 Oct, JRC recorded a Bay-breasted Warbler at Trou Caiman, one of the few records from Haiti. An imm. female Bay-breasted was seen on St. John, U.S.V.I. 13 Oct (FH), and another was photographed at Megan's Bay, a first for St. Thomas—and 4th for the Virgin Is.—11-16 Nov (FH).

A Blackpoll Warbler at Quillse Forest, St. Lucia 31 Oct (SL, DK) was unusual. A female Cerulean Warbler on Grand Cayman 24-25 Aug (NN, TB) was a rare find. An American Redstart 4 Aug provided a new early arrival date for Cayman Islands at Grand Cayman (NN, TB). A Prothonotary Warbler noted at Trou Caiman 28 Sep provided JRC's first record there. A Worm-eating Warbler seen 16 Sep on Grand Cayman provided a new early arrival date for Cayman Islands (NN, TB). Swainson's Warblers were prevalent 3-19 Nov on Grand

Cayman (NN, TB), with as many as 4 recorded 14 Nov. Two Swainson's Warblers were seen at Shannon Golf Course, Grand Bahama 14 Nov and one at Lucaya National Park there 20 Nov (BH, GB, JVH). At least 10 Swainson's were seen at various location at Bermuda during the fall, a



Grand Cayman's first Blue-headed Vireo was this bird, found 30 October 2002.
Photograph by Bruce Hallett.

good count (AD). At St. Thomas, U.S.V.I., Hayes found a Louisiana Waterthrush among a host of other warblers near Megan's Bay 17 Nov. Perhaps attracted to the lights of a cruise ship, GK (ph.) counted up to 5 Connecticut Warblers following the vessel en route between Virgin Gorda, British Virgin Islands to St. Thomas 8 Oct. A Connecticut at Harrison Point, Barbados 19 Oct furnished only the 3rd record there (MF). Paul Dean reported a Connecticut Warbler in his yard in Nassau on 1 Nov. A Hooded



Though scarce at this latitude on the North American mainland, Snow Bunting is an annual, sometimes numerous late fall and winter visitor to Bermuda, where often found around the airport. This bird was at the Royal Naval Dockyard 15 November 2002.

Photograph by Edward S. Brinkley.

Warbler, rare in the Dominican Republic, was noted at the Botanical Gardens, Santo Domingo 3 Nov (PGR, KW, LML, SMB). A Yellow-breasted Chat at Ferry Point Park 14 Sep may be one of the earliest recorded from Bermuda (EA).

On Ile-a-Vache, JRC found 2 Gray-crowned Palm-Tanagers (nearly a Haitian endemic) at Port Morgan resort 22 Sep.; the island has few,

if any, large trees and so does not support woodpeckers (JRC). A Rose-breasted Grosbeak provided a new early arrival date for Cayman Islands 2 Oct (NN, TB). An imm. male Rose-breasted Grosbeak was at the Retreat, Nassau 30 Oct (CW). A new early date for Indigo Bunting was recorded on 9 Oct for Cayman Islands (NN, TB). An imm. Painted Bunting at the Biological Station, Bermuda 19-30 Nov+ (PW) was only the 4th record since 1971 and the first fall occurrence. A White-crowned Sparrow seen at Point Royal Golf Course (AD) was considered very early for Bermuda 14 Sep, while a Vesper Sparrow at Kindley Field 16 Nov-30 Nov+ (SR, DE) was a genuine vagrant. William Hayes reports one Grasshopper Sparrow near Sandy Cay, Exumas 11 Oct. Two Bobolinks were at Saltpond Bay, St. John, U.S.V.I. 6 Oct (LB).

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