

This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT January 2009 summary of sightings through the Region. Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalists Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about TTFNC, T&T Rare Bird Committee and our Photo Gallery are accessible at "<http://tffc.org>". Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick tel 674.7609; Email "martynkenefick@hotmail.com". The T&T Rare Birds Committee requires details for species indicated with an asterisk.

From Guadeloupe, a TREE SWALLOW (2nd for Guadeloupe) at Port-Louis Swamp on 25th Jan together with 300 BARN SWALLOWS, 10 BANK SWALLOWS and a NORTHERN PARULA. On the same date, a roost of 35 CARIBBEAN MARTINS were at Point a Pitre

From Barbados, heavy rain on 1st Jan brought in a LAUGHING GULL at Bridgetown Port (a rarity in winter) whilst 39 CARIBBEAN MARTINS roosted in the town on 8th Jan. In St Philip 1 female and 4 male MASKED DUCKS were at a favored breeding site on 10th Jan and the 2 EURASIAN SPOONBILLs, first found on 17th Nov 2008, remained all month.

From St Lucia, on 26th Jan a very early returning CARIBBEAN MARTIN was seen at Moule a Chique together with at least 6 RED-BILLED TROPICBIRDS. At least 5 POMARINE JAEGERs were lingering in Soufriere Bay 26th - 27th Jan together with a probable PARASITIC JAEGER (potentially 1st for St Lucia) on the 26th. and a very early LAUGHING GULL on the 27th

From Tobago, a NORTHERN PARULA * was found at Englishman's Bay on 31st Dec 2008

In Trinidad, the Christmas Bird Count was held on 28th Dec. The lower than usual summary of 4705 birds and 173 species can be explained by the most unsavory weather conditions, especially for those counters in the Northern range. No locally rare species were found

In the northern range of Trinidad, a hike east along the ridge trail from Morne Bleu Textel on 17th Jan produced 4 ORANGE-BILLED NIGHTINGALE THRUSH, 3 YELLOW LEGGED THRUSH and a female BEARDED BELLBIRD.

In north west Trinidad, 2 RUFOUS NIGHTJARS were seen at Point Gourde on 29th Jan

From the west coast of Trinidad, the un-seasonal presence of WILSON'S PLOVERS continues at Orange Valley with 14 birds present on 8th Jan. Early morning along Abidh trace, Cacandee produced 4 SORA RAILS on 11th Jan; still present on 18th Jan together with a YELLOW BREASTED CRAKE and the first reported DICKCISSEL of the season

In south west Trinidad, an adult male MASKED DUCK * in close to breeding plumage was found in South Oropouche on 8th Jan; present at least until the 11th. At the same locality, 3 RUDDY BREASTED SEEDEATERS were found on 11th Jan

From the east coast of Trinidad, an adult RUFOUS NECKED WOOD RAIL * was seen in mangrove north of Manzanilla on 1st Jan. This is the first documented mainland record away from Caroni swamp. In the same general area a sub-adult RUFOUS CRAB-HAWK was seen the same day

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT February 2009 summary of sightings through the Region. Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalists Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about TTFNC, T&T Rare Bird Committee and our Photo Gallery are accessible at "<http://tfn.org>". Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick tel 674.7609; Email "martynkenefick@hotmail.com". The T&T Rare Birds Committee requires details for species indicated with an asterisk.

Perhaps the most dramatic development throughout the region during the month has been the presence of exhausted, and sometimes moribund BLACK LEGGED KITTIWAKES found on several islands. To date there have been five picked up in Guadeloupe and two in Barbados which all died. A 1st winter plumaged bird passed South Pt, Barbados on the 22nd and one in Tobago was picked up in an exhausted state and subsequently released on 13th Feb.

In Dominica, on 1st Feb, 6 WHITE -TAILED TROPICBIRDS at the regular breeding site of Tareau, and 2 more south of Loubiere.

In Tobago, belated news of a reported HOODED MERGANSER* at Bon Accord on 22nd Jan. (potentially 1st for T&T). At least 3 GRAY THROATED LEAFTOSSERS were present along Gilpin trace on 5th Feb whilst on the 18th an adult RINGED BILLED GULL and a sub-adult HERRING GULL* were reported on from Coco Reef Bay. On the same date, a MASKED DUCK appeared on a lake at Lowlands accompanying the party of 7 RING-NECKED DUCKS* which were present all month

In Trinidad, the focus of attention for most local birders has been the high tide sea and shorebird roost on the west coast tidal mudflats. Throughout the month there have been up to 2000 LAUGHING GULLS and 5 LESSER BLACK BACKED GULLS who's presence obviously lured in a near-adult plumaged GREATER BLACK-BACKED GULL * (1st for T&T) from 31st Jan - 28th Feb; a 1st winter plumaged GREATER BLACK-BACKED GULL from 23rd - 28th Feb; an adult RING-BILLED GULL and adult BLACK-HEADED GULL both on the 24th; a 1st winter BLACK HEADED GULL on 25th and a different 1st winter 26th - 28th Feb. Also found in the area were peak counts of 1437 SEMI PALMATED SANDPIPERS, 1100 SEMI PALMATED PLOVERS and 550 WESTERN SANDPIPERS, 11 WILSON'S PLOVERS, 2 RED KNOT, 35 LARGE BILLED TERNS (first reported for the season on 18thFeb) and a YELLOW-BILLED TERN (first reported for the season on 25th Feb).

Close by the ROSEATE SPOONBILL * previously reported on 6th Dec 2008 was seen flying over the highway near the Caroni exit and a COCOI HERON was in Caroni swamp both on 16th Feb.

In south west Trinidad, a COCOI HERON and an unidentified *Sporophila* SEEDEATER at Sudama Steps on 7th Feb.

On the east-west corridor of Trinidad, 3 WHITE HAWKS flying low over San Juan on 8th Feb was a surprise

From the northern range of Trinidad, at Asa Wright Nature Centre, a BLACK WHISKERED VIREO* was found on 24th Jan and the first reported SWALLOW-TAILED KITE of the season the following day. A BLACK HAWK-EAGLE * was seen soaring over the valley on 29th Jan and a BROWN VIOLETEAR was present on 11th Feb

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This is the SOUTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN BIRD ALERT March 2009 summary of sightings through the Region. Sponsored by the T&T Field Naturalists Club, our aim is to promote birding and ornithology by fostering communication among resident and visiting birders regarding the study of birds in the region. The SCBA and information about TTFNC, T&T Rare Bird Committee and our Photo Gallery are accessible at "<http://tffc.org>". Reports should be sent to Martyn Kenefick tel 674.7609; Email "martynkenefick@hotmail.com". The T&T Rare Birds Committee requires details for species indicated with an asterisk.

From Barbados, the two EURASIAN SPOONBILLS first found on 17th Nov 2008 remained all month as did the two SOUTHERN LAPWINGS. On 8th Mar, a RED BILLED TROPICBIRD was found at the traditional nesting area at Paragon and an early HUDSONIAN WHIMBREL was seen at Inch Marlowe

From Tobago, a winter plumaged adult BLACK LEGGED KITTIWAKE * (2nd for T&T) spent most of the 3rd Mar close inshore at Speyside Bay. The AMERICAN HERRING GULL, MASKED DUCK and party of RING NECKED DUCKS reported last month were still present until 8th March at least and a WHITE TAILED TROPICBIRD was seen from the seabird cliffs on Little Tobago on 19th Mar. Finally two separate breeding pairs of MASKED DUCKS each showed off four ducklings in the south west of the island on 28th Mar

In the northern range of Trinidad, a male BLACKPOLL WARBLER along Lalaja trace and a WHITE THROATED SPADEBILL in Las Lapas both on 11th Mar and the first reported SWALLOW Tanager of the season was found along Las Lapas on 16th Mar

In north-west Trinidad, daily early morning hikes during the long end of month weekend in Chaguaramas Country Park produced RUFOUS NIGHTJARS on each day together with both STREAKED SALTATORS and BLUE TAILED EMERALDS and a fine selection of flycatchers including BRAN COLORED, NORTHERN SCRUB, YELLOW BREASTED, BROWN CRESTED, STREAKED and MOUSE COLORED TYRANNULET. Additional sightings included numerous RED EYED VIREOS and single YELLOW BILLED CUCKOO and WHITE WINGED BECARD both on 29th Mar

On the west coast of Trinidad, the seabird roost at Orange Valley still occupied much interest. A 1st winter BLACK HEADED GULL* was seen intermittently between 7th - 28th Mar; the adult GREATER BLACK BACKED GULL* first reported last month were still present on 21st Mar with the 1st winter plumaged bird regularly seen until the months end. An adult .RING BILLED GULL*, first reported (and last seen) on 24th Feb was present again from 28th - 31st Mar and the first reported CAYENNE TERN of the season was found on the 21st.

From south-western Trinidad, a party of at least 6 RUDDY BREASTED SEEDEATERS were found in an area of arable land at South Oropouche on 1st Mar with both single CRANE HAWK* and STREAK HEADED WOODCREEPER seen nearby on 14th Mar. Elsewhere a BLACK HAWK EAGLE* at Penal on the 11th

From the east coast of Trinidad 2 BLACK LEGGED KITTIWAKES * were seen slowly flying north along Manzanilla Beach on 4th Mar together with at least 6 LEACH'S PETRELS. On the same date, the WHITE TAILED HAWK * intermittently showing during much of 2008 was again seen over Kernaham village Nariva swamp

From north east Trinidad, at least 6 TRINIDAD PIPING GUANS showing well at Montevideo trace, Grande Riviere on 1st Mar

In central Trinidad. 2 pairs of PIED BILLED GREBES and a party of 20 COMMON WAXBILLS at Piarco on 14th Mar and a EURASIAN COLLARED DOVE in Barataria on the 30th

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