

DISTRIBUTIONAL NOTES ON
THE BIRDS OF CAYMAN BRAC

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ABSTRACT: Sight and photographic records are reported for 11 species which were rare or previously unknown for the island.

IN conjunction with a research project on Yellow-faced Grassquits, the authors spent a week (17-24 November 1973) on the Caribbean island of Cayman Brac, 150 miles NW of Jamaica. Observations of other species were also made during that time and noteworthy observations are presented here to supplement published data on the avifauna of the Cayman Islands (Johnston, Blake and Buden, 1971).

While most of these observations are significant only because of the paucity of field work on the island, some do seem to indicate changes in status among resident species (e.g., Common Gallinule and Greater Antillean Grackle).

Dendrocygna arborea. West Indian Tree Duck. A single individual was observed on 24 November near the lagoons on the west end of the island. This is apparently only the second sight record of this species, the first having been made by Blake in October 1956.

Anas americana. American Wigeon. One male was seen on 21 November on the west end. This is the first report from Cayman Brac.

Falco columbarius. Merlin. A male was seen on 19 November on the west end of the island. This is the first sight record from Cayman Brac.

Gallinula chloropus. Common Gallinule. Johnston et al., 1971, list records of this species from May, June and August. At least six or seven individuals (including immatures) were regularly seen during the study period, suggesting that the species is resident on the island.

Capella gallinago. Common Snipe. One bird was flushed from a damp marsh on 19 November. This is evidently the first report from Cayman Brac.

Helmitheros vermiverus. Worm-eating Warbler. An individual was mist netted and photographed on 22 November. This is apparently the first record since Cory, 1889.

Parula americana. Northern Parula. At least 10-12 birds were seen in widely scattered areas of the island throughout the study period. However, these seem to be the first sight records since Cory, 1889.

Dendroica virens. Black-throated Green Warbler. A single bird was seen on 19 November. This is the first sight record from Cayman Brac.

Dendroica palmarum. Palm Warbler. This species was very common on Cayman Brac in mid November, being found in almost every possible habitat; apparently not reported since Cory, 1889.

Quiscalus niger bangsi. Greater Antillean Grackle. Listed by Johnston et al., 1971, as an "uncommon resident" on Cayman Brac. However, they also note that the species was "curiously absent from Cayman Brac in summers of 1970 and 1971." No individuals of this species were found during our week stay on Cayman Brac.

Passerculus sandwichensis. Savannah Sparrow. Two sightings (one individual?) were made on 20 November. This is the first sight record from Cayman Brac.

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