

## **Bahamas/TCI Bird Report Summer 2006**

Summer 2006 was a slow season with few birds and few reports; nevertheless there were some real highlights. Surveys of two flagship species – Greater Flamingo and Bahama Parrot provided encouraging results. Anhinga and Yellow-billed Cuckoo may have nested in the Bahamas, and an American Robin was possibly the first summer record for the islands.

Bruce Hallett's long-awaited book "Birds of The Bahamas and the Turks & Caicos Islands" (Macmillan Caribbean, 245 pp.) is finally out. This field guide covers all the regular species – both residents and migrants – and is illustrated by numerous photos showing a range of plumages. It is a "must have" reference for anyone interested in the birds of our area.

It is time to start planning for the Christmas Bird Counts. Three counts have announced the dates on which they will be held:

Grand Bahama Dec 15, contact Erika Gates  
(Kayaknaturetours@aol.com);

Abaco Dec 16, contact Anita Knowles  
(anita@friendsoftheenvironment.org);

New Providence Dec 17, contact Carolyn Wardle  
(cwardle@batelnet.bs).

Thank you for your observations. They covered a number of islands, and included many noteworthy records. The fall season (August-November) will be more exciting as the wave of migrants pours through the islands. Please keep track of sightings and send me your fall reports when you get time. Good birding.

Tony White

Two pairs of Red-footed Boobies nested on Catto Cay, San Salvador 20 June, and seventy-seven Magnificent Frigatebird chicks were also there (WH). About 300 Brown Boobies were in the area but most

Brown Booby chicks had already fledged. (WH).

At least six pairs of White-tailed Tropicbirds were nesting on Shroud Cay, Exuma Cays Land and Sea Park in early June (LG).

Anhingas should be considered possible nesters in the Bahamas. A pair that summered at Lakeview Pond, Paradise I. (CW) was observed gathering nesting material 1 Jul (PD). Another pair summered at Cable Beach Pond, New Providence (PD).

Two immature Roseate Spoonbills were at Stanniard Creek, Andros mid-Jun (WP, MB). An airboat tour around Flamingo Cay, Andros 25 Jun yielded 6 White Ibis (1 adult and 5 immatures), 7 Roseate Spoonbills, and a Black-crowned Night-Heron (MB).

After five years of drought, the rains finally returned to Great Inagua creating ideal nesting conditions for the Greater Flamingos. Aerial photos showed **8,654** nests (NC), and the preponderance of young fledged successfully. There were few flamingos on other islands, e.g. the high count on Andros between 19 and 28 Jun was 107 birds. (MB).

A Purple Gallinule and a Sandwich Tern were unusual finds at Reef G.C., Grand Bahama 3 Jun (EG et al).

On 31 Jul EB and J&DH found 2 Piping Plovers, 5 Sanderlings, 1 Spotted Sandpiper, 2 Semipalmated Sandpipers, and 5 Ruddy Turnstones at Sandy Point, Abaco.

A Caspian Tern at Jubal Pt. Salina, Providenciales, Turks & Caicos 23-24 Jun was unexpected (ph. SW).

MB visited tiny Leaf Cay at the extreme southern end of Andros 27 Jun and found six pairs of Least Terns, one pair of Willets, and one pair of Antillean Nighthawks nesting there.

Approximately 200 Bridled Terns were counted on 1 Jun at Peterson Cay N.P., Grand Bahama. Nests were well hidden and only 13 were

found (EG, BR). In three visits during the summer a total of 15 Bridled Tern nests were located on Goulding Cay, west of New Providence (CW, OG).

“Thousands” of White-crowned Pigeons were nesting on cays in Fernandez Bay, Cat I. in July (MR). EGi saw 12 in the early morning of 9 Jun on Providenciales, Turks & Caicos where they are not common.

FRM estimated the population of Bahama Parrots on Great Inagua in July at **6,353** birds. Adding the results of his survey on Abaco this spring (*N.A.B.* 60(3)) gives a total population of **9,552** birds. A flock of four Amazon parrots including 3 Bahama Parrots was seen throughout the summer on eastern New Providence (PM, JB).

On Grand Bahama single Mangrove Cuckoos were seen at Bahamas Beach 4 Jul and North Riding Pt. Club 6 Jul (WH), and a Yellow-billed Cuckoo was seen and heard at Lucayan Estates 4 Jul (WH).

The Chuck-wills-widow at Coral Harbour, New Providence was last heard on 11 Jul (CW). Another was heard at Stanniard Creek, Andros 15 Jun (MB).

A Belted Kingfisher at Abaco National Park 31 Jul was early (EB, J&DH).

Six West Indian Woodpeckers were seen along Jake Jones Rd. and two along Linepole Rd., San Salvador 28 Jun (WH).

A Black-whiskered Vireo, the second for San Salvador, was singing at Gerace Research Center 21-24 Jun (WH).

A Barn Swallow flew over Gerace Research Center, San Salvador 1 Jul (WH).

An **American Robin** was at Warderick Wells, Exuma Cays Land and Sea Park roughly 1-20 Jul (JEB, LD). This may be the first summer record for the Bahamas.

Late spring migrants at Stanniard Creek, Andros included Cape May Warblers 16-20 Jun, American Redstarts 16, 17 Jun, a Black-throated Blue Warbler 21 Jun, and a Black-and-white Warbler 22 Jun (all WP).

An early immature male American Redstart was in downtown Nassau 31 Jul (SB,MK).

The west coast of Andros is predominately salt lake/dwarf mangrove habitat. The only Greater Antillean Orioles seen in a 10-day survey there were a pair nesting in ornamental palms at the Flamingo Cay Rod and Gun Club 18 Jun (MB).

Exotics: A Crested Bobwhite was seen in a flock of Northern Bobwhite near Stanniard Creek, Andros 31 Jul (WP).

Observers: Michael Baltz, Judy Estep Barbernitz (JEB), Johnny Bethell, Elwood Bracey, Sylvia Brown, Nancy Clum, Paul Dean, Larry Dougan, Lynn Gape, Erika Gates, Ethlyn Gibbs (EGi), Jan and Dick Hartley, William Hayes, Tony Hepburn, Maxine Kerr, Paulette Mortimer, Ornithology Group of the Bahamas National Trust (OG), William Pinder, Frank Rivera-Milán (FRM), Macgregor Robertson, Bernie Russell, Ann Sorensen, Carolyn Wardle, Stu Wilson.