

West Indies & Bermuda



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Summer is a brief season with relatively few reports, but there were noteworthy rarities in the West Indies this season. A pair of Southern Lapwings on Barbados provided the first West Indies record for the species. Puerto Rico had its first Bahama Mockingbird (in March) and Fork-tailed Flycatcher, the latter on Vieques. House Wrens attempted to nest on Bermuda for the first time. The Bahamas had its third Black-bellied Whistling-Duck and Short-eared Owl, the second straight year of successful flamingo nesting on Great Inagua, and a die-off of seabirds, probably Greater Shearwaters.

DUCKS THROUGH SANDPIPERS

Three Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks at Blue Water Cay, New Providence 24 Jun provided



Confirming local nesting, this Wilson's Plover brooding a chick was caught on film 10 June 2007 at Boca Quebrada, Vieques Island, Puerto Rico. Photograph by Daphne Gemmill.

the first record for the island and 3rd for the Bahamas (CW, SB, ph. TH, WP, m.ob.). The S.C.S.C.B. post-conference tour found 5 West Indian Whistling-Ducks at Laguna Cartagena N.W.R., Puerto Rico (a regular location for the species) 25 Jun; 2 were photographed near Knowles, Cat I., Bahamas 22 Jun (CW, PM). A female Blue-winged Teal at Emerald G.C., Grand Bahama 5 Jun was later than usual (BP). At least 18 White-cheeked Pintails were found on Vieques 1-11 Jun (DG), confirming the island's importance for this species. Six Ruddy Ducks and 15 Caribbean Coots were found at Laguna Puerto Diablo, Vieques 7 Jun (DG, MB). At Gaschet Res., Guadeloupe, FD recorded 113 Pied-billed Grebes 13 Jul. In Bermuda, a record-high 80 pairs of Bermuda Petrels produced 39 young (equaling the highest breeding success since rediscovery) (JM). Shearwater passage peaked 3 Jun in Bermuda, with birds moving at about 150 per hour. The majority were Greater, but there were also Cory's and Sooty Shearwaters (JM). A Greater Shearwater arrived on a cruise ship in Bermuda 18 Jul (DBW). A single Cory's Shearwater was seen flying eastward 1 km s. of Taino Beach, Grand Bahama 17 Jun (BP). Second- and third-hand reports indicate there was a large die-off of seabirds in the n. Bahamas in

Jun. The few specimens obtained were of Greater Shearwaters. It is probable that the dead birds were Greater Shearwaters unable to feed successfully on their way to more northerly feeding grounds. Six weeks of constant strong winds, and an unusual tongue of cold water extending down the e. side of the Bahamas in late Jun, may have contributed to the die-off (DL, PMA, BP).

Seven White-tailed Tropicbirds, 2 of which were nesting, were seen at the cliffs of Cayo Alfuera, Vieques 9 Jun (DG, OD, MB). On 23 Jun, two pairs of Red-footed Boobies were nesting on Cato Cay, and a Masked Booby was roosting on White Cay in



These three Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, constituting the third Bahamas record, were at Blue Water Cay, New Providence 24 June 2007. Photograph by Tony Hepburn.



White-cheeked Pintails are fairly common on Vieques Island, Puerto Rico, and are rather tame here, and on Culebra Island, as hunting them is now prohibited. A pair (9 June 2007) took up residence in an ephemeral pond near Blue Beach; they allowed very close approach by cars and people. Photograph by Daphne Gemmill.



Up to 15 Caribbean Coots, a local high count, were noted 7 June 2007 at Laguna Puerto Diablo, Vieques Island, Puerto Rico. Photograph by Daphne Gemmill.

Graham's Harbour, San Salvador (WH). On 9 Jun, only 7 Brown Pelicans were found at Cayo Conejo, once the largest colony in Puerto Rico (DG, OD, BM). The low number may be seasonal or may reflect a decline in the colony since the 1970s. Three Brown Pelicans were at Atwood Harbour, Acklins I. 7 Jun, and 2 Magnificent Frigatebirds (probably nesting), Osprey, and many Brown Noddies were on Propeller Cay (near Samana Cay) 11 Jun (LJ); this small cay should be checked next spring. An estimated 1000 Neotropic Cormorants

SA This summer, a pair of **Southern Lapwings** bred on a turf farm at Bright Hall, St. Lucy, Barbados. (WB, MF, ph. EM); as of 28 Jul, they had successfully raised 3 young. Another ad. **Southern Lapwing** was at Kendal, Barbados (KW). These birds constitute the first record for this species in the West Indies and add to the evidence that it is expanding its range northward.



These terns were part of a flock of thirty that caused some confusion before being identified as Roseate Terns, a regular breeder in the Turks and Caicos Islands. These terns were roosting on Water Cay, Caicos Islands 23 July 2007. The West Indian nesters of this species look quite different from northern birds, showing shorter tails and orange bases to the bills. Photograph by Stu Wilson.

were seen in a one-hour birding tour around Inagua N.P. 3 Jul (LG, AB, KB, TR). A single Neotropic Cormorant 11 Jul at Windemere, Eleuthera was away from its normal locations on the island (EJ). Summering heron species in Bermuda included 10 Great Blue Herons, a Great Egret, and a Little Blue Heron (DBW); the long-staying Gray Heron was also present



The first photographic documentation for Key West Quail-Dove for Vieques Island, Puerto Rico was established 5 June 2007 at Puerto Mosquito; the photographer had previously documented two other *Geotrygon* here, Ruddy and Bridled, making it the only location in the world where these three species of quail-dove coexist in close proximity. Photograph by Daphne Gemmill.

throughout the period (AD). Greater Flamingos nested successfully in two colonies on Great Inagua this year. Heavy rains in late May and Jun, after the young had left the nests, de-

stroyed the nest mounds, so a nest count could not be conducted (HN, *fide* LG). On 3 Jul, 5000 flamingos were seen in Inagua N.P. (LG, AB, KB, TR). One Osprey summered in Bermuda (GB). At Gaschet Res., Guadeloupe, Levesque found 13 Caribbean Coots and 44 American Coots or hybrids 9 Jul, and Duzont recorded 91 Common Moorhens there 13 Jul.

A Snowy Plover at McKinney Pond, Cat I. 22 Jun was near the n. end of its range in the Bahamas (CW, PM). The first significant arrival of returning shorebirds in Bermuda was in the last week of Jul (EA). A Semipalmated Plover 12 Jul at Whalebone Bay, Bermuda may have been a summering bird (AD). A Piping Plover, 4 Ruddy Turnstones, and 3 Least Sandpipers were on the beach at Crossing Rocks, Abaco 21 Jul (EB, UN). DG found 70 Wilson's Plovers during her 1-11 Jun survey on Vieques, indicating the island's population is in good shape. A Black-necked Stilt remained at Spittal Pond, Bermuda through 6 Jun (KR); another seen at various locations in Bermuda in Jul may have been the same individual. Six Black-bellied Plovers 3-10 Jun, 4 Semipalmated Plovers 10 Jun, 4 Short-billed Dowitchers 2-3 Jun, 2 Greater

Yellowlegs 6 Jun, 2 Ruddy Turnstones 2 Jun, and 30 Stilt Sandpipers 11 Jun lingered on Vieques after their expected spring departure dates (all DG). Summering shorebirds in Bermuda included Black-bellied Plover (4), Greater Yellowlegs (one), Whimbrel (4), and Ruddy Turnstone (14) (DBW, PW). While surveying Windemere, Eleuthera 7-15 Jul, EJ found a Semipalmated Plover 9 Jul, a Lesser Yellowlegs 13 Jul, and several Wilson's Plovers, Short-billed Dowitchers, and American Oystercatchers. EB found 2 Piping Plovers at Green Turtle Cay, Abaco 14 Jul, and on at the same location 29 Jul he saw 7 Willets, a Red Knot, a Western Sandpiper, a Semipalmated Sandpiper, 4 Least Sandpipers, and 4 Short-billed Dowitchers there. A Whimbrel was at Cabo Rojo N.W.R., Puerto Rico 25 Jul (S.C.S.C.B.).

GULLS THROUGH WARBLERS

In Bermuda, 2 Laughing Gulls were present throughout Jul, and one Great Black-backed Gull summered (PW). On Cat I., 49 Gull-billed Terns were at a saline pond near Arthur's Town 21 Jun and 50+ at McKinney Pond 22 Jun (CW, PM). A surprising 6 Caspian Terns were found among a flock of Royal Terns at Windemere, Eleuthera 7-12 Jul (EJ).



The first summer record for Guadeloupe of Barn Swallow was established by this pair at Petite-Terre Nature Reserve 3 July 2007. Photograph by Anthony Levesque.

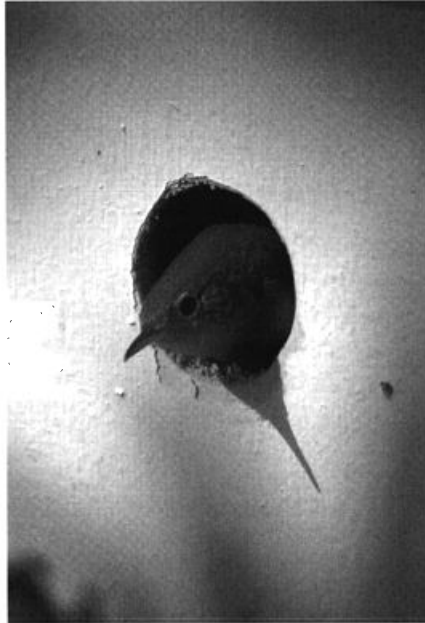
A Royal Tern was in St. Georges Harbour, Bermuda 15 Jun (PW). A Sandwich Tern stayed in the East End, Bermuda 23-25 Jun (PW). A Roseate Tern was seen in various locations in Bermuda 14 Jun-11 Jul (DBW, JM). A flock of 30 Roseate Terns, including 10 juvs., was seen roosting on the Atlantic side of Water Cay, Caicos Is. 23 Jul (SW). Eight Roseate Terns were nesting on Roca Alcatraz near Cayo Conejo, Vieques 9 Jun (DG,



This Fork-tailed Flycatcher provided the first record for Puerto Rico and the eastern Greater Antilles on 8 June 2007, near Green Beach, Vieques Island. Photograph by Daphne Gemmill.

OD, MB). The Bermuda population of Common Terns devastated by Hurricane *Fabian* (2003) was hit again by Hurricane *Florence* (2006). Nevertheless, their breeding success improved. A population of 18 birds (eight pairs, plus 2 single birds) resulted in four pairs producing 11 fledglings (DBW). A Plain Pigeon at El Yunque rainforest 11 Jun (BMo) was unusual but not unprecedented. Two White-winged Doves were noted at Pointe des Châteaux, Guadeloupe 14 Jul (AL). A Yellow-billed Cuckoo was seen and one heard in the pine forest of Grand Bahama 30 Jun (WH); another was heard calling at the old fruit farm, Abaco I. 3 Jul (EB), suggesting that this species breeds in the Bahamas. One was an unseasonable find at Spanish Pt., Bermuda 8 Jul (JFI), and 2 were at Laguna Cartagena N.W.R., Puerto Rico 25 Jul (S.C.S.C.B.). The Bahamas' and Exuma's 3rd Short-eared Owl was seen on Sandy Cay, the southernmost cay in the Exuma Chain, 21 Jun (WH). Three endangered Puerto Rican Nightjars were heard and one well seen at Guanica S.F. 25 Jul (S.C.S.C.B.). Late calling Chuck-will's-widows are suggestive of breeding. Sixteen were heard on Grand Bahama 1-2 Jul by WH, one at Coral Harbour, New Providence 2 Jul by CW, and 3 at Treasure Cay, Abaco I. 10 Jul by EB.

A Western Kingbird was found in coppice on Treasure Cay, Abaco I. 6 Jun (BB, JG). A



House Wrens made their first known breeding attempt in Bermuda, using empty Eastern Bluebird nest boxes at Alfred Blackburn Smith Nature Reserve (here 6 July 2007). Photograph by Andrew Dobson.

Fork-tailed Flycatcher photographed near the old Navy Headquarters, Vieques 8 Jun (DG, EL, SN) provided the first record for Puerto Rico and the e. Greater Antilles. Numbers of Caribbean Martins at Pointe à Pitre, Guadeloupe steadily increased from 504 on 25 Jun to 805 by 28 Jul (AL, JF). A single Bank Swallow was at Pitman's Pond, Bermuda 10 Jun, and 2 Barn Swallows were at Bermuda Airport 8 Jun (DBW). The first summer record in Guadeloupe of Barn Swallow (one pair) was made 3 Jul at Petite-Terre Nature Reserve (ph. AL).

House Wrens made their first breeding attempt in Bermuda this season; the birds made use of Eastern Bluebird nest boxes. A nest at Alfred Blackburn Smith Nature Reserve containing four eggs was abandoned. Two more nests containing seven eggs in each nest were also unsuccessful, as the eggs failed to hatch. Wrens were sitting on both nests, and at least 3 individuals were confirmed (DBW, FH, AD). A female Black-throated Blue Warbler was feeding at Treasure Cay, Abaco I. 29 Jul (EB). A Blackpoll Warbler 7 Jun at the Bermuda Institute for Ocean Sciences (JA, BM) provided the first summer-season record for Bermuda. On 26 Jul, at least 2 Elf-woods Warblers were found around the perimeter of the campground at Maricao S.F., Puerto Rico (S.C.S.C.B.). A Black-and-white Warbler at Tom Moore's Mangroves, Bermuda 19 Jul furnished the earliest date by seven days (DW). A late Northern Waterthrush was at Harrold



Representing the first summer record of the species for Bermuda, this Blackpoll Warbler was photographed 7 June 2007 at St. Georges. Photograph by Andrew Dobson.

and Wilson Ponds N.P., New Providence 23 Jun (WP).

Addendum: From 23-30 Mar, a **Bahama Mockingbird** was seen visiting a water drip at a residence at Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico (ph. JS), providing the first record for the island.

Observers: Eric Amos, Mike Barandiaran, Geoff Bell, Alan Bolten, Karen Bjorndal, Betsy Bracey, Elwood Bracey, Sonny Bratz, Wayne Burke, Oscar Diaz, Andrew Dobson, Frantz Duzont, Jenny Flood (JFI), Jacky Froidefond, Martin Frost, Lynn Gape, Daphne Gemmill, Judy Gire, William Hayes, Tony Hepburn, Felicity Holmes, Larry Jackson, Everton Joseph, Elizabeth Langhorne, David Lee, Anthony Levesque, Jeremy Madeiros, Pericles Maillis (PMa), Eddie Massiah, Blake Mathys, Brian Monk (BMo), Predenza Moore, Henry Nixon, Staci Notine, Uli Nowlan, William Pinder, Bruce Purdy, Tamica Rahming, Keith Rossiter, Jorge Saliva, Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds (S.C.S.C.B.), David Wallace (DW), Carolyn Wardle, Karl Watson, Paul Watson, Stu Wilson, David Wingate (DBW). 🐦

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