

This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003- 01) for 10th January 2003. Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

From the Bocas Is off of north west Trinidad, comes a report on 7th Jan of 2 DARK BILLED CUCKOOS* at Chacachacare. This former resident of Trinidad has not been recorded for many years.

In the Caroni plain of Trinidad, at Caroni ricefields on 7th Jan, only one wet field held a flock of shorebirds. However, this included 3 KILLDEER* (first record for at least 4 yrs); 200 LEAST SANDPIPERS, 25 SEMI PALMATED PLOVERS and 4 GREATER YELLOWLEGS. Also present were 7 fully grown LEAST GREBES and 2 chicks, 2 PIED BILLED GREBES, 3 PINNATED BITTERNS, a MASKED DUCK* and the sub-adult male SNAIL KITE.

In south west Trinidad at Roussilac swamp on 7th Jan a BAT FALCON few over and single GREEN THROATED MANGO and LONG BILLED STARTRHOAT were found. Further north, up the coast at Brickfields, an adult winter plumaged RING BILLED GULL and a first winter LESSER BLACK BACKED GULL were seen later the same day.

In the northern range of Trinidad, a hike along Lalaja trace on 5th Jan produced a CHESTNUT WOODPECKER, a STREAKED XENOPS, an OLIVE SIDED FLYCATCHER, 2 EULER'S FLYCATCHERS and a SPECKLED TANAGER.

In eastern Trinidad, a kayak/hike into Bush Bush on 9th Jan produced single GREEN THROATED MANGO, CRIMSON CRESTED WOODPECKER, SILVERED ANTBIRD and SULPHURY FLYCATCHER.

In St. John, US Virgin Islands, a female CAPE MAY WARBLER was found in a silk cotton tree in the employee's parking lot at Caneel Bay on 8 January. The 25th annual Christmas Bird Count on 28 December produced 2059 birds of 53 species. Highlights included a PIED-BILLED GREBE at Caneel Bay, a REDDISH EGRET (locality unreported), three WHITE-WINGED DOVES at Coral Bay, a PUERTO RICAN FLYCATCHER at Lameshur Bay, a BLACK-WHISKERED VIREO (locality unreported), six BANK SWALLOWS at Trunk Bay, and only nine species of warblers including a BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER along the Bordeaux Mountain Road, two HOODED WARBLERS along Reef Bay Trail, a PRAIRIE WARBLER, a WORM-EATING WARBLER (locality unreported), five YELLOW WARBLERS, a NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH, an OVENBIRD, seven AMERICAN REDSTARTS and eight NORTHERN PARULAS. Warbler numbers have declined alarmingly since the first decade of counts.

In St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands, a survey of four east end wetlands on 5 January produced 114 WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAILS (highest count for St. Thomas), a TRICOLORED HERON at Red Hook Pond (first in St. Thomas since 15 September), and three BLUE-WINGED TEAL, two CLAPPER RAILS, two SORAS and three BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS at Compass Point Pond. At Magens Bay, five species of warblers were noted on 5 January including a YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER, a BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER, two AMERICAN REDSTARTS, a NORTHERN PARULA, and a NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH. Recent reports of Puerto Rican Flycatcher at Magens Bay and Perseverance Bay are now thought to have been Caribbean Elaenias. Whether Puerto Rican Flycatcher still exists on highly developed St. Thomas remains uncertain.

From Guadeloupe, the MARSH HARRIER (first seen on 11th Nov)was still present at Grand Cul-de-Sac-Marin on 2nd Jan at least. Photograph now included in our Photo Gallery. On 4th Jan, 2 PRAIRIE WARBLERS were present at Pointe d'Antigues and a male RUDDY DUCK was found on Gaschet Reservoir.

In Anguilla, the Christmas Bird Count on 28th Dec concentrated on 21 of the islands wetland areas. A total of 1710 birds of 32 different species were found including record counts of 370 SEMI PALMATED SANDPIPERS, 285 BLUE WINGED TEAL, 179 LEAST SANDPIPERS and 84 BLACK BELLIED PLOVERS. Also recorded were 184 WHITE CHEEKED PINTAILS. Further information on Anguilla's biodiversity can be requested from Email address "axanat@anguillanet.com".

PHOTO GALLERY: Photos of the following birds are now posted at the SCBA website: Red-breasted Merganser (St. John), Striped Owl (Tobago), White-winged Swallow (Tobago), Ring-necked Duck (Tobago), Bay-breasted Warbler (St. Thomas), Ring-necked Duck (St. Thomas), West Indian Whistling-Duck (St. Croix), Connecticut Warbler (Virgin Gorda/St. Croix), Magnolia Warbler (St. Thomas), Purple Heron (Trinidad), Mangrove Cuckoo (Tobago), Crane Hawk (Trinidad) and nesting Scarlet Ibis (Trinidad).

OUTING :- The Field Naturalist Club birding outing originally scheduled for 12th Jan, will now take place on Sunday 19th Jan. The itinerary will include Roussilac swamp, Sudama Steps and the west coast coast shoreline. Interested participants should contact Courtenay Rooks on 622/8826 for timings.

ORNITHOLOGICAL TIDBIT: The following abstract is from: Hayes, F. E., and I. Samad. 2002. Avifauna of the 'dragon's teeth': the Bocas Islands, northern Gulf of Paria, between Venezuela and Trinidad. Department of Life Sciences, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Occasional Paper 11:62-85. Situated in the northern Gulf of Paria, which separates Trinidad from the South American continent, the Bocas Islands comprise five major islands (up to 4.54 km²), ten minor islands (up to 0.08 kms) and many tiny islets. The predominant climax vegetation of the relatively arid islands includes littoral woodland and deciduous seasonal forest on soils derived from sedimentary rocks. Data are provided on the abundance of 135 species of birds on the major islands based on general observations, point counts and mist-netting (three islands only). Only 31 species have been recorded on the minor islands. Of the 135 species, at least 34 have been confirmed breeding, another 39 presumably breed, 32 likely represent non-breeding but locally resident (Venezuela or Trinidad) visitors, 25 are Nearctic migrants, two are Neotropical migrants, two are introduced visitors and one is extirpated (an additional ten are regarded as hypothetical). Seabirds and coastal waterbirds are scarce, presumably due to inadequate nesting and foraging habitat. Scavengers are exceptionally abundant, but presumably forage in Venezuela and Trinidad. The landbirds are dominated by forest interior species, with fewer forest/grassland edge species. Evidence of frequent overwater dispersal exists for certain species. The breeding season, which for most species is restricted to the early wet season, is more seasonal than it is on Trinidad.

RARE BIRD REPORTING :- Do we believe what you see ? We want to ! Many of the identifications reported in the SCBA are tentative. For birds found in Trinidad & Tobago, the T&T Rare Birds Committee, formed in 1995, requests details for all rare birds observed (see Species Review List at our website) Please submit details to the TTRBC Secretary : Martyn Kenefick, 36 Newalloville Ave, San Juan, Trinidad - Email "martynkenefick@hotmail.com"

This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003- 02) for 18th January 2003. Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martykenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

In St Martin, a research team for Environment Protection in the Caribbean (EPIC) has reported the following noteworthy recent sightings :- 5 TRICOLOURED HERONS at Orient ponds on 4th Jan; 2 YELLOW CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS at Fish Pond on Jan 13th & 15th; 9 RING NECKED DUCKS at Little Bay Pond on Jan 12th; 3 LESSER SCAUP at Fresh Pond on Jan 10th; a RED BREASTED MERGANSER at Baie de l'Embouchure on Jan 13th (see USVI above); a male NORTHERN SHOVELER (2nd island record) was found at Fresh Pond on Jan 17th; hundreds of RUDDY DUCKS breeding on the island; 8 PEREGRINES (considered vagrant to the island) islandwide on Jan 4th; 175 STILT SANDPIPERS and 50 SHORT BILLED DOWITCHERS at Orient Ponds on Jan 12th; an adult LESSER BLACK BACKED GULL at Great salt Pond on Jan 12th together with a 1st winter bird found there on Jan 17th; and a first winter GREATER BLACK BACKED GULL (no previous records for the island) at Grand Case pond on Jan 12th.

Landbirds included; 15 COLLARED DOVES (no previous records for the island) islandwide on Jan 2nd; 12 WHITE WINGED DOVES (no previous record) islandwide on Jan 4th & 14th; 2 YELLOW BILLED CUCKOOS at Lotterie Farm on Jan 9th-11th; 7 MANGROVE CUCKOOS also at Lotterie Farm on Jan 8th-13th; a female CHUCK=WILL'S WIDOW at Lotterie Farm on Jan 3rd; the islands first CLIFF SWALLOW at Cul -de Sac on Jan 12th; 20 SCALY BREASTED THRASHERS (5 of which were banded) at Lotterie Farm on Jan 3rd and the islands first YELLOW THROATED VIREO at Lotterie Farm on Jan 8th.

The following new world warblers were found at Lotterie Farm . A total of 8 different BLACK THROATED BLUE WARBLERS (considered as vagrant on the island) between Jan 3rd - 11th; at least 17 PRAIRIE WARBLERS from Jan 2nd; 15 BLACK AND WHITE WARBLERS (5 of which were banded) between Jan 5th-8th; at least 37 AMERICAN REDSTARTS between Jan 3rd-9th; 3 OVENBIRDS (one banded), considered vagrant status on the island on Jan 4th ; the islands first KENTUCKY WARBLER banded on Jan 6th ; a COMMON YELLOWTHROAT (vagrant to the island) on Jan 4th and 12 HOODED WARBLERS (2 of which were banded) also considered vagrant status, between Jan 3rd -12th. Elsewhere, the islands first MYRTLE WARBLER at Little Bay Pond on Jan 10th and a PROTHONOTARY WARBER (vagrant status) was banded at Fish pond on Jan 15th.

Finally the islands first INDIGO BUNTING was banded at Lotterie Farm on Jan 11th.

More information concerning EPIC can be obtained from their website at "www.epicislands.org".

In Tobago, the adult male RING NECKED DUCK * (first recorded on 26th Nov 2002) was again present on Bon Accord sewage ponds on 14th Jan, with a LITTLE EGRET and 2 GREAT BLUE HERONS close by. From Crown Pt, 2 adult winter COMMON BLACK HEADED GULLS * were reported flying west on 13th Jan.

From Trinidad, a detailed summary of the Christmas bird count held on 29th Dec describes 7342 individuals from 173 species. Other than those mentioned in earlier Bird alerts, highlights include 3 SUMMER TANAGERS reported from Lopino and one of the regular SNAIL KITES on Caroni ricefields.

In south Trinidad, at Tableland on 16th Jan, a grey phase HOOK BILLED KITE * was found soaring over a citrus plantation.

On the west coast of Trinidad, the only birds worthy of mention at the high tide roost at Waterloo were a 3rd winter LESSER BLACK BACKED GULL and a GULL BILLED TERN.

A visit to Chacachacare on 18th Jan in search of the previously reported DARK BILLED CUCKOOS (see SCBA 2003-01)was unsuccessful, however the day was salvaged by excellent perched views of a rufous phased adult HOOK BILLED KITE*, together with several FUSCOUS, NORTHERN SCRUB and, BRAN COLOURED FLYCATCHERS, a few MOUSE COLOURED TYRANULETS and large numbers of WHITE FRINGED ANT-WRENS.

In St. John, US Virgin Islands, new photos surfaced from a nature photographer of what appears to be the same RED-BREASTED MERGANSER (1st for VI) found on 4 December at Francis Bay on the north coast. However, the new photos were taken on 29 November from Lameshur Bay on the south coast, indicating that this bird has been on the move. The female RED-BREASTED MERGANSER found at Baie de l'Embouchure, St. Martin, on 13 January could well be the same individual wandering eastward through the islands.

In St. Croix, US Virgin Islands, five species of waterfowl including two RUDDY DUCKS, two LESSER SCAUP, six RING-NECKED DUCKS (five females and a lucky male), a BLUE-WINGED TEAL and a few dozen WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAILS were tallied at Fredensborg Pond on 13 January. Also present at the pond were three AMERICAN COOTS and one seemingly pure CARIBBEAN COOT, which appeared loosely paired with one of the American Coots. Another AMERICAN COOT was seen on a nearby pond.

In St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands, the YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER last seen at Sapphire Bay Condominiums on 8 December was relocated on 12 January.

From Guadeloupe, on 12th Jan at least 10 MYRTLE WARBLERS, were found at Port Louis Swamps. On 16th Jan, a census of wildfowl at Gaschet Res produced, 35 BLUE WINGED TEALS, 9 RUDDY DUCKS, 3 LESSER SCAUP (incl one male), 2 AMERICAN COOT and 2 CARIBBEAN COOT.

OUTING :- The Field Naturalist Club birding outing originally scheduled for 12th Jan, will now take place NOT on Sunday 19th Jan as had been advertised but on Sunday 9th February - apologies for this unavoidable postponement . The itinerary will include Roussillac swamp, Sudama Steps and the west coast coast shoreline. Interested participants should contact Courtenay Rooks on 622/8826 for timings.

ORNITHOLOGICAL TIDBIT: The following abstract is from: McNair, D. G., F. Sibley, E. B. Massiah, and M. D. Frost. 2002. Ground-based Nearctic-Neotropic landbird migration during autumn in the eastern Caribbean. Department of Life Sciences, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Occasional Paper 11:86-103.

We examined ground-based Nearctic-Neotropic landbird migration during autumn at coastal sites on two islands about 775 km apart in the eastern Caribbean, where autumn migration had not been previously studied using mist-nets. We sampled migrants using mist-nets at Harrison Point (HP), Barbados, for 42 days in 1997 and 31 days in 1998-1999, and at Guana Island (GI), British Virgin Islands, for 52 days during 1995-1999. We also obtained information on landbird migration from sight observations. We recorded 28 species of Nearctic-Neotropic landbird migrants at HP and 23 species at GI, for a total of 36 species. The volume of migration was low at both sites. The Blackpoll Warbler (*Dendroica striata*) was the most abundant migrant (98 captures, 206 observations at HP; 132 captures, 263 observations at GI). The Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) was the second most abundant migrant at HP (six captures, 101 observations), but was rare at GI (seven observations). The Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo o. olivaceus*), previously considered a vagrant or scarce transient in the eastern Caribbean, was the third most abundant nocturnal migrant at HP (12 captures, 8 observations). At HP and GI, respectively, 23% and 33% of captured Blackpoll Warblers were after hatching year birds, compared to 8% and 14% for other Nearctic-Neotropic migrants. At both sites we recorded many scarce transients or apparent vagrants, some verified or seen for the first time in the eastern Caribbean. All species recorded except Northern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) at HP and Nashville Warbler (*Vermivora ruficapilla*) at GI, have been recorded at least once during winter in South America; however, more species wintering primarily within the West Indies occurred at GI. Autumn migration of Nearctic-Neotropic landbirds is a regular phenomenon to the eastern Caribbean for a few relatively abundant species moving to their winter range in South America, and also includes a large variety of scarce species. Other than Blackpoll Warblers, which migrate during autumn over the western North Atlantic Ocean through the West Indies to South America, the other Nearctic-Neotropic landbird migrants probably departed from southeastern North America for a shorter over-water crossing through the Greater Antilles and over the Caribbean Sea.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003- 03) for 25th January 2003. Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

BIRDING NEWS :- In west Trinidad, an early morning hike into the mangrove at Cacandee on 20th Jan produced 2 COMMON BLACK HAWKS, 3 SOLITARY SANDPIPERS, a LITTLE CUCKOO, single PYGMY and GREEN KINGFISHERS, 2 STRAIGHT BILLED WOODCREEPERS, 2 BLACK CRESTED ANT-SHRIKES, 6 YELLOW WARBLERS, 1 possibly 2 PROTHONOTARY WARBLERS, 4 AMERICAN REDSTARTS and 6 NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH. In a nearby, recently cut field, 3 white morph LONG WINGED HARRIERS were found.

In the northern range, both , juvenile HEPATIC TANAGER at Brasso Seco, and a male SUMMER TANAGER* at Morne Bleu were seen on 22nd Jan.

In central Trinidad, on 20th Jan, 2 MORICHE ORIOLES at at the usual site in Wallerfield and on 25th Jan a juvenile RUFESCENT TIGER-HERON was carefully studied near Comuto. On Caroni ricefields, the RUFF (first seen on 28th Dec 2002, reappeared on the 25th; also 2 MASKED DUCKS and up to 7 PINNATED BITTERNs have been seen during the week.

On the east coast, an AZURE GALLINULE, a scattering of DICKCISSELS and a PLAIN BREASTED GROUND DOVE were found at Kernaham on 20th Jan.

On Tobago, 2 WHITE WINGED BECARDS were found in the central range on 22nd Jan.

In St. John, US Virgin Islands, short hikes at Francis Bay, Cinnamon Bay, Reef Bay Trail and Bordeaux Mountain Road on 19 January produced eight species of warblers, including two YELLOW-THROATED WARBLERS (Francis Bay), a HOODED WARBLER (Reef Bay Trail), a PRAIRIE WARBLER, four NORTHERN PARULAS, four BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLERS, four AMERICAN REDSTARTS, a YELLOW WARBLER and a NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH. Other noteworthy birds seen include two BRIDLED QUAIL-DOVES at Cinnamon Bay and a singing male LESSER ANTILLEAN BULLFINCH at Francis Bay.

In St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands, a WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL, three AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHERS, one GREATER YELLOWLEGS and a MANGROVE CUCKOO were noted at Patricia Cay on 17 January.

CETACEAN NEWS :- most, if not all birders, have an interest in other aspects of wildlife and we are always happy to include recent sightings of unusual mammals, cetaceans etc. On 20th Jan a Pilot Whale, estimated between 20-25ft long, beached at Waterloo on the west coast of Trinidad. It appeared to react positively to the second attempt at refloating.

ORNITHOLOGICAL TIDBIT: The following abstract is from: Murphy, W. L. 2002. Observations of pelagic seabirds wintering at sea in the southeastern Caribbean. Department of Life Sciences, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Occasional Paper 11:104-110. I report observations, including several significant distributional records, of 16 species of seabirds wintering at sea in the southeastern Caribbean during cruises from Bonaire to the Orinoco River (5-13 January 1996, 3-12 March 1997 and 24 December 1997 - 1 January 1998). A few scattered shearwaters (*Calonectris diomedea* and *Puffinus lherminieri*) were seen. Storm-Petrels (*Oceanites oceanicus* and *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*), particularly the latter species, were often seen toward the east. Most tropicbirds (*Phaethon aethereus*) and gulls (*Larus atricilla*) were near Tobago. Boobies were common; *Sula leucogaster* outnumbered *S. sula* by about 4:1 and *S. dactylatra* was scarce. Frigatebirds (*Fregata magnificens*) were strictly coastal. Several skuas (*Stercorarius skua*) were seen off Venezuela. Jaegers were common, with a ratio of 90 *Stercorarius pomarinus* to 8 *S. parasiticus* to 2 *S. longicaudus*. Only two tern species were seen: *Sterna maxima* was widespread and 4,000 *S. antillarum* were noted southeast of Trinidad.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003- 04) for 31st January 2003. Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

BIRDING NEWS :- In the US Virgin Islands, an unexpected assortment of Nearctic migrants within the past week suggests an invasion of refugees fleeing the extremely cold weather gripping the southeastern USA. An unprecedented incursion of KILLDEER into the islands provides the most compelling evidence, with 68 tallied on the golf course and playing field at the University of the Virgin Islands, St. Thomas, on 27 January, 20 on a small field at Cruz Bay, St. John, on 26 January, and 15 at Sapphire Bay Condominiums, St. Thomas (where none had been seen previously despite numerous visits this winter), on 26 January. Smaller numbers were unusually conspicuous elsewhere.

In eastern St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands, a male AMERICAN BLACK DUCK (1st for Virgin Islands) dropped in at Compass Point Pond on 27 January. It was relocated in the morning of 28 January, but could not be found later that afternoon or the following day. Birders elsewhere in the region should be on the lookout. Other noteworthy birds seen at Compass Point Pond include: 13 GREEN-WINGED TEAL (high count for Virgin Islands) including three males on 24 January but only four on 25 January and none thereafter; five BLUE-WINGED TEAL on 25 January and four on 24 January; up to five CLAPPER RAILS and a SORA (all seen) on 28 January; 29 STILT SANDPIPERS on 25 January; up to 16 LESSER YELLOWLEGS on 28 January; two WHITE-WINGED DOVES from 25-28 January; and up to six YELLOW WARBLERS on 25 January. Elsewhere in eastern St. Thomas, noteworthy birds include: a LEAST GREBE at Turpentine Run on 26 January but not subsequently; the usual PIED-BILLED GREBE at New Herrnhut Pond on 26 January; a TRICOLORED HERON at Red Hook Pond on 26 January; 35 STILT SANDPIPERS in the salt pond behind the Ritz Carlton Hotel on 24 January; and the elusive YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER at Sapphire Bay Condominiums on 24 January.

In western St. Thomas, exploration of several wetlands on 27 January revealed an unprecedented nine LEAST GREBES, including two at a salt pond at Perseverance Bay, two in a freshwater pond at Fortuna Bay, and five in two freshwater ponds at Bordeaux where two stripe-headed juveniles with two adults and an obvious nesting platform were noted on one pond. This species was unrecorded from the Virgin Islands for several decades until local birders began seeing them several years ago at several sites in eastern St. Thomas; within the past year breeding has been documented on all three major islands, indicating that its numbers have increased dramatically. At Perseverance Bay, other noteworthy birds observed on 27 January include: two female NORTHERN SHOVELERS (2nd for St. Thomas), six BLUE-WINGED TEAL, an AMERICAN COOT, a BRIDLED QUAIL-DOVE well seen plus two others heard, a NORTHERN PARULA, a male AMERICAN REDSTART and a NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH. On 27 January, 140 WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAILS (high count for St. Thomas) were tallied at six sites scattered throughout the island, including eight chicks at Perseverance Bay; of these, 114 were at two east-end resorts (Sugar Bay and Sapphire Bay) where they receive handouts from tourists.

In south west Trinidad, at Roussillac swamp, 2 STREAK HEADED WOODCREEPERS were found on 27th Jan, whilst nearby, at Sudama Steps, 2 NORTHERN SCRUB FLYCATCHERS and 4 SPOTTED TODDY-FLYCATCHERS were present. Further north, the midday high tide gathering of gulls at Kings wharf San Fernando produced three 1st winter and one 2nd winter LESSER BLACK BACKED GULLS.

On the west coast, an adult winter and a 1st summer LESSER BLACK BACKED GULLS were seen at Orange Valley, and a GULL BILLED TERN, both on 30th Jan. At Cacandee mangrove a MOUSE COLOURED TYRANNULET and 2 PYGMY KINGFISHERS were the highlight on 30th Jan.

In the Caroni plain of Trinidad, at Caroni ricefields, 4 unseasonal FORK TAILED FLYCATCHERS were found together with a STRIPE BACKED BITTERN.

In the northern range of Trinidad, a hike down Las Lapas trace on 28th Jan produced a pair of DUSKY CAPPED FLYCATCHERS, and a SLATY CAPPED FLYCATCHER building a nest under one of the banks. Also present were an adult male HEPATIC TANAGER, whilst at Brasso Seco junction, an OLIVE SIDED FLYCATCHER was found. A GREEN KINGFISHER flew across the road at Morne la Croix. Is this an altitude record for this species in Trinidad ? We would welcome comments.

From the Bocas Is, a BROAD WINGED HAWK, at least 6 MOUSE COLOURED TYRANNULETS, 3 BRAN COLOURED FLYCATCHERS and a STREAKED SALTATOR were found on Chacachacare on 29th Jan.

From St Martin, RING NECKED DUCKS increased to 11 birds present at Fresh Pond on 24th Jan.

A number of interesting shorebirds records included 2 AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHERS at Tintamarre islet on 23rd Jan together with 3 RUDDY TURNSTONES and 1 SANDERLING (all banded/flagged from the Delaware Bay Banding project) present at Orient Pond on 25th Jan. Unbanded birds included 30 SEMI PALMATED SANDPIPERS and 1 WESTERN SANDPIPER at Grand Etang on 24th Jan and 351 STILT SANDPIPERS on Orient ponds .

At Great Salt Pond, 2 LAUGHING GULLS together with 3 adult and 1 2nd winter LESSER BLACK BACKED GULLS were found on 26th Jan.

A second CHUCK-WILL'S WIDOW was seen foraging around a floodlit restaurant at Grand Case on 24th Jan (the previously reported bird at Lotterie Farm was still present).

American wood warblers have further increased their numbers on the island At Lotterie Farm on 26th Jan there were 3 NORTHERN PARULA'S, 2 PRAIRIE WARBLERS, and 3 AMERICAN REDTSART. At Fish pond a MYRTLE WARBLER, 2 NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH and a PRAIRIE WARBLER and at Mullet Bay golf course 2 MYRTLE WARBLERS and 2 PRAIRIE WARBLERS.

COLOUR BANDED SHOREBIRDS :- reports of banded shorebirds in the Antilles can be sent from the web page : http://www.vex.net/~hopscotc/shorebirds/cgi-bin/data_entry.cgi?language=en

ORNITHOLOGICAL TIDBIT: The following abstract is from: White, S. A. 2002. A mist-netting study in Guayaguayare and the Victoria Mayaro Forest Reserve, Trinidad, West Indies Department of Life Sciences, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Occasional Paper 11:111-118. During July-August 1999, I conducted a mist-netting study of resident landbirds in four different forest types in southern Trinidad, West Indies: (1) virgin forest; forest managed by the (2) Open Range Method (ORM) and (3) Periodic Block System (PBS); and (4) mixed forest. During 728 mist net hrs, 742 individual birds representing 57 species were captured at the four sites. Species richness, species diversity and capture rates were greatest in the mixed forest and lowest in the virgin forest. The avifauna of the PBS forest most closely resembled that of the virgin forest. However, given the limitations of mist-netting, further censuses are needed to adequately compare avifaunal composition between the four sites.

TTFNC OUTING :- participants for the birding outing to Roussillac swamp and other south west localities on Sunday 9th February should meet on the "north/south" highway at Grand Bazaar at 6.15am. Contact Courtenay Rooks on 622.8826 with any queries.

RARE BIRD REPORTING :- Do we believe what you see ? We want to ! Many of the identifications reported in the

This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003- 05) for 7th February 2003. Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

BIRDING NEWS :- From Anguilla, while carrying out areas searches for over-wintering migrants in the Katouche Valley on 5th Feb, EPIC biologists located a MERLIN (rare on the island), PROTHONOTARY WARBLER (1st island record), 17 PRAIRIE WARBLERS (island high count), BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER (2nd island record), HOODED WARBLER (5th island record), 3 NORTHERN PARULAS (1st island record), MAGNOLIA WARBLER (1st island record), and MYRTLE WARBLER (2nd island record).

From St Martin, a LESSER SCAUP was recorded at Fresh Pond on 26th Jan. During terrestrial bird surveys and banding on the 31st at Lotterie Farm, the following were recorded: 1 YELLOW BILLED CUCKOO, 6 NORTHERN PARULA, 1 MAGNOLIA WARBLER (2nd island record), 4 BLACK THROATED BLUE WARBLERS, 1 MYRTLE WARBLER, 11 PRAIRIE WARBLERS, 6 BLACK AND WHITE WARBLERS, 12 AMERICAN REDSTARTS, 1 WORM EATING WARBLER (second island record), and 1 KENTUCKY WARBLER (2nd island record). On 1st Feb, 2 OVENBIRDS were found.

During a Kayak trip through the mangroves at Fish Pond on the 28th Jan, 4 MYRTLE WARBLERS, 2 PRAIRIE WARBLERS and 7 NORTHERN WATERTHRUSHES were seen. Also on 28th Jan, at Mullet Bay Golf Course pine trees 7 MYRTLE WARBLERS (bringing to 12, the number seen during the week - there has been only one previous island record!) and 3 PRAIRIE WARBLERS.

In Tobago, a group of ducks at Lowlands on 5th Feb included 2 NORTHERN SHOVELER*, 1 AMERICAN WIGEON* and the male RING NECKED DUCK* (first reported on 26th Nov 2002). Elsewhere, a SORA RAIL was present at the freshwater marsh at Louis d'Or on both 2nd and 3rd Feb; the WHITE TAILED TROPICBIRD* first recorded on Little Tobago back in April 1998 put in another appearance from the 2nd seabird lookout, and a female WHITE WINGED BECARD was in woodland behind Speyside on 3rd Feb; 37 MASKED BOOBIES* were recorded from St Giles rocks on 4th Feb and the VIOLACEOUS TROGON* was again seen on the Roxborough -Bloody Bay on the 5th. A currently unidentified Coot sp was seen distantly at Buccoo marsh on 5th Feb. It is likely to be a CARIBBEAN COOT but at present, hybrid CARIBBEAN/AMERICAN has not been ruled out.

In north east Trinidad, 3 TRINIDAD PIPING GUANS were watched at length from the usual lookout at Montevideo on 1st Feb. Also present in the area were 2 SWALLOW TAILED KITES, 2 GREY HEADED KITES, 2 DOUBLE TOOTHED KITES, a BROAD WINGED HAWK and a COCOI HERON.

In central Trinidad, at Wallerfield, the CRANE HAWK* again flew over (presumably from roost) the main drag on 4th Feb.

TTFNC OUTING :- participants for the birding outing to Roussillac swamp and other south west localities on Sunday 9th February should meet on the "north/south" highway at Grand Bazaar at 6.15am. Contact Courtenay Rooks on 622.8826 with any queries.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003- 06) for 14th February 2003. Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

BIRDING NEWS :- From Guadeloupe, a female RUDDY DUCK with 9 juveniles (1st record for the island) was seen Gaschet Reservoir on 1st and 8th Feb. On 11th Feb, 3 pairs of MASKED DUCKS together with one juvenile, and a female CAPE MAY WARBLER were found on Marie Galante Is.

In Tobago, the YELLOW BREASTED CRAKE * (1st for Tobago) first heard on 22nd Dec 2002, was seen and photographed at Louis d'Or on 11th Feb. On the same date, 4 different VENEZUELAN FLYCATCHERS were seen at various points along the Roxborough-Bloody Bay Rd.

In the northern range of Trinidad on 12th Feb there was a single BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER *, a SUMMER TANAGER *, and both SLATY CAPPED and DUSKY CAPPED FLYCATCHERS at Las Lapas; several YELLOW LEGGED THRUSHES at Brasso Seco junction; 2 HEPATIC TANAGERS, 8 SCALED PIGEONS together and a SOOTY GRASSQUIT at Morne Bleu and finally a COMMON POTOO roosting at Asa Wright Nature Centre.

In south west Trinidad, 11 members of the Field Naturalists Club saw at least 10 STREAK HEADED and 5 STRAIGHT BILLED WOODCREEPERS, and a MANGROVE CUCKOO at Roussillac Swamp and a GREEN THROATED MANGO at Oropouche Swamp on 9th Feb.

In central Trinidad, a MORICHE ORIOLE was seen at the usual site at Wallerfield, and a RED BELLIED MACAW was seen obviously nesting at Comuto on 12th Feb.

In eastern Trinidad, a GREEN THROATED MANGO was in Nariva swamp on 12th Feb.

In St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands, the two NORTHERN SHOVELERS (2nd for St. Thomas) continue to be seen at Perseverance Bay, where they were last reported on 7 February. The AMERICAN COOT at Perseverance Bay was last seen on 5 February. Two BRIDLED QUAIL-DOVES were heard at Perseverance Bay and one was heard in a ravine above Charlotte Amalie (unexpected locality) on 5 February. Single LEAST GREBES were noted at Perseverance Bay and Turpentine Run on 7 February, and at a newly "discovered" freshwater pond at New Herrnhut on 2 February. No ducks have been seen at Compass Point Pond since the AMERICAN BLACK DUCK (1st for VI) was last seen on 28 February.

In St. John, US Virgin Islands, a DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT was reported from Francis Bay and Cruz Bay during 8-10 February. A 2 hour hike along the entire Reef Bay Trail on 12 February produced only four species of warblers, including four AMERICAN REDSTARTS, two BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLERS, an OVENBIRD and a NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH.

MEETING: The Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds will be sponsoring a meeting in Tobago during 21-26 July. Further information is available at the society's website at: <http://www.nmnh.si.edu/BIRDNET/SCSCB/index.html>.

ORNITHOLOGICAL TIDBIT: The following abstract is from: Alexander, G. D. 2002. Observations of the Trinidad Piping-Guan, or Pawi (Pipile pipile), in northern Trinidad. Department of Life Sciences, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Occasional Paper 11:119-130. Relatively little is known about the Trinidad Piping-Guan (Pipile pipile), locally known as the Pawi, an endangered tropical forest species of arboreal habits. Pawi were observed at a site in Northern Trinidad in July and early August 1989 and 1991. Individuals or groups of up to three birds foraged in an area including vine forest, secondary vegetation and agriculture habitats. In 1989 the birds fed and spent most of their time in vine forest and were seen to feed on six food types. In 1991 they fed and spent most of their time in secondary vegetation or agriculture habitat and were seen to feed on three food types, predominantly nutmeg in the agriculture habitat. Berries of four tree species and foliage of three plant species were previously unrecorded in the diet of the Pawi. This is the first record of Pawi feeding on foliage. Foraging took place in early morning and late afternoon, with slightly longer foraging periods in mornings. Between the two years, much of the surrounding area of forest was felled and disturbance increased. Pawi showed no apparent effects from disturbance, but appeared to have shifted their feeding area in response to the loss of habitat. Four types of vocalisations were identified. Two of these vocalisations and wing drumming displays were recorded and are described.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003- 07) for 22nd February 2003. Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

BIRDING NEWS :- From Barbados, A female SCAUP sp. first seen at Packer's on the 15th February was relocated in the nearby Oilfields the following day where it was conclusively identified as a GREATER SCAUP (1st record for Barbados). The species was previously listed by M.B. Hutt based on a hunter's written description of a male scaup sp. shot in Nov 1979, but the record was recently reevaluated and the description is ambiguous on some critical features and does not adequately eliminate Lesser Scaup. The GREY HERON now in full breeding plumage was seen at Congo Road on 16th Feb. and four female MASKED DUCKS females were back at Bayfield Pond on February 9th.

On the west coast of Trinidad on 15th Feb., an immature PARASITIC JAEGAR was watched harrying feeding gull flocks whilst up to 12 BROWN BOOBIES fed offshore at Orange Valley ;45 RED KNOT and 50 SHORT BILLED DOWITCHERS were on the mudflats at Waterloo. Further north at Cacandee, 2 PYGMY KINGFISHERS, 2 GREEN THROATED MANGO'S, 3 STRAIGHT BILLED WOODCREEPERS, a NORTHERN SCRUB FLYCATCHER, 10 AMERICAN REDSTARTS and 8 YELLOW WARBLERS were found.

From St Martin, During banding and point counts from the 10th-16th at the Lotterie Farm secondary Forest Site, EPIC biologists observed 11 NORTHERN PARULAS, 2 BLACK THROATED BLUE WARBLERS, 4 PRAIRIE WARBLERS, 1 BLACK AND WHITE WARBLERS, 5 AMERICAN REDSTARTS, 2 HOODED WARBLERS, and 3 MANGROVE CUCKOOS. Waterbird surveys at Orient Pond on the 13th, produced 7 TRICOLOURED HERONS together (island high count). An adult HERRING GULL was observed at Great Salt Pond on the 14th. During banding and point counts at the Fish Pond mangrove site, EPIC biologists observed 3 MYRTLE WARBLERS a WHITE WINGED DOVE, 3 NORTHERN WATERTHRUSHES, 2 PROTHONOTARY WARBLERS, and 3 PRAIRIE WARBLERS. While completing seabird surveys at Tintamarre island off of St. Martin, 2 AUDUBON'S SHEARWATERS were found incubating eggs. Resident birds of note this week included the arrival of BLACK WHISKERED VIREOS to the scrub habitat of Lotterie Farm (2 banded and 5 heard) and the arrival of CARIBBEAN MARTINS to Maho (their annual nesting area) where 5 birds have been observed daily foraging amongst the hotels.

In Guadeloupe, on 15th Feb at the Nature Reserve of Petite-Terre the PIPING PLOVER (first found on 30th Nov). On 16th Feb on Gaschet Reservoir , there were 41 BLUE-WINGED TEALS, 2 AMERICAN COOTS, 1 CARRIBEAN COOT, 5 LESSER SCAUPS, 9 RUDDY DUCKS (plus 6 chicks) and 1 CLIFF SWALLOW. At Beautiran on the same day, 1 BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER, 2 OVENBIRDS, 10 NORTHERN WATERTHRUSHES, and 5 AMERICAN REDSTARTS.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003- 08) for 28th February 2003. Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

SAD NEWS: This past week Peter Bacon, Professor of Zoology at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad, passed away after a courageous battle with cancer. Professor Bacon was an enthusiastic lecturer and accomplished scholar who inspired thousands of West Indian students in his biology courses in Jamaica and Trinidad. Although his primary research interests focussed on the ecology of invertebrates and coastal wetlands, he supervised many student projects (including several that were published) on birds in the region. We extend our condolences to his family and friends.

BIRDING NEWS :- On St Martin, wetland surveys on the 22nd were very ""Rail-ly"" with a SORA being observed at Orient Pond (fourth island record), and more exciting, a CLAPPER RAIL at Fish Pond (first island record). During wetland surveys on the 26th, single male and female GREEN WINGED TEAL (second island record) were found on Little Bay Pond.

In the northern range of Trinidad, a hike from Luango to Maracas on 23rd Feb produced an immature HEPATIC TANAGER. This bird was at an altitude of only 800ft - possibly the lowest altitude report from Trinidad. Also seen were single COLLARED TROGON and a QUAIL-DOVE sp, almost certainly RUDDY Q-d.

On the west coast of Trinidad, the usual boat trip into Caroni swamp on 25th Feb found 2 roosting TROPICAL SCREECH OWLS and a COMMON POTOO plus the first reported LARGE BILLED TERN of the year. A summer plumage COMMON BLACK HEADED GULL * was amongst the high tide gull roost at Brickfields on 26th Feb. DICKCISSELS are now roosting "in their thousands" in the sugar cane fields south of Caroni swamp.

In east Trinidad at Bush Bush reserve on 27th Feb, the first recorded PLUMBEOUS KITE of the year was seen together with 2 GREY HEADED KITES. Also present were 2 female CRIMSON CRESTED WOODPECKERS and a RED RUMPED WOODPECKER At Plum Mitan, the first of the DICKCISSEL flocks were reported during the week.

In Tobago, the NORTHERN SHOVELERS * first recorded at Lowlands on 5th Feb had increased to 4 on 22nd Feb (a male and 3 females). Also on 22nd Feb regularly seen WHITE TAILED TROPICBIRD * was watched repeatedly trying to land in one small area of the forested cliff face. It was also acting in a very aggressive manner to RED BILLED TROPICBIRDS nearby. Whilst only one bird at a time has been seen this year, could a second be "on a nest" ?

In St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands, an unprecedented ten LEAST GREBES were found in four ponds in the western half of the island on 14 February, including two at Fortuna, four at Bordeaux, three at Perseverance Bay and one at Dorothea; none could be found the same day in eastern St. Thomas. Other birds noted in western St. Thomas on 14 February include the two NORTHERN SHOVELERS and an AMERICAN COOT at Perseverance Bay, and two LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSHES in a forested ravine with freshwater pools at Dorothea. On 23 February, the YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER was relocated at Sapphire Bay Condominiums.

ORNITHOLOGICAL TIDBIT: The following abstract is from: Berres, M. E. 2002. Long-term persistence of White-bearded Manakin (*Manacus manacus*) leks in the Arima Valley of Trinidad, West Indies. Department of Life Sciences, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Occasional Paper 11:131-137. During 1997-2000, I searched for 11 White-bearded Manakin (*Manacus manacus*) leks studied by Snow (1958-1961) and Lill (1967-1971) in the lower Arima Valley of Trinidad. Four of the leks described by Snow and one by Lill were found in precisely the locations indicated by these authors 29-42 yrs ago. Actively displaying males and visiting females attended each of these leks. However, two leks appear affected by a dissolution process. Of the six leks not found, habitat alteration by humans appeared responsible for the abandonment of three; the factors responsible for the demise of the remaining leks remain unknown. All surviving leks occur in areas distant from human activities, suggesting that leks will persist indefinitely in the absence of any significant disturbance.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003- 09) for 8th March 2003. Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

BIRDING NEWS :- In St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands, the two NORTHERN SHOVELERS (2nd for St. Thomas) were still present at Perseverance Bay on 5 March. An immature female YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER (possibly only 2nd record for St. Thomas) was found along Turpentine Run on 28 February. Only six LEAST GREBES were found in various ponds on 5 March: one at Fortuna Bay, three including a new, half-grown chick at Bordeaux, one at Dorothea and one at Turpentine Run. Other noteworthy birds seen on 5 March include: a GREEN-WINGED TEAL and a YELLOW-RUMPED (MYRTLE) WARBLER at Bordeaux; a SORA at Perseverance Bay; two CLAPPERS RAILS, two SORAS and 15 STILT SANDPIPERS at Compass Point Pond; and 145 WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAILS (highest count for St. Thomas) at six sites. A WHITE-WINGED DOVE was seen along Turpentine Run on 4 March.

From Guadeloupe, wildfowl on Gaschet Reservoir included 91 BLUE WINGED TEAL, 9 RUDDY DUCK, 5 LESSER SCAUP 1 NORTHERN PINTAIL and 2 each of CARIBBEAN and AMERICAN COOT whilst on Gardel Reservoir, a SORA and a female RING NECKED DUCK were seen. Also on the same date, at Port-Louis Swamp there were 4 MYRTLE WARBLERS and at Beautiran 12 NORTHERN WATERTHRUSHES, 6 AMERICAN REDSTARTS, 2 OVENBIRDS, 2 BLACK AND WHITE WARBLERS and a female PROTHONOTARY WARBLER.

From north east Trinidad, an intriguing report of 2 adult KING VULTURES feeding at a deer carcass with TURKEY VULTURES on 27th Feb close to Grande Riviere.

In central Trinidad on 4th March there were 17 LEAST GREBES and a single PIED BILLED BREBE on Trincity ponds.

On the west coast of Trinidad, the first reported YELLOW BILLED TERN of the year was seen at Waterloo together with approximately 125 ROYAL TERNS, 3 SANDWICH TERNS and a winter plumaged GULL BILLED TERN In the northern range of Trinidad, belated news of a female BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER seen at Asa Wright on 24th Feb. Also at Asa Wright a NORTHERN SCRUB FLYCATCHER was carefully studied on 3rd March. A hike on the trails north of Luango village on 7th March produced 60 species including 3 WHITE NECKED JACOBIN, both COLLARED and WHITE TAILED TROGON, RED RUMPED WOODPECKER, 2 STREAKED XENOPS, 3 PLAIN ANT-VIREO, BLACK FACED ANT-THRUSH, both SLATY CAPPED and DUSKY CAPPED FLYCATCHERS, at least 25 RED LEGGED HONEYCREEPERS and 6 BLUE DACNIS.

In Tobago, a YELLOW BILLED CUCKOO * was seen at Bon Accord sewage lagoons on 24th Feb - could this be the same bird as seen on 21st Dec overwintering ?. On 26th Feb, an adult GREY HAWK * soared over the ridge behind Blue Waters - also present was an immature GREAT BLACK-HAWK.

During this week on St Martin, a new female LESSER SCAUP was found amongst 150 WHITE CHEEKED PINTAILS and 35 BLUE WINGED TEALS at Grand Case Airport Pond. Both the SORA at Orient Pond and the CLAPPER RAIL at Fish Pond were still present.. At Belair Pond, 2 GREEN WINGED TEAL were found. Numbers of STILT SANDPIPERS on the island have dwindled down to 50 from a peak of 350+. At Great Salt Pond, 5 LESSER BLACK BACKED GULLS were still present. The GREAT BLACK BACKED GULL found in January, was again seen at Grand Case Airport Pond. Banding highlights at Lotterie Farm during the week included a MANGROVE CUCKOO (a hatch-year bird), a BLACK WHISKERED VIREO, with many other being seen in the scrub habitat, 4 NORTHERN PARULA with 10 others being observed, a MAGNOLIA WARBLER (4th island record and first banded bird), a BLACK THROATED BLUE WARBLER with 3 others being seen, 5 PRAIRIE WARBLERS, all adult males, a BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER, 6 AMERICAN REDSTARTS, with 25 others being seen, 2 KENTUCKY WARBLERS (3rd and 4th island records), and 3 HOODED WARBLERS. Banding at Fish Pond, produced 3 PRAIRIE WARBLERS, all adult females, whilst 3 MYRTLE WARBLERS and 12 NORTHERN WATERTHRUSHES were seen.

ORNITHOLOGICAL TIDBIT: The following abstract is from: Collins, C. T. 2002. Notes on the biology of the Band-rumped Swift in Trinidad. Department of Life Sciences, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Occasional Paper 11:138-143. The Band-rumped Swift (*Chaetura spinicauda*) in Trinidad has a breeding and moult cycle coinciding with the dry season flowering period. This differs from the early rainy season breeding period of other swift species and can represent a type of seasonal resource partitioning. Breeding may be biannual.

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BIRDING NEWS :- From St Martin comes the final weekly survey results of the EPIC biologists work on migrant and wintering species .At Fish Pond 2 PRAIRIE WARBLERS were banded with four more seen. A PROTHONOTARY WARBLER was banded together with and 4 NORTHERN WATERTHRUSHES - a further 10 waterthrushes were also seen. In the mangrove 2 WHITE WINGED DOVES and 2 MYRTLE WARBLERS were seen. Waterbirds found were 9 RING NECKED DUCKS and 2 GREEN WINGED TEALS at Little Bay Pond; LESSER SCAUPS at both Fresh Pond and Grand Case Airport Pond and a TRICOLOURED HERON at Orient Pond. Birding at Lotterie Farm forest area on the 11th and the 14th revealed the CHUCK-WILL'S WIDOW (still on the same branch..we are waiting to see if it over summers on the island), 7 NORTHERN PARULAS, 2 PRAIRIE WARBLERS, 3 BLACK AND WHITE WARBLERS, 10 AMERICAN REDSTARTS, and a single HOODED WARBLERS.

In summary, EPIC banded a total of 803 birds of 29 species on St Martin this winter as well as 245 recaptured birds; 75 migrant birds of 15 species and,remarkably, 454 Bananaquits. Full details of the operation can be found at www.epicislands.org.

On St. Eustatius (Statia), EPIC biologists found 4 NORTHERN PARULAS, 6 PRAIRIE WARBLERS, 1 BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER (2nd island record), and 2 AMERICAN REDSTARTS at the Quill volcano site, together with a single SCALY BREASTED THRASHER foraging near the crater rim. This species has long been thought to be extirpated from the island. Around the town of Oranjestad, 4 EURASIAN COLLARED DOVES were seen (1st island record) and 2 WHITE WINGED DOVES (first island record).

We thank Adam Brown and his team for their contribution to the Bird Alert and look forward to receiving their news again next winter.

In the northern range of Trinidad, on 12th March, a BLACK WHISKERED VIREO * and an OLIVE STRIPED FLYCATCHER were feeding in the same fruiting tree close to the base of Morne Bleu.

In central Trinidad, a drive from Comuto to Four Roads,Tamana produced 84 species including 6 PLUMBEOUS KITES, GREY HEADED KITE, FERRUGINOUS PYGMY-OWL, WHITE COLLARED SWIFT, 3 CHANNEL BILLED TOUCANS, RED RUMPED WOODPECKER and TRINIDAD EUPHONIA.

In south west Trinidad on 14th March, 2 CRESTED CARACARAS *(adult and juvenile) were seen close to Fullerton swamp. From the Icacos peninsula, a dark morph PARASITIC JAEGAR and 3 BROWN BOOBIES were seen offshore.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003- 11) for. 22nd March 2003. Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfn>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below) .

BIRDING NEWS :-In south west Trinidad, a MANGROVE CUCKOO was seen at south Oropouche and 2 SWALLOW TAILED KITES were found at Mora dam, on 15th March On the west coast of Trinidad, watching the seabird roost at Brickfields remains rather uninteresting - just 1750 LAUGHING GULLS, 1 adult LESSER BLACK BACKED GULL, 2 CAYENNE TERNS, 1 LARGE BILLED TERN and 16 ROYAL TERNS.

In the Caroni plain of Trinidad, DICKCISSEL numbers are building up nicely - at least 15,000 were in the eastern quadrant of Caroni ricefields on 22nd March (with 3 adult PEREGRINES in attendance) and at least that number, if not more were roosting in the canefields at Wilderness. Also on the ricefields, 2 PINNATED BITTERNs, 1 YELLOW BREASTED CRAKE, 2 SAVANNAH HAWKS and a light morph LONG WINGED HARRIER.

From Guadeloupe, the MARSH HARRIER (first found back on 11th Nov 2002) was still present in the Grand-cul de Sac-Marin on 17th March. Wildfowl counts on 18th March on Gaschet Reservoir included 87 BLUE WINGED TEAL, 31 RUDDY DUCKS, male and female LESSER SCAUP and a NORTHERN PINTAIL Also on the same date, at Beautiran, Port-Louis : 5 Northern Waterthrushes, 2 American Redstarts were found.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003- 12) for. 29th March 2003. Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below) .

BIRDING NEWS :- In St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands, two female LESSER ANTILLEAN BULLFINCHES were seen in Red Hook on 27 March and a single female on 24 March; a pair had apparently been seen intermittently during the past month and a female reportedly was seen once flying out of a BANANAQUIT nest. There appear to be only a few previous sight records (details lacking) of this species from St. Thomas, where it is expected to spread given its ubiquity in neighbouring St. John. At Red Hook, 18 WHITE-WINGED DOVES (highest count for St. Thomas) were tallied on 24 March but only eight were seen on 27 March. Drought conditions are drying up the small ponds on the west side of the island, where only four LEAST GREBES were tallied on 27 March, but five others were found the same day in a newly ""discovered"" small, freshwater pond at Red Hook. Other noteworthy birds recorded on 27 March include: a WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL with two yellow nasal tags and ring #915-08097, presumably ringed in Puerto Rico or Culebra, at Sapphire Bay Condominiums; 13 BLUE-WINGED TEAL at four sites; the first LAUGHING GULL of the year at Hull Bay; and three WILSON'S PLOVERS and nine STILT SANDPIPERS at Perseverance Bay. The YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER at Magens Bay was still present on 22 March. The immature female YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER was relocated at Turpentine Run on 8 March. A male RING-NECKED DUCK was found at Mahogany Run on 7 March.

We received word that the OSPREY found ill at Fortuna Bay, St. Thomas, on 15 September and found dead on 17 September was ringed as a nestling near Barnegat Light, New Jersey, on 2 July 1994; its death from an unexplained illness just might have been from the West Nile Virus, which has recently reported from birds in the Dominican Republic, but unfortunately the bird had been dead too long for testing.

The small offshore cays surrounding St. Thomas provide suitable nesting habitat for a variety of birds, especially seabirds. A brief hike along the east side of Cockroach Cay on 20 March produced a dead AUDUBON'S SHEARWATER (no active nests found), 15 adult and five young MASKED BOOBIES, and 12 RED-BILLED TROPICBIRDS including eight on nests. Also on 20 March, ten nesting RED-FOOTED BOOBIES (nine brown and one white morph) at Dutchcap Cay were visible from a boat and three RED-BILLED TROPICBIRDS flew off the coast of Water Island. A pair of WILSON'S PLOVERS was noted at Dog Cay on 26 March.

In St. John, US Virgin Islands, a short hike at Cinnamon Bay on 24 March produced a male BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER (only report for the season), two BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLERS, two AMERICAN REDSTARTS and a NORTHERN PARULA. To correct an earlier report, the two Yellow-throated Warblers at Francis Bay on 19 January were actually YELLOW-RUMPED (MYRTLE) WARBLERS, which apparently staged a major southward invasion this winter into Central America, the Greater Antilles and the Lesser Antilles (reports from St. Martin, Anguilla and Guadeloupe chronicled in earlier alerts).

In the northern range of Trinidad, a hike to the OILBIRD caves at Aripo on 26th Mar produced WHITE BELLIED ANTBIRD, BEARDED BELLBIRD, 4 YELLOW LEGGED THRUSHES, SPECKLED TANAGER and 3 BLUE CAPPED TANAGERS. On 29th March, in the forest between Morne Bleu and Las Lapas an adult ORNATE HAWK-EAGLE flew south down the valley and the first SWALLOW TANAGERS of the year (a male and 3 females) were found. Also seen were COLLARED TROGON, BLUE CROWNED MOTMOT, 2 CHANNEL BILLED TOUCANS, RED RUMPED WOODPECKER, STREAKED XENOPS, OCHRE BELLIED, 2 SLATY CAPPED, EULER'S AND 3 DUSKY CAPPED FLYCATCHERS.

From the north east corner of Trinidad, a 2 hour seawatch from Galera Pt on 25th March did not produce a single migrant seabird ! Obviously mid March is too early ! However, roadside TROPICAL SCREECH-OWL and SWALLOW TAILED KITE at Balandra made the trip worthwhile.

ORNITHOLOGICAL TIDBIT: The following abstract is from: Heath, M., and M. Hansell. 2002. Weaving techniques in two species of Icteridae, the Yellow Oriole (*Icterus nigrogularis*) and Crested Oropendola (*Psarocolius decumanus*). Department of Life Sciences, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Occasional Paper 11:144-154. African weaverbirds (subfamily Ploceinae) use a variety of weaving stitches in nest construction, which suggests that in these woven nests building behaviour is particularly complex. However, birds in several other families also make hanging nests of entangled vegetation, the most impressive being nests made by the New World orioles and oropendolas (family Icteridae). Examination of nests of the Yellow Oriole (*Icterus nigrogularis*) and Crested Oropendola (*Psarocolius decumanus*) in this study demonstrates that a similar range of stitches are used by these species compared with the Ploceinae. The nests of both species, however, make particular use of two simple stitches, the half hitch and simple loop; both species also use a simple weaving technique. Spiral binding is shown by both species, but was at its highest density around the entrance of the nests of the Crested Oropendola. The difficulty of weaving compared to other techniques and the extent of its occurrence among birds are discussed.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003-13) for 14 April 2003. Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfn>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

BIRDING NEWS :- In the northern US Virgin Islands, several species of intratropical migrants have reappeared in recent weeks to breed. In St. Thomas, only three LAUGHING GULLS were at Charlotte Amalie on 29 March but by 6 April the number had swelled to 275. The first CARIBBEAN MARTINS of the season were noted on 6 April at Fortuna, where 11 were tallied. Two WILSON'S PLOVERS were at Perseverance Bay on 6 April. Eight LEAST GREBES were tallied island-wide on 6 April, including three at Bordeaux and five at Red Hook; a ninth at Lily-choked Turpentine Run was relocated on 9 April. Only five BLUE-WINGED TEAL were found island-wide on 6 April, including three at Bordeaux and two at Red Hook. On 6 April two WHITE-WINGED DOVES were noted at Compass Point and one at Red Hook. A leisurely drive through Charlotte Amalie on 6 April produced 67 ROCK DOVES and 22 HOUSE SPARROWS. Previously recorded only a few times from the island, a BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER flitted about Frydendal on 3 and 4 April.

In St. John, four WILSON'S PLOVERS were noted at Leinster's Bay and four WHITE-WINGED DOVES at Coral Bay on 13 April. A WHITE-CROWNED PIGEON was seen at Calabash Boom on 2 April. Ten WHITE-WINGED DOVES and 20 HOUSE SPARROWS were tallied on 2 April at Coral Bay, where a resident reported observing 80 WHITE-WINGED DOVES a few days earlier. The first BLACK-WHISKERED VIREOS of the season were heard calling on 2 April at Europa Bay, where a BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER and NORTHERN PARULA were seen. A LEAST GREBE and a PIED-BILLED GREBE were reported from Caneel Bay, but only the latter was seen on 2 April.

In south west Trinidad, single LITTLE CUCKOO and MANGROVE CUCKOO were found at South Oropouche swamp on 30th and 31st March respectively. Further north up the coast, at Brickfields 2 GREATER FLAMINGOES were found on the mudflats on 31st March.

In eastern Trinidad, a GREEN HERON was identified in the Kernaham area of Nariva swamp on 29th March.

In the northern range of Trinidad, at Asa Wright Nature Centre, a male BLACKPOLL WARBLER, moulting into breeding plumage, was seen on 28th March. Further up the Blanchisseuse Road at Las Lapas lookout, a group of about a dozen Chaetura swifts, likely to be CHAPMAN'S SWIFT, were carefully studied amongst a flock of CHESTNUT COLLARED SWIFTS.

In SCBA 2003-12, we reported on the total absence of seabird migration from north east Trinidad. From Barbados, comes similar news where a 4 hour pelagic reaching a maximum of c. 8 nautical miles off the island's SW on March 29th had virtually the same result - only 3 birds seen: 1 FRIGATEBIRD sp at c. 6 nm out, a RED BILLED TROPICBIRD at 7.5 nm and a WILSON'S PETREL at 5.4 nm.

ORNITHOLOGICAL TIDBIT: The following abstract is from: Manolis, T., and A. Cruz. 2002. *Mating and nest-searching behaviour of Shiny Cowbirds associated with different host species in Trinidad and Tobago*. Department of Life Sciences, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Occasional Paper 11:155-165.

The Shiny Cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*) is a brood parasite of a wide variety of passerine species in South America and the Caribbean region. We examined the mating and nest-searching behaviour of cowbirds parasitising various hosts in different environments in Trinidad and Tobago. Breeding cowbirds congregate at nesting colonies of Yellow-hooded Blackbirds (*Agelaius icterocephalus*) in marshes in Trinidad in the rainy season. Most female cowbirds visiting territories and nests of blackbirds do so singly or in groups of two or more females. Little evidence of cowbird pair formation was observed at blackbird colonies. We observed a different pattern of cowbird mating behaviour in rural areas of mixed agricultural plots and woodland, where House Wrens (*Troglodytes aedon*), which have more uniformly dispersed nesting attempts than the colonial blackbirds, are the primary host. At one such site, we documented stable pair formation over a period of a few weeks within a small population of colour-banded cowbirds. Cowbirds also showed a greater likelihood to visit House Wren nests and territories in male-female pairs than for other potential hosts. Combining various lines of evidence (grouping patterns, mating and nest-searching behaviour, and pair formation among colour-banded birds) offers some support for a hypothesis that cowbirds are promiscuous where host (and cowbird) densities are highly clumped (e.g., blackbird colonies), and monogamous where hosts are fairly common but uniformly dispersed (e.g., House Wren territories). Shiny Cowbird mating behaviour seems to show considerable flexibility, both within and between populations. More extensive studies with a greater range of hosts over a broad range of habitats throughout the cowbird's range are warranted to elucidate the effects of host type and availability, as well as other ecological factors, on its mating behaviour.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003-14) for 28 April 2003. Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfn>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

BIRDING NEWS :- In Aruba, a productive birding trip in late March produced an exceptional number of significant records. At the Tierra del Sol Golf Course, noteworthy birds include: a breeding plumaged LITTLE EGRET (1st for Aruba) from 25-30 March; two male NORTHERN SHOVELERS on 23 March; a male NORTHERN PINTAIL (3rd for Aruba) from 23-30 March; up to five GREEN-WINGED TEAL (1st for Aruba) from 25-30 March; two SOUTHERN LAPWINGS (1st for Aruba) on 30 March; and a male RED-BREASTED BLACKBIRD (1st for Aruba) on 28 March. At Bubali, a SWALLOW-TAILED KITE (1st for Aruba) was seen hunting over the trees on 25-30 March. A TENNESSEE WARBLER (1st for Aruba) was noted at Spanish Lagoon on 25 March. At least nine NORTHERN PARULAS (2nd plus for Aruba) were noted at four localities, including three at Bubali during 23-25 March, four at Spanish Lagoon during 23-30 March, and two at Pos Chiquito on 23 March. Other noteworthy warbler migrants include a CAPE MAY WARBLER (3rd for Aruba) at Bubali on 24 March, an OVENBIRD (4th for Aruba) at Bubali on 23 March, and a female HOODED WARBLER (3rd for Aruba) at Spanish Lagoon on 23 March and a male (4th for Aruba) at Bubali from 24-30 March.

In Dominica, a YELLOW-THROATED VIREO was seen on the northern peninsula on 22 April.

ORNITHOLOGICAL TIDBIT: The following abstract is from: Quesnel, V. C. 2002. Breeding biology of the Black-throated Mango (*Anthracothorax nigricollis*). Department of Life Sciences, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Occasional Paper 11:166-179. During a 9 yr period (1985-1993), the Black-throated Mango (*Anthracothorax nigricollis*) built 28 nests in three open-sided greenhouses (GHs) at Talparo, Trinidad. One GH was particularly attractive, acquiring 23 nests; this was attributed to its provision of 140 sites with excellent support for the nests and a close cover overhead. Building material was partly identified and building methods are described. Nine nests were used more than once: four twice, four three times and one four times. Eighty-one eggs were laid, usually early in the morning. Five single eggs were lost before the second was laid. Nestlings hatched mostly in the morning after an incubation period of 16-18 days ($x = 17.2$ for first egg; $x = 16.5$ for second egg), but a few hatched in the afternoon. Fledging took 21-26 days ($x = 22.6$ for first nestling; $x = 22.7$ for second nestling). The female brooded the nestlings for 8-12 days. Fledging (first flight) of the nestlings was usually early in the morning. Reproductive success (percent of eggs producing fully fledged young) was 56.5%. Some causes of egg or nestling loss were identified.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003- 15) for 5th May 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

BIRDING NEWS :- From Barbados, a four hour pelagic on 18th April produced 2 BLACK CAPPED PETRELS (1st for Barbados) - 7 miles and 6 miles offshore respectively. Also seen were an adult POMARINE SKUA and 2 SOOTY/BRIDLED TERNS - 7 miles off and a further SOOTY/BRIDLED TERN - 5 miles off. Frustratingly, an all dark PETREL sp (probably a pterodoma) was seen distantly - 9 miles offshore. A further pelagic on 28th April yielded a STORM PETREL sp- 5 miles out; a probable LONG TAILED JAEGER - 6 miles out and up to 8 SOOTY/BRIDLED TERNS. On 21st April a 5 hour sea-watch on the south coast produced 1 WILLET and nothing else. On 26th April at Congo Road swamp there were 7 STILT SANDPIPERS, 1 WILSON'S SNIPE and an assortment of "calidris" waders. At Marshall's Swamp all 3 pairs of CARIBBEAN COOTS present are incubating/ sitting on nests. One REEVE was also located. Also 60+ MOORHEN, 1 BLUE WINGED TEAL and 1 PIED BILLED GREBE. On 1st May, one BLACK SWIFT had returned to the regular site in St. Joseph. Also an OSPREY fishing along the East Coast is a late stayer.

From the west coast of Trinidad, on 3rd May t Brickfields a RUFIOUS CRAB-HAWK was found. A survey of the shorebirds present both on 3rd and 5th May produced 499 BLACK SKIMMERS 250 LAUGHING GULLS 6 YELLOW BILLED TERNS, 6 LARGE BILLED TERNS, 4 CAYENNE TERNS, 26 ROYAL TERNS, 27 GREAT WHITE EGRETS, 51 RED KNOT - many in summer plumage and considerable numbers of both WESTERN and SEMI PALMATED SANDPIPERS.

In southwest Trinidad, 4 GREATER ANI in a garden near Penal on 19th Apr was particularly unusual as the nearest mangrove is some 2 miles away.

In eastern Trinidad, a RUFESCENT TIGER-HERON was watched at length west of Kernaham on 22nd Apr. On 27th Apr, a SWALLOW TAILED KITE flew across the coastal road north of Mayaro. On 3rd May, an early morning surveying the western perimeter of Nariva swamp produced a STRIPE BACKED BITTERN (1st record for Nariva), a PINNATED BITTERN, a COCOI HERON, 3 PLAIN BREASTED GROUND-DOVES, a BARN OWL and an adult male RUDDY BREASTED SEEDEATER.

In north east Trinidad, a 4 hr seawatch from Galera Pt on 1st May produced a white morph RED FOOTED BOOBY, 1 BROWN BOOBY, 25 WHIMBREL, and 17 ROSEATE TERNS.

In the northern range of Trinidad, a probable LINED QUAIL-DOVE was found close to the summit of El Tucuche on 12 Apr.

In Tobago, both SOOTY and BRIDLED TERNS reappeared for the summer on Smith Is on 25th Apr. The following day a BLACKPOLL WARBLER was reported from the grounds of the Coco Reef hotel and a SCARLET TANAGER was found in the central range.

From St Maarten recent sightings include a PURPLE GALLINULE at Fresh Pond on 22nd March and an adult male SCARLET TANAGER on Sentry Hill, 20th Apr. On 28 Apr a LITTLE Egret (1st for St Maarten) and 4400 LAUGHING GULLS were counted in the Saltpond..

During a count in Fresh Pond on 30 Apr GREAT WHITE EGRETS were seen on nests (2nd breeding record for St Maarten - first recorded in 2000 on Madame Estate). Two nests were finished with birds in situ, and two nests were being built.

In Grenada during the last week A BLACKPOLL WARBLER was found on Mt Harman; RUDDY DUCKS and BLACK CROWNED NIGHT-HERON were seen at Lake Antoine; an AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER in the Mourne Rouge Bay area and a SWALLOW TAILED KITE from the north of the island were also reported. Finally there have been a number of SANDWICH TERNS seen from the west coast.

In St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands, a male SCARLET TANAGER fatally crashed into a window in late April. Following heavy rains in late April, LEAST GREBE numbers appear to be declining in St. Thomas; only three were found on 1 May, including a nest-building pair at Bordeaux and a lone individual at Red Hook. WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL numbers also declined at the two major resorts (Sugar Bay and Sapphire Bay), where only 33 were tallied on 2 May, and have spread out in small numbers to the many freshwater ponds and salt ponds. WHITE-WINGED DOVE numbers have reportedly declined at the feeder in Red Hook, where only two were seen on 1 May; single birds were also noted the same day at Bovoni Bay and Turpentine Run. A TRICOLORED HERON at Turpentine Run on 1 May was unexpected. A leucistic BANANAQUIT showed up at a feeder in Red Hook on 7 April.

In St. John, US Virgin Islands, a male SCARLET TANAGER was seen at Chocolate Hole on 23 April. On 1 May, a pair of LITTLE BLUE HERONS and a pair of YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS were found nesting at Reef Bay.

ORNITHOLOGICAL TIDBIT: The following abstract is from: Temple, S. A. 2002. Extinction-prone birds of Trinidad and Tobago: making predictions from theory. Department of Life Sciences, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Occasional Paper 11:180-193. Theory suggests that vulnerability to extinction can be predicted, in a general way, on the basis of certain risk factors associated with a bird's life history and ecology. Using information about these risk factors, taken mostly from Richard ffrench's A Guide to the Birds of Trinidad and Tobago, I used a multiple logistic regression model to predict the relative vulnerability of the landbirds of Trinidad and Tobago to extinction. The results were compared with other lists of threatened bird species for Trinidad and Tobago. The birds predicted to have the highest risks of extinction seem likely to become threatened species, and they should be the targets of additional study and, possibly, conservation planning.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003- 16) for 14th May 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

BIRDING NEWS :- From Guadeloupe, news of a male MAGNOLIA WARBLER at Petite-Terre on 9th May. The PIPINGPLOVER first discovered on 30th Nov 2002 was still present on 11th May.

In the northern range of Trinidad, at Asa Wright Nature Centre, an immature/female RUFIOUS SHAFTED WOODSTAR was briefly, but well seen on 3rd May. A hike to Heights of Aripo caves on 8th May produced 2 daytime roosting SPECTACLED OWLS, SQUIRREL CUCKOO, WHITE NECKED JACOBIN, TUFTED COQUETTE, 3 WHITE BELLIED ANTBIRDS, 2 BLACK FACED ANT THRUSH, BEARDED BELLBIRD, STREAKED XENOPS and. YELLOW LEGGED THRUSH.

On the west coast of Trinidad, at Waterloo, the roost of BLACK SKIMMERS increased to an impressive 860 on 9th May, and CATTLE EGRETS to 821. Following on with the theme of GREATER ANI away from mangrove, comes a record of 2 from a Carapachaima garden on 4th May.

Negative news from Barbados, no sign of any BLACK SWIFTS at St Joseph over the last weekend.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003- 17) for 23rd May 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

BIRDING NEWS :- From Dominica, a BULWER'S PETREL (likely to be 1st record for Lesser Antillean waters) was the highlight of an otherwise quiet pelagic on 21st Apr. Up to 6 IMPERIAL PARROTS were found near Mt Diablotin amongst numerous RED NECKED PARROTS on 22nd-23rd Apr. A couple of EURASIAN COLLARED DOVES were found near Cane Field airport on Apr 23rd.

In St Lucia a RUFIOUS NIGHTJAR was found at Grande Anse on Apr 18th. On the same date up to 10 SHORT TAILED SWIFTS, (1st documented record for the island were seen in the Les Cartiers area.

On Monserrat, 2 EURASIAN COLLARED DOVES were found near Little Bay on 26th Apr (not previously documented for the island ?) MONSERRAT ORIOLES appear relatively common in hill forest in the northern "safe zone" of the island.

From Grenada, an adult HOOK BILLED KITE was seen on 14th Apr with an adult and a juvenile seen the following day.

In St Vincent, a RED EYED VIREO found in the Botanical Gardens on 15th Apr is strongly suspected of being from the nominate migratory race.

On Barbuda, a late MERLIN flew over on Apr 27th.

In Tobago, on 11th May a late BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER was found on Gilpin Trace; the following day a COMMON POTOO was seen at the same site.

In Barbados, 2 BLACK SWIFTS were seen around St Joseph on 18th May and an OSPREY was seen at Long Pond. At Barbados Flour Mills, 2 adult EARED DOVES and a recently fledged juvenile indicate the continued westward expansion of their range on the island.

In St. John, US Virgin Islands, a LEAST GREBE turned up at the recently filled freshwater pond at Concordia on 14 May. A SANDWICH TERN with a mostly yellow upper bill at Maho Bay on 13 May was either a "CAYENNE" TERN (potential 1st for St. John) or a hybrid "SANDWICH" X "CAYENNE" TERN. The extent of hybridisation and taxonomic relationships between these two taxa, currently considered conspecific by the American Ornithologists' Union, are poorly understood. Also at Maho Bay, a few COMMON TERNS were noted among the ROSEATE TERNS on 13 May. The LITTLE BLUE HERON and YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON nests (one of each) at Reef Bay were still attended on 14 May. On 7 May, 15 WILSON'S PLOVERS were found at four sites; a nest with three eggs was found at Leinster Bay. At Coral Bay, a colour-banded RUDDY TURNSTONE (green flag above ankle, red band below on left leg; aluminum band above ankle, blue band below on right leg), two WHITE-WINGED DOVES and a PALM WARBLER were tallied on 7 May. Two WHITE-WINGED DOVES were seen at Chocolate Hole in southwestern St. John on 14 May, and in eastern St. John single birds were noted at Hurricane Hole and Hansen Bay on 7 May. A lone WHITE-CROWNED PIGEON perched in mangroves at Lagoon Point on 14 May. Active hummingbird nests inspected on 13 May include a GREEN-THROATED CARIB with two nestlings at Francis Bay, another with two eggs at Leinster Bay, and an incubating ANTILLEAN CRESTED HUMMINGBIRD at Peace Hill.

In St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands, a skittish subadult PURPLE GALLINULE (2nd for St. Thomas) turned up at Turpentine Run on 18 May, but was not relocated after two kids dropped large stones off a bridge while it cowered in vegetation nearby. WHITE-WINGED DOVES appear to have staged a recent invasion, with an unprecedented high count of 24 tallied on 18 May, including: two at Brewer Bay and two at the University of the Virgin Islands; five at Frenchman's Bay; one at Turpentine Run; two at Sugar Bay; ten at Compass Point; one at Red Hook; and one at Cabrita Point. A few had been noted earlier in recent weeks, including one at Compass Point and three at Sugar Bay on 6 May, three at Sugar Bay on 11 May, and one at Turpentine Run on 15 and 16 May. Breeding probably occurs but has yet to be documented. LEAST GREBES have moved into recently filled freshwater ponds at lower Dorothea, where one was seen on 11 May and a pair attending a nest with a single egg on 18 May, and at Bolongo, where one was seen on 11 and 19 May. Three adults and a nest (uncertain if any eggs present) were at Bordeaux and a pair at Red Hook on 18 May. A KILLDEE

This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003- 18) for 1st June 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/tfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below) .

BIRDING NEWS :- In Guadeloupe, an adult male BLACK THROATED BLUE WARBLER was found on the Nature reserve at Petite-Terre on 23rd May . On 1st June, at Gaschet Reservoir, there were 5 RUDDY DUCKS, 1 LESSER SCAUP (with a broken wing), 2 AMERICAN COOTS and a CARIBBEAN COOT.

On Dutch St Maarten LITTLE EGRETS was seen on Fresh Pond and Little Bay Pond on 24th May. Also at Fresh Pond an adult BLACK CROWNED NIGHT-HERON and 8 GREAT WHITE EGRET nests. On 25th May, at Saltpond a 1st year GREAT BLACK BACKED GULL (2nd record for St Maarten) was seen amongst a flock of 2400 LAUGHING GULLS.

On French St Martin, a male SCARLET TANAGER was found in the hills of Pic Paradis.

On the west coast of Trinidad, shorebird counts at the high tide roost at Brickfield included a GREAT BLUE HERON, 130 SHORT BILLED DOWITCHERS, 9 GREATER YELLOWLEGS, 8 COLLARED PLOVERS, a 2nd winter LESSER BLACK BACKED GULL, 120 LARGE BILLED TERNS, 14 ROYAL TERNS and 710 BLACK SKIMMERS. Additionally a mixed flock of several hundred SEMI PALMATED and WESTERN SANDPIPERS were seen.

In the northern range of Trinidad, a hike along Las Lapas trace and adjacent woodland on 29th May produced 51 species including 3 WHITE TAILED and 3 COLLARED TROGONS, 3 BLUE CROWNED MOTMOTS, 4 RED RUMPED and a CHESTNUT WOODPECKER, WHITE THROATED SPADEBILL and 4 SWALLOW TANAGERS.

RARE BIRD REPORTING :- Do we believe what you see ? We want to ! Many of the identifications reported in the SCBA are tentative. For birds found in Trinidad & Tobago, the T&T Rare Birds Committee, formed in 1995, requests details for all rare birds observed (see Species Review List at our website) Please submit details to the TTRBC Secretary : Martyn Kenefick, 36 Newalloville Ave, San Juan, Trinidad - Email "martynkenefick@hotmail.com"

This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003- 19) for 11th June 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below) .

BIRDING NEWS :-.

From Guadeloupe, an unprecedented seawatch over the weekend of 7th and 8th June produced an incredible passage north passed the Nature Reserve of Petite-Terre. On the 7 June, a 4 hours watch tallied : 68 CORY'S SHEARWATERS, 33 GREATER SHEARWATERS, 28 "unidentified large shearwaters", 16 AUDUBON'S SHEARWATERS, 6 "unidentified small shearwaters", 3 WILSON'S STORM PETRELS and 1 "unidentified Storm Petrel" The following day, in 2.75 hrs, 111 CORY'S SHEARWATERS, 97 GREATER SHEARWATERS, 26 "unidentified large shearwaters", 19 AUDUBON'S SHEARWATERS, 2 "unidentified small shearwaters", 8 WILSON'S STORM PETRELS and 1 "unidentified Storm Petrel" passed through. (By comparison, only 96 Cory's Shearwaters were seen during the whole season passage in 2002).

From the north east corner of Trinidad, at Galera Pt, a 4 hr seawatch on 10th June failed to find any shearwaters passing through. However, inshore feeding flocks included 5 SOOTY TERNS, 3 BRIDLED TERNS, 12 BROWN NODDIES, 4 ROSEATE TERNS and 125 COMMON TERNS.

In the northern range of Trinidad, belated news from the Field Naturalist Club outing to the Saut d'Eau lookout trails east of Paramin on 18th May included a grey phased HOOK BILLED KITE, up to 15 SWALLOW TANAGERS, COLLARED TROGON, RED LEGGED HONEYCREEPER and several CHANNEL BILLED TOUCANS. Just 3 SWALLOW TANAGERS were found there at midday on 8th June ,also a BLACK TAILED TITYRA and SOOTY GRASSQUIT On the Blanchisseuse Rd, approx one mile north of Paria junction a VARIEGATED FLYCATCHER * was carefully studied on 8th June. Another VARIEGATED FLYCATCHER has been reported from a private estate on Heights of Aripo also on 8th June.

In the Caroni plain of Trinidad, counts at Valsayn and Caroni ricefields on 8th June produced 8 FULVOUS WHISTLING DUCKS, 1 LONG WINGED HARRIER, 25 LIMPKIN, 1 SOLITARY SANDPIPER (latest spring record for T&T ?) and a pair of PLAIN BREASTED GROUND-DOVES.

On the west coast of Trinidad, at Brickfield, a census of the high tide seabird roost on 7th June produced 256 YELLOW BILLED TERNS, 75 LARGE BILLED TERNS, 4 COMMON TERNS, 2 ROYAL TERNS, 73 LAUGHING GULLS and 258 BLACK SKIMMERS. Also present were 47 COLLARED PLOVERS amongst the usual over summering shorebirds.

RARE BIRD REPORTING :- Do we believe what you see ? We want to ! Many of the identifications reported in the SCBA are tentative. For birds found in Trinidad & Tobago, the T&T Rare Birds Committee, formed in 1995, requests details for all rare birds observed (see Species Review List at our website) Please submit details to the TTRBC Secretary : Martyn Kenefick, 36 Newalloville Ave, San Juan, Trinidad - Email "martynkenefick@hotmail.com"

This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003- 20) for 19th. June 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below) .

BIRDING NEWS :- Seabird passage passed Guadeloupe continues to be the highlight of the week. A 2.5 hr seawatch from the nature Reserve of Petite Terre on 11th June produced 261 GREATER SHEARWATERS, 59 CORY'S SHEARWATERS, 2 SOOTY SHEARWATERS together with 77 "large" and 3 "small" unidentified shearwaters; 6 WILSON'S STORM PETRELS and a further 2 "unidentified storm petrels " and 1 "jaegar sp". However the undoubted main prize was a carefully studied BULWER'S PETREL (the 2nd for the season in Antillean waters - see SCBA 2003-17). This concentrated movement of seabirds is as a result of recent very strong easterly winds in the area.

In St. John, US Virgin Islands, an adult STRIATED HERON (1st for VI, 2nd for West Indies) was found in a small freshwater pond at Concordia on 25 May, where it was relocated on 28 and 29 May but not thereafter, providing the northernmost record ever (only previous West Indies record was from St. Vincent). A small, unidentified swift, most likely a CHIMNEY SWIFT (2nd small swift for St. John), was briefly glimpsed over Coral Bay on 25 May. Three adult BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS (perhaps 2nd for St. John) turned up at Caneel Bay on 10 June. The LEAST GREBE continues to be seen at Concordia as recently as 10 June. A variety of waterbirds have been documented nesting within the past month, including WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL at Francis Bay, LITTLE BLUE HERON at Reef Bay, YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON at Reef Bay and Flanagan Island, COMMON MOORHEN at Maho Bay, BLACK-NECKED STILT at Grootpan Bay and Brown Bay, and WILSON'S PLOVER at Grootpan Bay.

In St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands, two nests with incubating WHITE-WINGED DOVES at Compass Point on 1 June provided the 1st documented breeding record for the island. Three BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS (perhaps 3rd for St. Thomas) at Sugar Bay on 6 June were joined by a fourth on 16 June. A survey of mangroves surrounding Bovoni Cay on 21 May yielded 13 nests of GREEN HERON with at least 14 chicks and two eggs, and 31 nests of pigeons and doves, of which at least half were WHITE-CROWNED PIGEON, at least five were SCALY-NAPED PIGEON, and at least three were ZENAIDA DOVE; a WHITE-WINGED DOVE seen flying over may also have been nesting. A single WHITE-CROWNED PIGEON was seen on adjacent Patricia Cay on 21 May, but no nests were located. Other waterbird species noted breeding within the past month include: LEAST GREBE at four sites (Fortuna Bay, Bordeaux, Dorothea Bay, and Red Hook), WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL at three sites (Turpentine Run, Sugar Bay and Sapphire Beach), a recently fledged CLAPPER RAIL at Compass Point on 3 June, and active COMMON MOORHEN nests at four sites (Dorothea Bay, Turpentine Run, Sugar Bay, and Red Hook). Yet another partially leucistic ZENAIDA DOVE was found at Compass Point on 1 June. Late Nearctic landbird migrants include a BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER at Neltjeberg and a female AMERICAN REDSTART at Magens Bay on 31 May.

On Dog Island, off St. Thomas, a colony of about 410 pairs of SANDWICH TERN was studied on 28 May and 1 June. A scan survey of 200 individuals revealed that 94% appeared to be typical "Sandwich Terns", although a few with slight amounts of excessive yellow on the bill may have been overlooked. At least four individuals with >75% yellow coloration in their bills (one with 100%) could be considered "Cayenne Terns". The remaining individuals with intermediate bill coloration or excessive amounts of yellow at the base, upper ridge or tip of bill could have been hybrid Sandwich X Cayenne or pure Cayenne Terns (see photos posted at <http://www.geocities.com/secaribbirds/idsandwichcayennetern>).

From Tobago, a BALTIMORE ORIOLE * (first record for many years) has been reported from a garden in Charlotteville on 13th June In the northern range of Trinidad, a hike down Las Lapas trace on 18th June produced 2 GREY THROATED LEAFTOSSERS, a BLACK FACED ANT THRUSH, 4 SWALLOW TANAGERS and a SOOTY GRASSQUIT In southwest Trinidad, a CRESTED CARACARA * was spotted in headlights feeding on a roadkill beside the M2 ringroad, south of San Fernando, late on 11th June.

On the west coast of Trinidad, at the high tide roost at Brickfields on 12th June, there remains at least 300 SEMI PALMATED SANDPIPERS all in non breeding dress. Amongst them were only 3 WESTERN SANDPIPERS. Also present were a GREAT BLUE HERON, 12 COMMON TERNS and 2 CAYENNE TERNS. Nearby, at the floating temple, 2 adult male SAFFRON FINCHES were feeding in the car park.

BIRD MEETING :- a reminder that the Society for the Study and Conservation of Caribbean Birds meets in Tobago from 21st-25th July. (See SCBA 2003-17 for details) The Conference will combine lectures and field trips. Participating countries include Cuba Canada, Dominican Republic, UK, USA, Haiti, and Guadeloupe. Registration fee is TT\$100.00. Special accommodation rates have been arranged at Hilton Hotel, Mt Irvine, Kariwak, Rovanel's, Violas Place and Golf View Apartments. Booking came be made at The Dept of Natural Resources and the Environment, PO Box 5566 Scarborough, Tobago - registration deadline 30th June. Cheque or Draft should be made payable to The Administrator, Division of Agriculture, Marine Affairs and the Environment. Contact Martyn Kenefick (Email or phone) for a summary of accommodation details & rates and daily conference agenda.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003- 21) for 27th June 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below) .

BIRDING NEWS :-From Barbados, undoubted highlight of recent days is news of an ALPINE SWIFT at St. Bernard's village, St. Joseph 21st-22nd June(2nd for Barbados,- the previous record of the African race "tuneti" was in 1955 following hurricane Janet. Probably only the 5th West Indian record - previously been recorded from Desecheo Island off Puerto Rico, Guadeloupe and St. Lucia).Photos will shortly appear on our Photo Gallery. Also on 22nd, 10 BLACK SWIFTS were present (highest count for the year). A 2 hr seawatch at Inch Marlowe on June 21st produced a small passage of 7 breeding plumaged ROSEATE TERNS.

From Grenada, an "island round-up" on 11th June produced a HOOK BILLED KITE close to St Georges; 2 BLACK VULTURES at Perserverence (rare in Grenada); 4 GRENADA DOVES at Perserverence and another at Mt Hartman; GRENADA FLYCATCHER at Mt Harman together with 6 LESSER ANTILLIAN TANAGERS and 5 YELLOW BELLIED SEEDEATERS close to Grand Etang.

On St Vincent 43 St VINCENT PARROTS were seen from the Vermont trails on 12th June together with 1 RUDDY QUAIL-DOVE, 3 CARIBBEAN ELAENIA, 2 GRENADA FLYCATCHERS, 1 BROWN TREMBLER, 2 WHISTLING WARBLERS, and 2 LESSER ANTILLIAN TANAGERS.

Highlights of 2 days birding St Lucia on 13th-14th June included 2 BRIDLED QUAIL-DOVES and 1 RUDDY QUAIL-DOVE at Praslin; 23 St LUCIA PARROTS at Quillesse, a RUFIOUS NIGHTJAR seen (and another 6-7 heard), 2 St LUCIA PEWEES and 3 LESSER ANTILLIAN FLYCATCHERS at Praslin; 8 GREY TREMBLERS at Quillesse together with 15 WHITE BREASTED THRASHERS, 6 PEARLY EYED THRASHERS, 10 SCALY BREASTED THRASHERS, 7 ADELAIDE'S WARBLERS and 6 St LUCIA ORIOLES all at Praslin.

In Dominica, between 14th-16th June, a PEREGRINE flew over Layou river (locally very rare), 34 RED NECKED PARROTS, 3 IMPERIAL PARROTS were seen mainly in flight in the Syndicate trail region together with a BLUE HEADED HUMMINGBIRD, 2 CARIBBEAN ELAENIAS, 1 LESSER ANTILLIAN PEWEE, and 5 LESSER ANTILLIAN FLYCATCHERS, 6 BROWN TREMBLERS, 3 PEARLY EYED THRASHERS, 6 SCALY BREASTED THRASHERS, 5 RED LEGGED THRUSHES, 2 FOREST THRUSHES 2 RUFIOUS THROATED SOLITAIRES, 3 FOREST THRUSHES, 5 PLUMBEOUS WARBLERS, 4 LESSER ANTILLIAN EUPHONIAS and 2 LESSER ANTILLIAN SALTATORS. At the Emerald Pool, 2 RUFIOUS THROATED SOLITAIRES and 3 FOREST THRUSHES were found.

In Tobago, a WHITE TAILED SABREWING on Merchison Rd, immediately south west of Speyside on 25th June, is the first known sighting from this area. Also 2 GREAT KISKADEES are now regularly being seen in the Louis D'or area together with a LEAST GREBE.

In the Caroni plain of Trinidad, 10 FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCKS were swimming on Valsayn ricefields and 3 PINNATED BITTERNs were in a flooded section of Caroni ricefields on 24th June...

BIRD MEETING :- another reminder that the Society for the Study and Conservation of Caribbean Birds meets in Tobago from 21st-25th July. (See SCBA 2003-17 for details) The Conference will combine lectures and field trips. Participating countries include Cuba Canada, Dominican Republic, UK, USA, Haiti, and Guadeloupe. Registration fee is TT\$100.00. Special accommodation rates have been arranged at Hilton Hotel, Mt Irvine, Kariwak, Rovanel's, Violas Place and Golf View Apartments. Booking can be made at The Dept of Natural Resources and the Environment, PO Box 5566 Scarborough, Tobago - registration deadline 30th June. Cheque or Draft should be made payable to The Administrator, Division of Agriculture, Marine Affairs and the Environment. Contact Martyn Kenefick (Email or phone) for a summary of accommodation details & rates and daily conference agenda.

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BIRDING NEWS :- a quiet week, this week with not much activity in the field.

In the northern range of Trinidad, a hike along Las Lapas ridge and trace on 29th June produced ORNATE HAWK-EAGLE, LONG BILLED STARHROAT, 2 WHITE TAILED TROGONS, 2 COLLARED TROGONS, 3 CHANNEL BILLED TOUCANS, 2 BLUE CROWNED MOTMOTS, BLACK FACED ANT-THRUSH, WHITE THROATED SPADEBILL, EULER'S FLYCATCHER, 2 DUSKY CAPPED FLYCATCHERS and a SOOTY GRASSQUIT.

From Dominica, on 21st June, 5 GREATER SHEARWATERS, (historically very rare in coastal waters), 10 RED FOOTED BOOBIES, 15 BROWN BOOBIES, 1 SOOTY TERN, and 3 probable POMARINE JAEGARS were found attracted to the fish displaced by schools of dolphins.

This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003-23) for 13th July 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

BIRDING NEWS :- In Barbados a WHITE COLLARED SWIFT (1st For Barbados) was found along saddleback, St Joseph on 6th July. The ALPINE SWIFT, first found on 21st June was still present associating with BLACK SWIFTS at St Bernards Village. At Long Pond, St Andrew, a TRICOLOURED HERON, a 1st summer COMMON TERN. Together with 3 adult and one 1st summer ROSEATE TERNS were found on 29th June. At Graeme Hall, a BLACK CROWNED NIGHT-HERON was seen on June 29th On July 6th. The first returning SPOTTED SANDPIPER was seen at Inch Marlowe together with 2 ROSEATE TERNS.

In the Caroni plain of Trinidad, despite the heavy rains there is still little shorebird activity on Caroni ricefields. During a visit on 13th July, 2 juvenile COCOI HERONS (extremely late date for Trinidad) were found together with a PINNATED BITTERN, the first 2 WHITE FACED WHISTLING DUCKS of the season , 5 FULVOUS WHISTLING DUCKS, a light morph LONG WINGED HARRIER, a SAVANNAH HAWK and 8 LIMPKINS.

Further north west, a juvenile GREATER FLAMINGO * was reported flying over the western edge of Port of Spain on 6th July.

On the west coast, the adult RUFIOUS CRAB HAWK seen intermittently in the Waterloo/ Brickfield area was again briefly seen in flight on 12th July.

In Tobago on 8th July, a WHITE COLLARED SWIFT * (2nd record for Tobago) was carefully studied amongst a flock of SHORT TAILED SWIFTS from the hilltop at Grafton Sanctuary; an adult LITTLE EGRET was seen feeding in flooded fields close to Bon Accord lagoon and a WHITE WINGED SWALLOW remains in the recreational area at Plymouth. A pair of WHITE WINGED BECARDS are nesting and can frequently be seen in the Merchiston Rd area south of Speyside village.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003-24) for 25TH July 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below) .

BIRDING NEWS :-

From Grenada, a whale watching tour on 14th July produced a dark morph "CATHARACTA SKUA sp approx 10-15 miles out from the north west coast. Also found in the area were up to 40 each of RED FOOTED and BROWN BOOBIES and one subadult MASKED BOOBY

On the west coast of Trinidad, a census of the evening hide tide roost at Brickfields on 17th July produced 200 LARGE BILLED TERNS, 120 YELLOW BILLED TERNS, 5 SANDWICH/CAYENNE TERNS, 3 COMMON TERNS and 155 BLACK SKIMMERS. In addition the lingering adult RUFIOUS CRAB-HAWK * flew south at 4.30pm heading for the Carli Bay area, and 2 WHITE CHEEKED PINTAIL flew along the coast.

In the northern range of Trinidad, a flock of approximately 100 WHITE COLLARED SWIFTS flew east past Morne Bleu on 15th July. Also seen in the area were a SWALLOW TAILED KITE, 4 COLLARED TROGONS, 4 CHANNEL BILLED TOUCANS, DUSKY CAPPED and STREAKED FLYCATCHERS . On 23rd July, an OLIVE STRIPED FLYCATCHER was reported from the Oilbird trail at Asa Wright. On 24th July, a juvenile SPECTACLED OWL was seen perched beside the Blanchisseuse Rd at the 3.5 mile mark

In central Trinidad, the TTFNC field trip to Wallerfield and Arena forest on 20th July attracted 10 members, and a total of 45 species were found including RED BELLIED MACAW, SULPHURY FLYCATCHER and BLACK TAILED TITYRA

In Tobago, a REDDISH EGRET * (4th for T&T and 1st for Tobago) was seen briefly at Lowlands on 21st July. On 22nd July, the flooded fields at Bon Accord attracted 15 LESSER YELLOWLEGS, 2 GREATER YELLOWLEGS, 20 SPOTTED SANDPIPERS, 12 LEAST SANDPIPERS, 2 SOLITARY SANDPIPERS and a WESTERN SANDPIPER. The undoubted highlight of the SCSCB conference field trips on 23rd July was a daylight roosting STRIPED OWL seen by most, if not all of the delegates in the central range, together with at least 3 GREAT BLACK HAWKS and good numbers of WHITE TAILED SABREWINGS

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003-25) for 7th Aug 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

BIRDING NEWS :-In the Caroni plain of Trinidad, the first STILT SANDPIPERS of the autumn returned to Caroni ricefields, with 10 birds on 1st Aug. Also in the area was a WHITE FACED WHISTLING-DUCK, 8 FULVOUS WHISTLING DUCKS, 4 PINNATED BITTERNs, 7 SOLITARY SANDPIPERS and a PECTORAL SANDPIPER. In the dry south-eastern quadrant of the area, 2 PLAIN BREASTED GROUND-DOVES and a COMMON GROUND-DOVE were found.

On the west coast of Trinidad at Brickfields, the high tide seabird/shorebird roost on 31st July produced a GREAT BLUE HERON, 3 PECTORAL SANDPIPERS and the first GULL BILLED TERN of the autumn, 9 SANDWICH/CAYENNE TERNS, 28 COMMON TERNS, 110 YELLOW BILLED TERNS and 200 LARGE BILLED TERNS. At Waterloo, a BARN SWALLOW on 4th Aug is the first reported sighting for the autumn.

In south west Trinidad, an adult male GREEN THROATED MANGO and a juvenile LESSER NIGHTHAWK were both perched on overhead wires at Godineau, South Oropouche on 5th Aug.

In the northern range of Trinidad, a VARIEGATED FLYCATCHER * was found below Morne Bleu on 4th Aug.

In Tobago, a hike into the Bloody Bay end of Gilpin trace on 27th July produced at least 6 WHITE TAILED SABREWINGS, together with 2 GREAT BLACK HAWKS, 3 COLLARED TROGONS, a GREEN KINGFISHER, and an OLIVACEOUS WOODCREEPER. Most seabirds on Little Tobago have completed their breeding and have gone out to sea the end of July. However there were still 20 RED BILLED TROPICBIRDS, 25 RED FOOTED BOOBIES (just 2 white phased birds), 20 SOOTY TERNS and 2 BRIDLED TERNS.

Unfortunately there have been no reports from other islands during the last two weeks.

RARE BIRD REPORTING :- Do we believe what you see ? We want to ! Many of the identifications reported in the SCBA are tentative. For birds found in Trinidad & Tobago, the T&T Rare Birds Committee, formed in 1995, requests details for all rare birds observed (see Species Review List at our website) Please submit details to the TTRBC Secretary : Martyn Kenefick, 36 Newalloville Ave, San Juan, Trinidad - Email "martynkenefick@hotmail.com"

This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003-26) for 15th Aug 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

BIRDING NEWS : On the west coast of Trinidad during the weekend of 9-10th Aug, an unprecedented flock of 137 GREATER FLAMINGOES * (including 19 full salmon pink adults) were feeding on the mudflats north of Carli Bay - the largest previous flock recorded in T&T was just 6 ! Also present, a 3rd winter LESSER BLACK BACKED GULL and a GREEN KINGFISHER. At least 93 GREATER FLAMINGOES were still present on 12th Aug together with 15 LESSER NIGHTHAWKS hawking over the mangrove during a heavy rain squall.

In the Caroni plain of Trinidad on 12th Aug , 2 adult PIED BILLED GREBES were on Piarco ponds, and 31 STILT SANDPIPERS at Trincity Ponds. In one flooded field on Caroni ricefields, there were at least 125 LESSER YELLOWLEGS, 2 SHORT BILLED DOWITCHERS, 10 STILT SANDPIPERS and 3 SOLITARY SANDPIPERS. During the late evening, at least 5 NACUNDA NIGHTHAWKS were hawking insects over Piarco airport car park.

From the northern range of Trinidad, a RINGED KINGFISHER was seen along the Aripo river on 10th Aug.

From the north east corner of Trinidad, a 3.5 hr seawatch at Galera Pt on 15th Aug produced 143 BROWN NODDIES, 39 COMMON TERNS, 3 ROSEATE TERNS, 2 LEAST TERNS and single SOOTY, ROYAL AND SANDWICH TERNS. Shorebird passage included 19 LESSER YELLOWLEGS, 6 WHIMBREL, 4 WILLET, 2 SPOTTED SANDPIPER and 45 unidentified "CALIDRIS WADER sp".

From Tobago, the REDDISH EGRET * first seen at Lowlands on 21st July, has again been reported, this time from the wetland close to the Parlatuvier river on 3rd Aug.

From Tortola, British Virgin Is a WHITE WINGED DOVE was seen east of Road Town on 3rd Aug.

From St Croix, USVI, an adult LESSER BLACK BACKED GULL was found in the harbour at Christiensted on 4th Aug.

In Guadeloupe, the first returning BARN SWALLOWS of the autumn were seen on 14th Aug.

RARE BIRD REPORTING :- Do we believe what you see ? We want to ! Many of the identifications reported in the SCBA are tentative. For birds found in Trinidad & Tobago, the T&T Rare Birds Committee, formed in 1995, requests details for all rare birds observed (see Species Review List at our website) Please submit details to the TTRBC Secretary : Martyn Kenefick, 36 Newallovie Ave, San Juan, Trinidad - Email "martynkenefick@hotmail.com"

This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003-27) for 27th Aug 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

BIRDING NEWS : In MONTSERRAT the Soufriere Hills Volcano dome collapsed on 12th July resulting in between 1-15cm of ash falling over the northern half of the island. The immediate effect of the ash was that all active MONTSERRAT ORIOLE nests in the Centre Hills failed and there was widespread tree defoliation in many areas. By early August however most of the fallen leaves had been replaced, and it became apparent that many adult birds were still present in their territories. In early August local guides discovered two new active nests from re-nesting pairs at Jackboy (NE Centre Hills) in one of the least ash-affected areas. One nest (grass basket suspended from a Heliconia leaf) containing three young (2-3 eggs are usually laid) was watched from 11-14 Aug until the young reached fledging point. The diet consisted of a wide-variety of insects and included beetles, caterpillars, green crickets, mole crickets, grasshoppers and even one tree frog! The maximum number of feeding visits counted daily between 8-12 noon was 48 visits and this exceeded nests studied earlier in the season, which could indicate a greater abundance of insects present at this time. Censusing by RSPB (UK) and Forestry staff counted up to a daily maxima of 30 orioles in one part of the Centre Hills in early August. The remaining population of orioles is likely to be in the 'low hundreds' of pairs as the range is only a few square kilometres.

Also in Montserrat at the Belham River Mouth, a LITTLE STINT (1st record) was watched on the 17th Aug with a group of SEMI-PALMATED SANDPIPERS, one STILT SANDPIPER and one SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER. Less unusual, at Little Bay a pair of COLLARED DOVES was present on 18th Aug.

In Barbuda, 70+ WEST-INDIAN WHISTLING DUCKS were counted flying into the freshwater pond at Codrington Town in the evening of the 19th Aug. This accounts for most of the resident island population. Also at the same site a silent but apparent ANTILLEAN NIGHTHAWK (1st record) was observed. Also on Barbuda BARBUDA WARBLERS were found to be common in the dry scrub with many recently fledged young. Also breeding in the dry scrub HELMETED GUINEAFOWLS as evidenced by recently hatched chicks in one location. Of interest the plumage of the Barbuda race YELLOW WARBLER (common in coastal scrub, uncommon in dry scrub) appears very plain and yellow-crowned, compared with other Lesser Antillean races.

In Antigua on 21st August, at East Bus Station, St. Johns; 4+ HOUSE SPARROWS were seen early in the morning, plus one later heard calling from a roof crevice in Market Street. Apparently this species has only been observed for the first time in Antigua very recently but these records indicate it is already established there! At Parham Bay on 21st Aug notable were 100+ STILT SANDPIPERS, 50+ WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAILS and 4 CLAPPER RAILS.

Belated news from the northern range of Trinidad. A hike into Guanapo valley on 12th Aug produced single SCALED ANTPITTA, RUDDY QUAIL-DOVE and SILVERED ANTBIRD.

In north west Trinidad, a visit to Chacachacare on 23rd Aug produced a total of 44 species including a GREAT BLUE HERON (1st documented record for the Bocas Is); 2 SWALLOW TAILED KITES (1st doc record for the Bocas Is); 3 CHESTNUT COLLARED SWIFTS (1st doc record for Chacachacare); 2 RINGED KINGFISHERS (1st doc record for the Bocas Is); a PALE BREASTED SPINETAIL, at least 10 MOUSE COLOURED TYRANNULETS some feeding fledged young; 8 NORTHERN SCRUB FLYCATCHERS some feeding fledged young; 10 BRAN COLOURED FLYCATCHERS some feeding fledged young, several FUSCOUS FLYCATCHERS; numerous, mainly juvenile RED EYED VIREOS, perhaps as many as 20 TROPICAL PARULA'S including a pair feeding nestlings, 8-10 YELLOW BELLIED SEEDEATERS, brief views of what may have been a GRAY SEEDEATER, and a few BLACK FACED GRASSQUITS.

On the west coast of Trinidad, the high tide roost at Brickfields on 26th Aug, included the following :- 1 sub-adult GREATER FLAMINGO, 4 STILT SANDPIPERS, 30 RED KNOT, 12 SHORT BILLED DOWITCHERS, 250 LAUGHING GULLS, 25 GULL BILLED TERNS, 17 COMMON TERNS, 185 LARGE BILLED TERNS, 105 YELLOW BILLED TERNS AND 90 BLACK SKIMMERS. Over the adjacent scrubland, 3 juvenile BLUE AND WHITE SWALLOWS were hawking insects. An unidentified flock of some 200 "hirundines" over sugar cane fields south of Waterloo, may also have been this species.

OUTING :- T&T Field Naturalist Club next bird outing will be on Sunday 7th Sept visiting Caroni ricefields, Cacandee mangrove and the tidal mudflats at Waterloo, Orange Valley and Carli Bay. Anyone wishing to participate should contact Martyn Kenefick on 674.7609. As usual starting points will be either CIC Pembroke St, POS at 6.10am or alternatively south side of UWI at 6.30am.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003-28) for 8th.Sept 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

BIRDING NEWS : In Guadeloupe, an adult CURLEW SANDPIPER (1st for Guadeloupe -and still present to 4th Sept at least) and 2 SNOWY PLOVERS were found at "La Pointe des Châteaux" together with the first CLIFF SWALLOW of the season. The PIPING PLOVER, first found on 7th Aug on the Nature Reserve of Petite-Terre was still present as at 30th Aug.

In the northern range of Trinidad, a hike along the Lalaja and upper Guanapo valleys on 30th August produced 66 species including ORNATE HAWK-EAGLE, 50 WHITE COLLARED SWIFTS, CHESTNUT WOODPECKER, 2 GRAY THROATED LEAFTOSSERS, WHITE BELLIED ANTBIRD, BLACK FACED ANT-THRUSH and at least 10 SWALLOW TANAGERS (an extremely late date for this species). On 4th Sept, 3 CHESTNUT WOODPECKERS were found along Las Lapas ridge, and a male WHITE WINGED BECARD was at Mile Post 8 on the Blanchisseuse Rd.

Most birding in Trinidad over the weekend of 6th-7th Sept centred around the Caroni plain and the west coast wetlands,. a YELLOW BREASTED CRAKE fed out in the open at Caroni ricefields and the first BLUE WINGED TEALS and YELLOW WARBLERS of the season appeared on 6th Sept. The following day, the Field Naturalist Club outing tallied 84 species including a PINNATED BITTERN and the YELLOW BREASTED CRAKE at Caroni ricefields; 2 WHITE CHEEKED PINTAILS, CLAPPER RAIL, MANGROVE and STRIPED CUCKOO, PYGMY KINGFISHER and the first AMERICAN REDSTARTS of the season at Cacandee; together with large numbers of SEMI PALMATED, WESTERN and SPOTTED SANDPIPERS, RED KNOT, SHORT BILLED DOWITCHER, COLLARED, BLACK BELLIED and SEMI PALMATED PLOVERS amongst the gulls, terns and herons at the Brickfields mudflats tidal roost.

In Tobago, on 30th Aug, 5 WHITE WINGED SWALLOWS were feeding from the moored boats at Grafton Beach.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003-29) for 16th Sept 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

BIRDING NEWS : In north east Trinidad, 2 BLACK HAWK-EAGLES * were seen circling above the Toco road at mile post 50 just north of Cumana on 16th Sept. At Galera Pt, a rather disappointing 2 hr seawatch on 16th Sept produced 295 BROWN NODDIES, 184 COMMON TERNS, 13 ROSEATE TERNS and 2 CAYENNE TERNS. The only noteworthy landbird was a PLAIN BREASTED GROUND-DOVE.

In central Trinidad, early morning on 9th Sept at Wallerfield produced 2 GRAY HEADED KITES, 6 RED BELLIED MACAWS and 2 SULPHURY FLYCATCHERS. Nearby in the Aripo Savannah at Comuto, a BAT FALCON, 4 WHITE COLLARED SWIFTS and a further 15 RED BELLIED MACAWS were seen. Also on 9th Sept, in Arena forest there were 2 DUSKY CAPPED FLYCATCHERS and 2 FOREST ELAENIAS.

In the Caroni plain, at the north marsh on Caroni ricefields 2 LONG WINGED HARRIERS were present along with a PINNATED BITTERN and a smattering of WHITE RUMPED, LEAST, SEMI PALMATED, SOLITARY and SPOTTED SANDPIPERS on 12th Sept.

In north west Trinidad, an unlikely find perched close to the Movie Towne cinema complex during the morning of 12th Sept was a LESSER NIGHTHAWK.

On the west coast of Trinidad, at Brickfield, at least 20 BLUE AND WHITE SWALLOWS, mainly adults, were hawking insects along with much larger numbers of BARN SWALLOWS on 12th Sept. A dark morph LONG WINGED HARRIER was also present. On the 14th, an immature APLOMADO FALCON * perched in a dead tree, and a CLAPPER RAIL fed along the edge of the mangrove. The high tide roost produced 600 LAUGHING GULLS, 110 LARGE BILLED TERNS, 22 YELLOW BILLED TERNS, 12 COMMON TERNS, 2 GULL BILLED TERNS and 53 BLACK SKIMMERS. Shorebirds included 3 WHITE RUMPED SANDPIPERS, PECTORAL SANDPIPER and 12 RED KNOT. The 1st reported BANK SWALLOW of the season accompanied at least 100 BARN SWALLOWS and at least 10 BLUE AND WHITE SWALLOWS.

In south west Trinidad, a YELLOW BELLIED SEEDEATER * was found, somewhat surprisingly adjacent to the mangrove at Godineau on 14th Sept.

BIRD OUTING :- provisional date for the TTFNC birding trip to Chacachacare Island is Sunday 12th October - this date may change dependent upon the availability of boat transport. We will need to restrict numbers to a maximum of 16 persons. Likely cost will be approximately TT\$50 per person Anyone wishing to participate, please contact Martyn Kenefick on 674.7609. Further details will accompany the next Bird Alert.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003-30) for 27th Sept 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below).

BIRDING NEWS : On Guadeloupe, a RED-NECKED PHALAROPE (1st for Guadeloupe) was found on a 1 hectare pond at Pointe des Chaateaux on 21st Sept. it was still present on the 24th, joined by 2 WILSON'S PHALAROPES. 21st September. On 23rd Sept, the first BOBOLINK of the season appeared on Petite Terre and on the 25th the first PEREGRINE of the season flew over Pointe des Chaateaux.

In north west Trinidad, the first NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH of the season was found on Covigne trail in Chaguaramas on 18th Sept.

In the northern range of Trinidad, an adult ORNATE HAWK-EAGLE was seen soaring over the Blanchisseuse Rd at mile post 9.5 on 25th Sept. On the same date, there were 50+ WHITE COLLARED SWIFTS, 3 DUSKY CAPPED FLYCATCHERS, 3 HEPATIC TANAGERS, 2 SPECKLED TANAGERS, STREAKED XENOPS and a BLACK FACED ANT-THRUSH in the Morne Bleu area.

On the west coast of Trinidad, the high tide roost at Brickfields on 20th & 21st Sept produced the 1st WILSON'S PLOVER of the autumn together with 4 PECTORAL SANDPIPERS, a STILT SANDPIPER and 12 RED KNOTS amongst the commoner shorebirds. Seabird numbers included 166 LARGE BILLED TERNS, 71 YELLOW BILLED TERNS, 5 COMMON TERNS, 3 CAYENNE TERNS, an adult GULL BILLED TERN still feeding a juvenile (where did it breed ?), the first ROYAL TERN for a couple of months and a 2nd summer LESSER BLACK BACKED GULL. A dark morph LONG WINGED HARRIER hunted over the mangrove. On 27th Sept, the flooded grass fields inland from Carli Bay held 9 PECTORAL SANDPIPERS, WHITE RUMPED SANDPIPER and a flock of 30-40 SAFFRON FINCHES. At least 5 BANK SWALLOWS accompanied much larger flocks of Barn swallows on the power lines.

In central Trinidad, an early morning hike into Todds Rd forest reserve south on 21st Sept produced 54 species including 2 SQUIRREL CUCKOOS, CRIMSON CRESTED WOODPECKER, EULER'S FLYCATCHER and 2 BLACK TAILED TITYRAS. A lot of time was spent in vain trying to locate the owner of a call which may well have been BLUE GROUND DOVE.

BIRD OUTING :- the date for the trip to Chacachacare Island is now confirmed at Sunday 12th October. Numbers will need to be restricted to a maximum of 16 persons for boat safety reasons. Cost will be TT\$60 per head (subject to a minimum overall cost for the boat of \$600). We will meet at the boat yard (which is the first slip-road on the left about 50 metres beyond the entrance to Crews Inn) at Chaguaramas at 6.15am. Those wishing to participate, please contact Martyn Kenefick on 674.7609.

RARE BIRD REPORTING :- Do we believe what you see ? We want to ! Many of the identifications reported in the SCBA are tentative. For birds found in Trinidad & Tobago, the T&T Rare Birds Committee, formed in 1995, requests details for all rare birds observed (see Species Review List at our website) Please submit details to the TTRBC Secretary : Martyn Kenefick, 36 Newalloville Ave, San Juan, Trinidad - Email "martynkenefick@hotmail.com"

This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003-31) for 9th Oct 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfncc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below)

BIRDING NEWS :

Undoubtedly the highlight of recent days comes from Guadeloupe, where a CORN-CRAKE was present on the Nature Reserve of Petite-Terre between the 28th September and the 2nd October. Not only a 1st for Guadeloupe, it is almost certainly the first sighting of this shy and retiring species in the West Indies

In Tobago, an APLOMADO FALCON * (1st for Tobago) was seen at Lowlands on 7th Oct harrying local YELLOW HEADED CARACACAS. Also from Tobago, a YELLOW BILLED CUCKOO * was found along Bloody Bay Rd on 6th Oct together with the first season Tobago records for NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH, AMERICAN REDSTART and PEREGRINE. On 7th Oct, 2 OLIVACEOUS WOODCREEPERS and a COMMON POTOO were found at Grafton

In north west Trinidad, an olive morph BRIGHT RUMPED ATTILA was found close to Edith falls on 2nd Oct. and a creche flock of 40 juvenile SCARLET IBIS chaperoned by 4 adults flew east offshore from Macaripe Bay

On the west coast , amongst the high tide roost at Brickfields on 4th Oct were 2 CARIBBEAN FLAMINGOES * (increased to 8 on 6th Oct), 4 BLUE WINGED TEAL, 23 RED KNOT, 7 WHITE RUMPED SANDPIPERS and 6 PECTORAL SANDPIPERS.

In the south west , a RING BILLED GULL * was reported from Pt Lisas on 30th Sept

In central , the continuing construction work at Trincity ponds is keeping the water level extremely low in the two largest ponds. On 30th Sept, there were at least 50 SEMI PALMATED SANDPIPERS, 6 LEAST SANDPIPERS, 3 PECTORAL SANDPIPERS, STILT SANDPIPER, BLACK NECKED STILT, LESSER YELLOWLEGS AND SEMI PALMATED PLOVER feeding on the exposed mud. At Pax Guest House on Mt St Benedict, a BROWN VIOLET-EAR was well watched on 5-6th Oct and a BRIGHT RUMPED ATTILA has been heard from the forest close by

In the Caroni plain, the first BOBOLINK * of the season was found on Caroni ricefields on 6th Oct.

BIRD OUTING :- There are just a couple of places left for the trip to Chacachacare on Sunday 12th October. Numbers need to be restricted to a maximum of 16 persons for boat safety reasons. Cost will be TT\$60 per head. We will meet at the boat yard (which is the first slip-road on the left about 50 metres beyond the entrance to Crews Inn) at Chaguaramas at 6.15am. Those wishing to participate, please contact Martyn Kenefick on 674.7609.

RARE BIRD REPORTING :- Do we believe what you see ? We want to ! Many of the identifications reported in the SCBA are tentative. For birds found in Trinidad & Tobago, the T&T Rare Birds Committee, formed in 1995, requests details for all rare birds observed (see Species Review List at our website) Please submit details to the TTRBC Secretary : Martyn Kenefick, 36 Newalloville Ave, San Juan, Trinidad - Email "martynkenefick@hotmail.com"

This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003-32) for 16th Oct 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfn>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below)

BIRDING NEWS :

From Tobago, on 8th Oct, the first BELTED KINGFISHER of the season was found at Bon Accord. On 9th Oct an adult male VARIABLE SEEDEATER* was reported near Bloody Bay, the first sighting for a number of years . On 12th Oct the first PROTHONOTARY WARBLER of the season was at Buccoo and there were YELLOW BILLED CUCKOOS at both Buccoo and Bon Accord. On 14th Oct, the first BLACKPOLL WARBLER of the season was at Buccoo marsh, the APLOMADO FALCON first seen on 7th Oct was again present at Lowlands together with SORA RAIL, 12 AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVERS and a WILSON'S SNIPE. On the same day at Turtle Beach there were 2 WHITE WINGED SWALLOWS

In south Trinidad, a near adult KING VULTURE * was well watched flying over the Trinity Hills on 9th Oct

Off of the north west coast, on Chacachacare, the TTFNC outing on 12th Oct was best described as "quality not quantity" Only 51 species were recorded but included an adult male LESSON'S SEEDEATER *, up to 10 YELLOW BELLIED SEEDEATERS, 3 TUFTED COQUETTES, 3 BRAN COLOURED FLYCATCHERS and 2 STREAKED SALTATORS

In central, the CRANE HAWK * intermittently showing at Wallerfield was again present on 12th Oct.

In the Caroni plain, a survey of the freshwater marshes surrounding Sumaria trace on 11th Oct produced 50 species including PINNATED BITTERN, 2 LEAST BITTERNS, the first PEREGRINE reported for the season, HUDSONIAN GODWIT, PECTORAL SANDPIPER, 2 WHITE RUMPED SANDPIPERS, 2 STRIPED CUCKOOS, 2 RINGED KINGFISHERS, 2 PALE BREASTED SPINETAILED and a MASKED YELLOWTHROAT

In the northern quadrant of Caroni ricefields, a small area held 2 PINNATED BITTERNS, light morph LONG WINGED HARRIER, PECTORAL SANDPIPER, HUDSONIAN GODWIT and a YELLOW BREASTED CRAKE was calling persistently. On a small roadside pond on Valsayn ricefields, present were 10 BLUE WINGED TEAL, 5 BLACK BELLIED WHISTLING DUCK and 5 WHITE CHEEKED PINTAIL

On the west coast, a juvenile AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER and a 3rd winter LESSER BLACK BACKED GULL were amongst the high tide roost at Brickfields on 10th Oct .Earlier, at low tide 9 CARIBBEAN FLAMINGOES were still present

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003-33) for 24th Oct 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below)

BIRDING NEWS :

In Tobago, a flock of approx 20 BOBOLINKS * were found at Buccoo on 16th Oct .At Lowlands on 23rd Oct, 2 MASKED DUCKS, a female RUFF * and no less than 6 BLACKPOLL WARBLERS were found. On the same date a BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER* was close to the entrance to Gilpin trace

In central Trinidad at Wallerfield on 18th Oct, there was no sign of the CRANE HAWK reported from the previous weekend. However single GRAY HEADED KITE, ZONE TAILED and SAVANNAH HAWKS were present together with 2 PLAIN BREASTED GROUND DOVES, 7 RED BELLIED MACAWS and 2 SULPHURY FLYCATCHERS. At Mid Centre Mall a flock of at least 20 LESSER NIGHTHAWKS were seen hawking insects drawn into the car park lights on the night of 18th Oct.

In the northern range, a hike down Guanpo valley on 19th Oct produced 2 RUDDY QUAIL-DOVES, 2 GRAY THROATED LEAFTOSSERS, 2 SLATY CAPPED FLYCATCHERS, 3 EULER'S FLYCATCHERS, BLACKPOLL WARBLER , 8-10 AMERICAN REDSTARTS and a TRINIDAD EUPHONIA

On the east coast at Bush Bush two flocks, each numbering 100-150, RED BELLIED MACAWS were seen feeding in some Moriche palms

In the north west, the first MERLIN of the season was seen at Westmoorings on 16th Oct

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003-34) for 2nd Nov 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below)

BIRDING NEWS :

Highlight of the week comes from Grenada where a MAGNOLIA WARBLER was found at Westerhall Point together with 2 PROTHONOTARY WARBLERS on 24th Oct. On the same day a NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH was present at Petite Baceye, a SORA, 33 BLUE WINGED TEAL and a pair of CARIBBEAN COOT were at Lasagesse. On 25th Oct there was an AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER at Lance Aux Epines, 3 BLACKPOLL WARBLERS at Levra National Park Housing Development, 8 AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVERS near Pearls and a YELLOW BILLED CUCKOO at Morne Rouge Bay.

>From Barbados,a summary of October highlights from Harrison Point, St Lucy, include a SUMMER TANAGER (4th for Barbados) between Oct 18-26th; BLACKPOLL WARBLERS each weekend with a peak of 6 on 26th Oct; 13 sightings of YELLOW BILLED CUCKOO with a peak of 4 on 25th Oct; RED EYED VIREOS on 5th, 11th and 26th Oct; BOBOLINKS on 5th, 12th and 19th and "aestiva"YELLOW WARBLERS on 25th-26th Oct Additionally at Fosters, St Lucy there were 2 BLACK BELLIED WHISTLING DUCKS on Oct 16th; together with single NORTHER PINTAIL and GREEN WINGED TEAL on Oct 25th. The first PEREGRINE of the season was at Newcastle St John on Oct 15th with a NIGHTHAWK sp there on the 20th. A WILSON'S PLOVER was at Chancery Lane on Oct 12th, a KILLDEER at Mangrove, St Philip on Oct 19th and at Graeme Hall one downy chick was seen at a LITTLE EGRET nest on Oct 27th. Also of interest from Barbados is a report of a passage of approx 100 Painted Lady butterflies on NE coast on Oct. 12th, the largest number seen for at least 10 years and single White-tailed Page-moths seen at Harrison Point, Oistins and Inch Marlowe on Oct. 19 - the first records since 1995.

In western Trinidad, both STRIPE BACKED AND LEAST BITTERNs were present along Sumaria trace on 26th Oct, together with a MERLIN and 6 PECTORAL SANDPIPERS. On 2nd Nov birds seen there included STRIPED BACKED BITTERN, 2 PEREGRINES, AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER, IWHITE RUMPED and PECTORAL SANDPIPERS. Close by, at Cacandee a YELLOW BILLED CUCKOO* was found at the end of Bernard Trace. Also present in the area were a pair of PALE BREASTED SPINETAILS feeding a fledgling STRIPED CUCKOO, CLAPPER RAIL, RINGED, GREEN and PYGMY KINGFISHERS, 3 BROWN CRESTED and 3 NORTHER SCRUB FLYCATCHERS

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003-35.) for 9th. Nov 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below)

BIRDING NEWS :

>From Barbados, a GREENSHANK (5th record for Barbados) was found on 1st Nov at Hannays, St Lucy, but not seen since. Other sightings include a HUDSONIAN GODWIT at Fosters, St. Lucy on 1st-2nd Nov and from the norther swamps over the same weekend c 40 GREATER YELLOWLEGS, c.20 LESSER YELLOWLEGS, 4 STILT SANDPIPER c. 40 WHITE RUMPED SANDPIPERS and at least 4 WESTERN SANDPIPERS. At Harrison Point, up to 3 YELLOW BILLED CUCKOOS and up to 4 BLACKPOLL WARBLERS were present 1st-2nd Nov.

>From Guadeloupe, on 17th Oct, a GLOSSY IBIS (2nd for Guadeloupe) was found on Saint Franccois aerodrome - present until 4th Nov at least. Also on 17th a PEREGRINE FALCON was present at La Pointe des Châteaux together with 5 RED-BILLED TROPICBIRDS . A late ANTILLEAN NIGHTHAWK was still present the 15th October at Belle-Plaine. Un-precedented numbers of certain Nearctic migrant land-birds continue to appear at the Nature Reserve of Petite-Terre . On 20th October, 24 BLACKPOLL WARBLERS, 11 YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOOS, 2 BOBOLINKS a ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK and an INDIGO BUNTING were present. The PIPING PLOVER continue to winters at Petite -Terre

>From Tobago, a SORA, 2 HUDSONIAN GODWITS, 32 AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER, a BUFF BREASTED SANDPIPER and 3 YELLOW BILLED CUCKOOS were in the Lowlands area on 28th Oct. Numbers of BOBOLINKS have been dramatic in recent days. Following 2 seen above Blue Waters Inn on 30th Oct, a flock of at least 60 have been feeding close to Bon Accord Sewage lagoons up to 5th Nov at least. On Gilpin trace, a GRAY THROATED LEAFTOSSER was seen briefly on 2nd Nov In the northern range of Trinidad, a GREY NECKED WOOD-RAIL was found close to the estuary of the Mariannre river on 6th Nov

CONSERVATION NEWS:- the reintroduction programme of the BLUE AND YELLOW MACAW into south-east Trinidad is about to enter phase two with the scheduled imminent release of a further 20 birds. Following the initial release of 18 birds several years ago, there have been widespread sightings throughout the area and reports of 9 fledged young.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003-36.) for 1st Dec 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below)

BIRDING NEWS :

From the north coast of Trinidad, at the Marianne river estuary, 2 GRAY NECKED WOOD-RAILS were found on 16th Nov close to the road bridge, and a pair of CRIMSON CRESTED WOODPECKERS were investigating potential nest sites close by.

In the northern range, from 4th Nov onwards, an OLIVE SIDED FLYCATCHER has been regularly recorded at Asa Wright Nature Centre. Also at the Centre, a SHORT TAILED NIGHTHAWK hunted over the car park area at dusk on 20th Nov. Close to the village of Avocat, 2 BAT FALCONS were found on 16th Nov. On the same date, a BLACKPOLL WARBLER was amongst a feeding flock just north of Paria junction on the Blanchisseuse Rd and an adult ORNATE HAWK EAGLE soared over the same area. On 19th Nov, a GRAY NECKED WOOD RAIL ran across the Blanchisseuse Rd at MP 4.5.

On the east coast, at Kernaham village in Nariva swamp, a light morph LONG WINGED HARRIER has been regularly seen throughout November quartering the fields, and a juvenile AZURE GALLINULE was found on 17th Nov. At the traditional Royal palm parrot roost, 125 RED BELLIED MACAWS and 9 YELLOW CROWNED PARROTS flew in on 17th Nov.

On the west coast, a RUFIOUS NECKED WOOD RAIL was seen at close range running across mangrove roots beside the Blue river in Caroni swamp on 21st Nov.

In central Trinidad, a LESSER ELAENIA was briefly seen at the eastern edge of Aripo Agriculture Stn on 17th Nov, 2 MORICHE ORIOLES were at Wallerfield aerodrome on 19th Nov and a WHITE TAILED GOLDENTHROAT was amongst long grasses at Trincity ponds on 21st Nov.

From Tobago, 2 LITTLE EGRETS were seen in the Bon Accord area on 22nd Nov together with a late WHITE RUMPED SANDPIPER. On 23rd Nov, a BLACKPOLL WARBLER was seen beside the Bloody Bay Rd and on 25th, a VENEZUELAN FLYCATCHER was found in forest close by.

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003-37.) for 18th Dec 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfnc>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below)

BIRDING NEWS :

On the west coast of Trinidad, a falcon almost certainly EURASIAN KESTREL (1st for T&T and the Caribbean) was found north of Carli Bay on 17th Dec. It was still present (and was photographed) on the 18th

From Tobago, both single MASKED DUCK and SORA were present at Lowlands on 2nd Dec. On the same date, extremely late YELLOW BILLED CUCKOO and BLACKPOLL WARBLERS were found at Bon Accord and Grafton Sanctuary respectively. On 3rd Dec a WHITE THROATED SPADEBILL was seen on Gilpin trace and on 4th Dec a VENEZUELAN FLYCATCHER was on Merchison Rd, Speyside. The first returning RUBY TOPAZ hummingbirds for the season were at Bon Accord on 11th Dec. At Bon Accord, 3 female NORTHERN PINTAILS *(1st record for Tobago and 2nd for T&T) were seen on 13th Dec. The REDDISH EGRET * (first found on 21st July 2003) continues to be reported from the Parlatuvier river, latest sighting on 16th Dec. On the same date, 2 WHITE TAILED TROPICBIRDS were seen on Little Tobago and yet another BLACKPOLL WARBLER was found, this time at Merchison Rd

In the northern range of Trinidad, a SCALED ANTPITTA * was seen by multiple observers along the Blanchisseuse Rd between Morne Bleu and Las Lapas on 12th Dec. At the Marianne river estuary, there were still 2 GRAY NECKED WOOD RAILS and several SILVERED ANTBIRDS showing on 13th Dec

In central Trinidad, the CRANE HAWK* again put in an appearance at Wallerfield on 13th Dec

In west Trinidad, hot on the heels of the Tobago report, the first RUBY TOPAZ was found at Cacandee on 12th Dec. Also nearby , both PINNATED and STRIPE BACKED BITTERN were seen at Sumaria trace. On 17th Dec, a female LESSER SCAUP * was at Cacandee

In south west Trinidad, a GRAY SEEDEATER was reported from a garden in San Francique on 8th Dec and a SHORT TAILED NIGHTHAWK was seen in the same area on 12th Dec.

SCBA IN 2004 Please note that due to a considerable reduction in the number of reports received, the SCBA will for the time being become a monthly summary of bird news from the islands. Hopefully, during the year, the number of contributions will increase significantly justifying a return to the weekly format

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT (2003-38.) for 31st Dec 2003 Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalist Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology in the southeastern Caribbean by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about the TTFNC, T&T Rare Birds Committee and Photo Gallery are accessible at <http://www.wow.net/ttfn>. Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick by phone at 674-7609 or by Email at "martynkenefick@hotmail.com" The TTRBC requests details for species indicated with an asterisk (see website above and RARE BIRD REPORTING below)

BIRDING NEWS :

On the west coast of Trinidad, at Carli Bay, the EURASIAN KESTREL (1st for T&T) was still present until 1st Jan 2004 at least. Photographs now appear at our Photo Gallery. On 21st Dec single COCOI HERON and CLAPPER RAIL were seen in Caroni swamp. Over the "new years holiday" up to 5 adult CARIBBEAN FLAMINGOES were feeding on the mudflats at Brickfields and numbers of DICKCISSELS were heard flying over Waterloo after dark.

In south west Trinidad, at San Francique, a BLACK HAWK-EAGLE * was seen on 28th Dec

In central Trinidad, a SORA was found at Trincity ponds on 19th Dec

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