TWO NEW BIRD RECORDS FOR TOBAGO

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During a short visit to Tobago in April 1971 I observed two species as far as I know not recorded before from this island. On 9 April a Rough-winged Swallow, Stelgidopteryx ruficollis, was seen circling around the light tower northeast of Charlotteville just opposite the St. Giles Islands. I distinguished it from the migratory Cliff Swallow, Petrochelidon pyrrhonota, by its pale brown rump, slightly forked tail and generally brown appearance. On 18 April 2 or 3 Bank Swallows, Riparia riparia, were seen there.

The Bank Swallow is regularly found on migration in small numbers through Trinidad (R.P. ffrench, in litt.), so the occurrence of this North American migrant on Tobago is to be expected.

Since the subspecific identity of the observed Rough-winged Swallow is not known, the origin of the bird remains obscure. Most probably the bird came from Trinidad, where the species is a common resident (G.A.C. Herklots, The Birds of Trinidad and Tobago. London, Collins, 1961). There is however a possibility that the North American race was involved. This race is migratory wintering chiefly in Mexico and Central America, but a few occur in the Greater Antilles (J. Bond, Birds of the West Indies. London, Collins, 1971, second edition).