

Here is the Bahamas/Turks & Caicos bird report for spring 2006. Highlights were the Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks and Brown-headed Cowbird on Grand Bahama and Masked Boobies at Mayaguana. A census of Bahama Parrots on Abaco showed a slight increase over last year. In general spring migration was slow with no large fall-outs and relatively few uncommon birds. A list of papers and web-pages of interest follows the seasonal report.

Thanks to everyone who submitted reports. It is encouraging to note that the coverage extends from the Ragged Islands to Bimini, from Providenciales to Grand Bahama. The summer season is short (June and July), but it is the best time to census breeding seabirds and other colonial waterbirds. Please send in your reports when they are ready or in early August after the season ends. Good birding, Tony White

SPRING 2006

Eighteen Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks at Reef G.C., Grand Bahama 28 May were unprecedented (M&AA). They were gone by 30 May. The ducks were probably blown over from Florida where the population is burgeoning.

There were 14 West Indian Whistling-Ducks at Tarpon Ponds, Fresh Creek, Andros 6-7 May (OG), one with ducklings was observed at Rock Sound Airport 9 Apr confirming breeding on Eleuthera (DC), 11 were at George Town, Exumas 25 May (PF), and one with ducklings was at Lee Stocking I., Exumas 31 May (fide CW).

A Snow Goose was at Four Seasons Resort, Great Exuma 9 Apr (PD, ph. RS), and two Canada Geese were at Coral Harbour, New Providence 11 May (M&FD).

Single American Wigeons on Eleuthera were at Rock Sound 7 Apr (DC) at Gregory Town 22-23 Apr (LG). A Northern Shoveler was at Harrold and Wilson Ponds National Park, New Providence 3 Mar (CW, GG, PF, TT), and a Northern Pintail spent the entire season near Treasure Cay, Abaco (EB).

A mixed flock of 500 Audubon's Shearwaters, 3 Magnificent Frigatebirds, 25 Sooty Terns, and 20 Roseate Terns was in Exuma Sound 20 Apr (NMc).

Three Cory's Shearwaters and a Leach's Storm-Petrel were seen 15-20 mi. off Tiloo Cay, Abaco 20 May (EB). Another Cory's Shearwater was at Stocking I., George Town, Exumas 30 Apr (PF)

Fifteen White-tailed Tropicbirds were at Little Harbour, Abaco 10-12 Mar (PD, LL, LH).

Three adult Masked Boobies were photographed on Booby Rock off northwestern Mayaguana 19 Mar (OG, ph. TH), and a subadult was seen 10 mi. off Great Guana Cay, Abaco 20 Apr (EB).

How many Anhingas wintered on New Providence? At least 4. On 4 Mar 2 males and 2 females were observed soaring together over Cable Beach (OG, ph. TH). Three (one male and two females) were seen at Cable Beach Ponds 20 Apr (RS, PD).

Ten Glossy Ibis were noted at Gregory Town, Eleuthera 24 Apr (LG).

The only Swallow-tailed Kite reported in the Bahamas this spring was seen over the road between Marsh Harbour and Treasure Cay, Abaco 27 Apr (EB). A Northern Harrier was at Harrold and Wilson Ponds N.P. 3 Mar (CW, GG, PF, TT).

On 5 May the pond at Flamingo Cay, Ragged Is. held three Semipalmated Plovers, two Wilson's Plovers and 15 Semipalmated Sandpipers (PF). The last

Piping Plover of the season on Green Turtle Cay was noted on 10 May (EB).

A Pomarine Jaeger was 15 mi. off Manjack Cay, Abaco 24 May (EB).

In the Bahamas Great Black-backed Gulls were 1 at Bimini 2 Mar (BP), 3 at Great Stirrup Cay (Coco Cay), Berry Islands 12 Mar (DF), and 2 near Taino Beach, Grand Bahama 29 Mar (EG). Lesser Black-backed Gulls include 2 at Bimini 2 Mar (BP) and 1 at Great Stirrup Cay 12 Mar (DF).

Gull-billed Terns returned to southern Eleuthera 23 Apr (DC, JW, RB, KP, EJ).

FRM censused Bahama Parrots on southern Abaco 29 Apr – 7 May and estimated the population at **3,199** parrots. He attributed the increase over the 2005 census to the fact that the birds were widely dispersed in 2005 after hurricanes Frances and Jeanne, and to the earlier date of this year's census.

Single Yellow-billed Cuckoos were at the Retreat, Nassau 4 Apr (PM) and Winton, Nassau 15 May (LH), and six were at the fruit farm, Abaco 24 May (EB).

A Chimney Swift at Harrold and Wilson Ponds N.P. 13 May was the first for the park (TH, LH, KHL, WP, PD).

Gray Kingbirds and Black-whiskered Vireos are summer residents in the Bahamas that appear to be arriving earlier than their historical norms. Brudenell-Bruce (Birds of New Providence and the Bahama Islands, 1975) states Gray Kingbirds arrive in the second half of April with 31 March as the extreme early date. This spring they were first reported in Eleuthera 4 Mar (DC, RB) and Grand Bahama 11 Mar (EG). Some Gray Kingbirds also departed late last fall. (See fall and winter N.A.B. regional reports.) Brudenell-Bruce says Black-whiskered Vireos arrive the end of April with the earliest date 12 April. This spring they were reported at Mayaguana 18 Mar (OG), Grand Bahama 24 Mar (EG), Providenciales, Turks & Caicos Is. 26 Mar (SW), Nassau 9 and 14 Apr (LH, PD), and Eleuthera 16 Apr (DC).

A Tennessee Warbler was netted at Tarpum Bay, Eleuthera 22 Apr (DC, JW).

A Nashville Warbler was at Waterloo Rd., Nassau 6 Mar (PD), and one was near Rock Sound Eleuthera 29 Mar (DC).

Twenty-three Yellow-rumped Warblers in Mayaguana 17 Mar (OG) were farther south in the Bahamas than usual.

LL photographed a female Kirtland's Warbler near the junction of Hole-in-the-Wall and Soldier Roads on Abaco 11 Mar; it was relocated there two weeks later (EB, HA, HP).

Over the past four winters the Kirtland's Warbler Research and Training Project has banded 113 Kirtland's Warblers in southern Eleuthera (fide DC).

A Prothonotary Warbler was at the Rand Nature Centre, Grand Bahama 8 Apr (EG).

A Summer Tanager was at Lyford Cay, New Providence 4 Apr (CF), and a male Scarlet Tanager was at Waterloo Rd., Nassau 28 Apr (PD).

Two Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were found at Camperdown, Nassau 3 Mar (CW, GG, RF, TT); singles were in southern Eleuthera 19 and 23 Apr (DC), at Angelfish Pt., Abaco 22 Apr (EB), and Winton, Nassau 1 May (LH). Two were in southern Eleuthera on 2 May (DC, RB).

A male Shiny Cowbird at the Retreat, Nassau 29 May (BG, CW) was an apparent first for that location. A **Brown-headed Cowbird** at the picnic grounds in Lucaya National Park, Grand Bahama 29 Mar (SR) was also probably the first for the site.

Two male Baltimore Orioles were at Tarpum Bay, Eleuthera 11 Apr (DC, JW, RB), one at Chippingham, Nassau 15 Apr (CW, PM), and one at Coral Harbour 4 May (CW, JeW).

Observers: Mike & Anne Acosta, Hank Adams, Rudy Badia, Elwood Bracey, David Currie, Paul Dean, Monty & Franny Doyle, Patty Foreman, David Freeland, Christine Fuller, Lynn Gape, Erika Gates, Gary Gray, Barry Grimecy, Lee Hannah, Bahamas National Trust Ornithology Group (OG), Tony Hepburn, Everton Joseph, Keva Hannah Lawrence (KHL), Lionel Levine, Neil McKinney (NMc), Predensa Moore, Hagen Peters, Keith Phillippe, William Pinder, Bruce Purdy, Frank Rivera-Milán (FRM), Shamie Rolle, Ted Tanna, Stu Wilson, Jean Wunderle (JeW), Joe Wunderle

PAPERS AND WEB-PAGES OF INTEREST:

1. Birdlife International. 2006. Bahama Nuthatch gets stamp of approval. http://www.birdlife.org/news/news/2006/03/Bahamas_nuthatch.html.
2. Bracey, E.D. 2006. Kirtland's Warblers have been sighted. *Abaconian* Apr. 15:21B.
3. Bracey, E.D. 2006. Boobies are seen off Abaco. *Abaconian* May 15:26.
4. Carlson, B., D. Steadman, and B. Keegan. 2006. Talking Taino: Birdland. *Times of the Islands* Spring No. 74:64-69 and <http://www.timespub.tc/Natural%20History/natural.htm>.
5. Hayes, W.K., and A.W. White. 2006. A record of Cuban/Caribbean Martin (*Progne cryptoleuca/dominicensis*) for the Bahamas. *North American Birds* 59(4): 672-673.
6. Norton, R.L., A. White, and A. Dobson. 2006. West Indies & Bermuda region. *North American Birds* 59(4):665-666.
7. Phillipott, S. 2006. Spotlight on Birds: Biodiversity and coffee certification. Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center. http://nationalzoo.si.edu/ConservationAndScience/MigratoryBirds/Science_Article/default.cfm?publish=current.
8. Pienkowski, MW., A.E. Pienkowski, and B.N. Manco. 2005. Birds on the outer cays of the Turks and Caicos Islands. *Journal of Caribbean Ornithology* 18(1): 31-43.
9. Radamaker, K., and C. Radamaker. 2005. First confirmed breeding of the West Indian Whistling-Duck at Abaco, Bahamas. *Journal of Caribbean Ornithology* 18(1):44.
10. Rivera-Milán, F.F. 2006. Population status of the Bahama Parrot on Abaco before and after Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne. Ms. 7 pp.
11. Wardle, C. 2005. Monitoring Nesting Seabirds on Goulding Cay. Ms. 8 pp.
12. Wege, D., and V. Anadón-Irizarry. 2005. Towards a globally threatened bird program for the Caribbean. *Journal of Caribbean Ornithology* 18(1):88-93.
13. Wunderle, J. 2005. Hurricanes and the fate of Caribbean birds – what do we know, what do we need to know, who is vulnerable, how can we prepare, what can we do, and what are the management options. *Journal of Caribbean Ornithology* 18(1):94-96.