

Bahamas Bird Summary Spring 2008

The highlights from the Bahamas this spring were the country's first Northern Cardinals, a newly discovered seabird colony in the Exumas, and the third straight year of successful breeding for the flamingos on Great Inagua.

On 9 May CW and SS found 4 West Indian Whistling-Ducks on Tarpon Pond, Fresh Creek, Andros. A Canada Goose flew over Treasure Cay, Abaco 15 Mar (EB). Two Red-breasted Mergansers were at Jaws Beach, New Providence 7 Mar (TH), one in a pond near Owl Hole, Grand Bahama 30 Mar (BP), and one at Cat Cay, near Bimini, 28 May (PD).

A Greater Shearwater was south of Grand Bahama 14 Apr (BP). WM, TB, and PJ discovered a new seabird colony on Adderly Cay, just south of Lee Stocking Island in the Exumas. It contained 100-200 pairs of Audubon's Shearwaters, and about 50 pairs each of Brown Noddies and Sooty Terns.

Multiple reports of White-tailed Tropicbirds from Conception I. and the Exumas suggest this species had a successful nesting season (SB, JG, BP, JT). On 16 May about 5 were off Glass Window, Eleuthera, where they have nested in the past (CW, SS), and 25 May 3 were at Rose Island, off New Providence, where they are unusual (CW). A Red-footed Booby was south of Grand Bahama 15 Apr (BP). A Northern Gannet was flying off Caves Point, New Providence 3 Mar (TW, JK, MV), and BP found 9 Northern Gannets off Grand Bahama 17 Apr. On 8 Apr a Brown Pelican was seen in Thompson's Bay, Long I. (DF), and 3 were over Montagu Foreshore, New Providence 17 Apr (TH); both locations are well away from known nesting sites.

A "Great White Heron" was at Cat Cay 14 May (L&CK); this form of the Great Blue Heron is rare in the Bahamas. A single Roseate Spoonbill was seen at Blue Water Cay, New Providence 13 May (WP). The American Flamingo colony on Great Inagua nested successfully for the third year in a row; the Sam Nixon Bird Club counted 8064 nests and 435 rejected eggs (TR, NC). In the last week of May a single American Flamingo was seen flying south off the mouth of Stafford Creek, Andros (MVi, JH).

On 4 Mar a single Turkey Vulture was seen flying over Paradise Island, New Providence – the first report from the New Providence area in decades (JK, PD, MV, TW).

There were 10 Piping Plovers on Green Turtle Cay, Abaco 6 Mar (EB, JK, TW), and 11 Piping Plovers and 7 Wilson's Plovers at Discovery Bay Beach, Grand Bahama 22 Mar (EG). An Upland Sandpiper was found on New Providence near Gladstone Rd. 14 Apr (PD, TH). Four Red Knots were at Green Turtle Cay, Abaco 6 Mar (EB, JK, TW), and the same number were found on Southwest Ridge near Lake Killarney, New Providence 17-18 May (PD, LH, TH (ph.)).

A Bonaparte's Gull was at Sandy Point, Abaco 5 Apr, and 4 Lesser Black-backed Gulls were at the cruise ship docks in Nassau 9 Mar (PB). The first Sandwich Tern of the spring was reported from Brown's Pt., New Providence 22 Mar (PD, LH, LL). The first Gull-billed and Least Terns were seen on New Providence 21 Apr (TH); Least Terns first appeared at Treasure Cay 16 Apr (EB). A Common Tern was seen there 17 May (PD, LH), and the same day a Forster's Tern was seen at Treasure Cay, Abaco (EB).

EB states Mourning Dove numbers are down on Abaco, and Eurasian Collared-Doves are increasing. A Key West Quail-Dove was seen near the Rock Sound Club, Eleuthera 16 May (CW, SS).

A Chuck-will's-widow sang throughout the season at Coral Harbour, New Providence (CW). They were first heard singing on Grand Bahama 3 Mar (BP). First reports of Antillean Nighthawks on New Providence were from Blue Water Cay 3 May (TH) and Lynden Pindling Airport 5 May (JB).

The first Gray Kingbird report from New Providence was at Coral Harbour 18 Mar (CW).