Caribbean Birds
Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds

Newsletter July 2006 – Vol. 1, No. 2

From the President

The SCSCB Board met in Mandeville, Jamaica 6-9 July in order to develop a new strategic plan for the Society for the next 5 years. Nearly all board members were present and we were also joined by Ian Davidson, Head of BirdLife International's America's Secretariat; Veronica Anadón, BirdLife's Caribbean Program Coordinator, and Steve Latta, from the Point Reyes Bird Observatory, California, and Chair of SCSCB's Monitoring Working Group. Hosted by board members Ann Sutton and Brandon Hay at the historic Marshall's Pen estate – the abundant endemic bird species were more of a distraction than the World Cup!

SCSCB Board Meeting at Marshall's Pen. From L to R: Andrew Dobson, Brandon Hay, Eric Carey, Lisa Sorenson, Ian Davidson, Ann Sutton, Floyd Hayes, Lourdes Mugica, Veronica Anadón, Steve Latta, Rosemarie Gnam, Carolyn Wardle, Jeremy Madeiros

We met local conservationists and members of local bird groups for an early evening social reception in Kingston on the 6th July. It provided me with the opportunity to present an illustrated talk on the workings of the SCSCB. Board member Jeremy Madeiros then gave a fascinating talk on the Cahow (Bermuda Petrel) recovery program (see the July 'Bird of the Month' at www.scscb.org).

The following three days provided the opportunity for much discussion, brain-storming of ideas, and the development of an exciting and ambitious new strategic plan for the Society. The plan will provide the society with a clear direction for the next few years and will also assist us in our fund raising efforts. We invited Ian and Veronica in order to consider a more formal partnership with BirdLife. We are fully supportive of BirdLife's efforts in the region, and BirdLife has been very supportive of many of our programs in recent years. Under the present constitution of BirdLife, partners are NGOs from individual countries. There would need to be special consideration for SCSCB (which is itself a partnership) to become a 'regional partner' of BirdLife. It is therefore proposed that the first step should be the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding between SCSCB and BirdLife outlining how the two organizations will work together on shared bird conservation goals.

Most of the group stayed an additional day for a fieldtrip to the Cockpit Country – a forested karst region with a wealth of birds. However, the highlight was perhaps seeing the Giant Swallowtail (*Papilio homerus*)—the largest swallowtail in the western hemisphere and endemic to Jamaica (having already seen the one of the world's smallest butterfly at Marshall's Pen, the Pygmy Blue, *Brephidium exilis*).

I would like to offer my thanks to the USFWS for helping to fund the meeting, Ann Sutton and Brandon Hay for their kind hospitality at Marshall's Pen, and to individual board members for contributing to the costs.

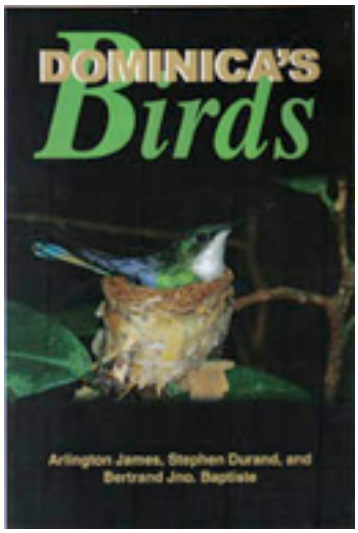
Birds Caribbean Newsletter

This newsletter has grown over the past two years, especially as there are so many exciting bird conservation efforts taking place in the region. In consultation with SCSCB and the BirdLife partners, the "BirdLife" newsletter has been renamed *Birds Caribbean* and is now a publication of the SCSCB, in association with BirdLife International. Members have hopefully seen the 4th newsletter published in May 2006 and the next will be December 2006. SCSCB is most grateful for BirdLife's help with this newsletter. It can be downloaded from our website at www.scscb.org (click on News) or at www.birdlife.org/regional/caribbean. Any comments, suggestions and news items are welcomed by David Wege david.wege@birdlife.org

SCSCB Website (www.scscb.org) - New Content!

We hope all members have had the opportunity to view our new website, which we are gradually building up. The Board welcomes your comments with regard to content (send email to LSoren@bu.edu). We are presently working towards making the site bilingual (English and Spanish) and eventually also French. Have a look at the latest 'Bird of the Month' for August, the Red-billed Streamertail (thanks to Leo Douglas for writing this up). We are looking for contributions for future months and know that many of you have loads of knowledge about the wonderful birds on your island. If you would like to contribute to this feature (see guidelines below), please send your submission to Lisa Sorenson (LSoren@bu.edu). All contributors will be acknowledged on the webpage.

New Local Field Guide: Dominica's Birds



We are pleased to announce the publication of **Dominica's Birds**, by Arlington James, Stephen Durand and Bertrand Jno Baptiste. Publisher: Forestry, Wildlife & Parks Division, Dominica, Publication Date: 2005. This fully illustrated book describes local and Caribbean endemic species found on Dominica, as well as several neo-tropical migrant species. The first section describes interactions between birds with humans, followed by a brief overview of Dominica's bird life. The next section examines local laws as they pertain to birds on the island, as well as the protection of the country's bird life. The following section, "Birds in Our Everyday Lives" presents examples of Dominican mountains, place names and establishments, sports and cultural groups, fruits, plants, etc. that have been named after local birds. Two other sections are devoted to the "avian heritage" of

Dominica, with local proverbs and metaphors (in the native Kwéyòl language) centred around birds. The most important section, which describes 65 species of birds, also presents local folklore associated with some of the species such as the story of the Mangrove Cuckoo, the origin of the "little cap" of the Antillean Crested Hummingbird, the fidgety movements of a perched Scaly-naped Pigeon, and the reason why the Broad-winged Hawk allegedly "steals" chickens, among many other tales.

The production of **Dominica's Birds** was made possible with the kind assistance of the Division of International Conservation of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the involvement of several members of staff of USFWS, and the SCSCB. The book was officially launched in Dominica on July 11, 2006.

To order your copy of Dominica's Birds:
To addresses in the USA - **US $16.00**. To addresses in the Caribbean - **US $14.00.** Payment preferably by money order or postal order; to be made to: **Forestry & Wildlife Division – Dominica.** Send to: Director of Forestry, Wildlife & Parks. Forestry, Wildlife & Parks Division, Botanic Gardens, Roseau, DOMINICA, West Indies. E-mail address: forestry@cwdom.dm

For more information on this book and others produced in association with SCSCB, go to the Programs/Local Bird Field Guide Program at www.scscb.org

Caribbean Endemic Bird Festival 2006

"As the **fifth** celebration of the CEBF concludes, we can say it has been very successful! Thanks to BirdLife, UNEP-GEF funds were available for small grants that helped 7 countries celebrate their activities. We also had materials from the International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) of Partners in Flight. They donated more than $1000 in materials to 10 countries for this festival. We are still waiting for reports from everyone, but so far, a total of 11 countries participated this year, carrying out 108 activities throughout the Caribbean with over 16,000 participants! Final results and some photographs will be posted on the website soon.

We are very grateful to everybody who helped make this CEBF another success. This translates into major outreach and education of our birds, why they are important and should be enjoyed by all. This seed will hopefully bear its fruit over time by encouraging adults and children alike to appreciate and conserve their local bird life."
Sheylda Diaz Mendez, CEBF Coordinator

The CEBF took place 22 April to 22 May 2006 and the following countries took part: Anguilla, Bahamas, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Guadeloupe, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, St. Thomas, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Tortola. (Ed.)

Rare Bird Club visits Bermuda

Members of BirdLife International's Rare Bird Club have just departed after a week's stay in Bermuda. As part of their visit, members were invited to see the bluebird trail in the grounds of

Government House and plant an endemic cedar tree in the Audubon Grove. SCSCB President Andrew Dobson helped organise the trip and was keen that Bermuda should be show-cased for its unique birds and the opportunity for eco-tourism. He commented, "The visitors had a great Bermuda experience. They were particularly impressed with the Nonsuch restoration project and Cahow recovery programme. They had the chance to see nature reserves such as Spittal Pond and Walsingham as well as Cooper's Island, recently declared a national park." BirdLife International is the largest bird conservation organisation in the world, formed from member organisations in more than 100 countries. The Rare Bird Club (RBC) is dedicated to saving 1,200 globally threatened bird species and their habitats. The RBC brings together an international group of individuals including environmentalists, keen birdwatchers, conservationists, artists and nature lovers. Authors Margaret Atwood and Graeme Gibson have just been appointed joint Honorary Presidents of the RBC. Queen Noor of Jordan, an RBC member and Honorary President of BirdLife International was also in Bermuda recently. At present there are more than 400 members in 40 different countries. The aim is to recruit one member for each of the 1,200 threatened birds. Anyone interested in joining the RBC can visit www.rarebirdclub.org for more information.

Journal of Caribbean Ornithology Update

If you renewed your membership, you should have received Vol 18.1. If not, please let us know. If you have not renewed your membership and/or would like to join the Society – go to www.scscb.org for details. We would welcome your support so that we can all work together for the benefit of Caribbean Birds.

Journal Webpages: Detailed instructions for authors and other information about JCO (e.g. previous volumes, advertising, etc.) has now been added to SCSCB's website (from the home page at www.scscb.org, click on Publications).

SCSCB Member Receives Prestigious Award

Kate Wallace, active SCSCB member, coordinator of SCSCB's West Indian Whistling-Duck and Wetlands Conservation Project in the Dominican Republic and Vice President of the Hispaniolan Ornithological Society, received this year's Outstanding Civic Service Recognition Award from the United States Mission in the Dominican Republic. Awarded as part of its annual Independence Day celebration, the award recognizes U.S. citizens living in the Dominican Republic who have dedicated their time, energy, and personal resources to assisting or improving the lives of the Dominican people. Kate has dedicated her life in the DR to raising the level of awareness of the importance of local birds and contributing to the conservation of their habitat. Among her many activities, Kate has organized and led numerous wetlands education training workshops for teachers, community leaders, environmental educators, and institutional technical staff, given talks about birds in schools and community

Kate Wallace receiving Outstanding Civic Service Recognition Award from Ambassador Hans Hertel and his wife on July 4th, 2006.

groups, encouraged avi-tourism, led birding field trips, and developed educational materials about the importance of the island's birds, especially the endemics. We are proud of Kate and congratulate her on this award.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS 2006

The Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds is governed by an elected Board of Directors including the President, Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer and up to five at-large members. In addition the Board includes the Past-president and the editor of Journal of Caribbean Ornithology (who is selected by the Board of Directors). The President may serve only for two consecutive terms, after which a two-year break must occur before he/she may run for office again. The officers serve for two years and there is no limit to the number of times they can stand for office.

The present board of directors, which was elected in 2004 to hold office for 2005 and 2006, consists of Andrew Dobson (President, first term), Lisa Sorenson (Vice-president), Rosemarie Gnam (Treasurer), Ann Sutton (Secretary), Eric Carey (Immediate Past-president), Floyd Hayes (editor of Journal of Caribbean Ornithology), and directors at large Adrianne Tossas, Carolyn Wardle, Brandon Hay, Lourdes Mugica and Jeremy Madeiros.

Under the by-laws the society must hold elections every two years. The next election is due to be completed by December 15th, 2006. The main steps are set out below:

DATE	**ACTION**
By 17th August	All Nominations must have been received by the nominating committee
By 30th October	Nominating committee must announce the slate of candidates
By 1st November	Eligible members should have received ballots
On 15th December	Secretary will open and count ballots.
On 1st January	Terms of office will begin.

ELIGIBILITY FOR NOMINATION

Any individual or honorary member who has paid dues for the current year is eligible for nomination. For at-large members: The nominating committee will not nominate more than one candidate from a single political unit (a territory, colony commonwealth, state or nation). Candidates must be citizens of their respective political unit, or resident for a minimum of three months per year for five continuous years or have applied for permanent or resident status.

ELIGIBILITY TO MAKE NOMINATIONS

Nominations may be made by any full member in good standing and by the nominating committee.

NOMINATIONS MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

1. Name of the candidate
2. Address of the candidate (including telephone, fax and email, where applicable)
3. Country or countries of citizenship
4. Political unit of residence (n.b. For at-large members the candidate should demonstrate that he/she is eligible if he/she is not a citizen of the island that he/she is representing)
5. Written or e-mailed statement of the candidate's willingness to stand for election, and a brief biography including a short statement of how the candidate proposes to work for the society if elected (200 words).

6. Names and addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of nominator and seconder.

Nominations should be sent to: the Nominating Committee: Eric Carey (Chair, ecarey@batelnet.bs), Ann Sutton (Asutton@cwjamaica.com), Carolyn Wardle (cwardle@batelnet.bs) and Leo Douglas (ld2107@columbia.edu), or by airmail to the secretary, Ann Sutton (see address below) to be received no later than August 18. Please note that regular mail to Jamaica can take 2-3 weeks.

QUERIES
Please address any queries about the election process to:
Ann Sutton, Secretary, Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds, PO Box 58, Mandeville, Jamaica
Tel. 876 877 7335 OR 876 904 5454 OR asutton@cwjamaica.com

Guidelines for "Bird of the Month" on SCSCB's website

Here are some guidelines for writing up a "Bird of the Month" featured on SCSCB's homepage (www.scscb.org). Feel free to share this with your colleagues; we are looking for contributions!! It's a great opportunity to share information, raise awareness and show off your local birds. All contributions will be acknowledged.

As you can see from the months that are already up, the format is fairly simple and easy to write up since it is mainly bulleted text. The following section headings are suggested, but feel free to modify these as needed, depending on your species:

- Species Name
- Other local names
- Brief introductory paragraph
- Characteristics (physical description, voice, natural/life history traits such as diet, breeding season, # eggs laid, care of young, etc.)
- Range and Habitat Needs
- Interesting Fact – try to find one "wow" or "cool" fact about the bird, something unique to the species
- Threats
- What Can Be Done *or* Conservation Measures
- Where to find more information (e.g., key papers, websites, etc.)

Red-billed Streamertail – Bird of the Month, August 2006. Photo by Eladio Fernandez.

2-3 good photos are needed (include photo credits and captions if necessary).

Species choice: Preference for now is to feature Caribbean endemic and/or threatened species and Caribbean residents and specialists (e.g., Kirtland's Warbler).

Resources: *Birds of the West Indies* (hardcover) by Raffaele et al. and other bird field guides (especially local ones) and books (e.g., *Handbook of the Birds of the World*, *Threatened Birds of the Americas: The ICBP/IUCN Red Data Book*). Consult with scientists, local experts and NGOs for

detailed information; obtain reprints of scientific papers. Check also for resources and information on the internet (e.g., http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/index.html).

Caribbean Wildlife Art Working Group

This group, under the direction of Nils Navarro, has been hard at work this past year. In addition to creating the design of our beautiful new website, the group has also worked on other projects dedicated to raising awareness about birds and biodiversity such as a new poster on bird conservation for Cuba, a Community Bird Festival "Protegiendo las Aves" 2006 during the CEBF, including more than 30 activities with the children and local people of rural communities, and the creation of art items and products to help raise funds for SCSCB (e.g., t-shirts, lithographic prints, etc.). Nils and his group are also working on a "Field Guide to the Endemic Birds of Cuba and other Caribbean Endemics" – stay tuned for more exciting news from the Caribbean Wildlife Art Working Group.

Future Meetings

The **4th North American Ornithological Conference**, Veracruz, Mexico Oct 3-7 2006. Go to the website to check for the call for papers, schedule of events and registration details. http://www.naoc2006.org/

The **8th Neotropical Ornithological Congress**, together with the Unión Venezolana de Ornitologos will be held in Maturin, Mongas, Venezuela 13-19 May 2007. Go to the website to check for the call for papers, schedule of events and registration details. www.neotropicalornithology.org/

The **16th Regional Meeting of the Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds**, **July 18-25 2007**, **San Juan, Puerto Rico**. The Local Organizing Committee is hard at work making arrangements for the meeting. Please let us know of particular training workshops you would like to have at the next meeting. Mark your calendars and plan to attend. More information to come!

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We hope everyone is having a good summer. By now, all of you should have received a renewal notice for your 2006 membership in the society. If you have not yet renewed your membership, please due so, we need your support! Please send US$20 (check or money order) to the Treasurer, Rosemarie Gnam, P.O. Box 863208, Ridgewood NY 11386-3208. PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS. If you're willing to sponsor a Caribbean national who may be unable to pay a subscription, we thank you in advance for your multiples of $20. You're welcome to name the person(s) you would like to sponsor, or we will assign one and let you know who that person is. Institutional membership is $120 for US institutions and $50 for Caribbean based institutions. Life membership is $300 which may be paid in three annual installments of $100.

This edition of the newsletter edited by Lisa Sorenson (LSoren@bu.edu) and Andrew Dobson (ADobson@warwickacad.bm). Contributions for the next newsletter should reach the editor, **Carolyn Wardle** (cwardle@batelnet.bs) by 31 December 2006.

Thanks in advance for your support!