

# Noteworthy Bird Records

by Graham White.

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Paint-billed Crake, *Neocrexerythrops*. A dead specimen of this bird was found on Cumuto road about 1/2 to 2 km south of the junction with Churchill-Roosevelt Highway. This is the first record of the species in Trinidad. The specimen was preserved and is still in my possession. With me at the time were Anil and Vasheist Kokaram. The Paint-billed Crake is very similar to the Ash-throated Crake except that the base of the bill is red. A complete description is as follows.

A small rail-like bird 20.5 cm long. Bill greenish-yellow with red base. Crown, nape, mantle, back, rump dark olive brown. Upper sides of wings mid-brown. Sides of head, neck, breast and belly slate grey. Throat and chin whitish. Two white feathers 1 cm behind eye and 5 mm above ear. Iris red (bird dead). Underwing coverts brown barred white. Thighs, flanks, vent and undertail coverts dark brown barred white. Tail short, 37 mm, mid-brown. Feet purplish-red. This description fits very well with that of the bird in Birds of Venezuela. (Meyer de Schauensee & Phelps 1978).

The habitat of this bird includes swamp and pastureland. There is ample pasture in the area in which the bird was found. The range of the Paint-billed Crake includes Monagas so it is unlikely that this is an escapee.

Marbled Godwit, *Limosa haemastica* On 86.10.05 I saw this bird at the Port of Spain sewage ponds. I had never before seen either the Marbled or Bar-tailed Godwit. I took a description into a taperecorder and identified the bird at home. Unfortunately I was the only observer but I am confident of my identification as the bird was only 7 m away. It is a rare species with only a few recent records (French 1986)

Ornate Hawk-Eagle, *Spizaetus ornatus*. A bird of this species attempted to nest at the Asa Wright Nature Centre. More information can be gained from the centre.

White Ibis, *Eudocimus a/bus*. On a trip to see Scarlet Ibis with Mr. Winston Nanan in August 1985 one White Ibis was seen in the flock. I pointed this out to Mr. Nanan who agreed that it was a White Ibis and claimed that he does see the occasional White Ibis in the flocks of Scarlet Ibis. The bird seen was white but with black wing tips. French (1980) gives its status as an "accidental visitor to Trinidad".

Brown-Throated Parakeet, *Aratinga pertinax*. For the past two

years I have been seeing small flocks of parakeets. I saw them first in North Valsayn and I have seen them in Tunapuna and St. Augustine. Professor Kenny had reported them from Maracas Valley. The birds are Brown-throated Parakeets. Many views have been good enough for identification. I have viewed them from about 5 m in Valsayn and about 7 m on campus, UWI.

These birds fly in noisy flocks of 2 to 7. They are basically blue-green above with a brown throat and greenish yellow belly. There is a yellow eye-ring. The tail is long as is typical of parakeets (note, not parrotlets.) After the first sighting I consulted Birds of Venezuela (Meyer de Schauensee & Phelps 1978) and was thus, on future sightings, able to look for specific features.

The range of this bird includes the delta region in extreme south-east Monagas and in Delta Amacuro. However the birds seen are probably escaped cage birds since they are most common in semi-urban areas. These birds have not been recorded before in Trinidad.

Black-necked Stilt, *Himantopus himantopus*. The T & TFNC bird group has recorded nesting of this bird in 1985, 1986 & 1987 at the Port of Spain sewage ponds. The bird group has also noted the presence of Stilts at the ponds all year round.

Black-bellied Whistling-duck, *Dendrocygna autumnalis*. A large flock (more than 50 of these birds) was seen by myself in a pond behind Buccoo Bay in Tobago. One had 5 chicks. I am very familiar with both of the common species of whistling duck. They are not recorded in Birds of Trinidad and Tobago by French (1980).

## References

French, R. P. 1980. A Guide to the Birds of Trinidad and Tobago. Harwood Books, Pennsylvania, 470 pp.

Meyer de Schauensee, R. & Phelps W. H. Jr. 1978. A Guide to the birds of Venezuela. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey. 424 pp.

French, R. 1986. Additional notes on the birds of Trinidad and Tobago. Living World. J. Trin. Tobago Field Nat Club 1985-1986 p. q.