

Weights of some Cuban birds

by Storrs L. Olson

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Specimen weights are recognized as one important measure of the size of a bird and may also frequently prove to be of systematic value in distinguishing between different populations, particularly of polytypic forms on islands. For example, data on weights from various populations of the West Indian tanager *Spindalis* corroborate plumage differences that suggest these birds are best divided into 3 species rather than one (Steadman *et al.* 1980). In the Cayman Islands, 2 populations of *Vireo crassirostris* currently considered to belong to the same subspecies were shown to differ significantly in weight (Olson *et al.* 1981), these differences subsequently being corroborated by other measurements (Olson & Barlow, in prep.).

The present paper continues previous studies of West Indian bird weights (Olson & Angle 1977; Steadman *et al.* 1980; Olson *et al.* 1981; Schreiber & Schreiber 1984), and results from 2 collecting trips to Cuba. Although many Cuban species are not represented in Table 1, it has not been possible to resume investigations on Cuba to augment the collections and additional weight data will probably be long in coming, especially for the rarer species.

Table 1. Weights (gm) of Cuban birds.

<i>Falco sparverius sparveroides</i> ♂ 97, 100, 103; ♀ 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 104, 120
<i>Jacana s. spinosa</i> ♂ 83, 90, 91, 91, 94, 98; ♀ 140, 149
<i>Capella gallinago delicata</i> ♀ 94
<i>Zenaida macroura</i> subsp ♂ 104, 115
<i>Zenaida a. asiatica</i> ♂ 162
<i>Saurothera m. merlini</i> ♂ 145
<i>Crotophaga ani</i> ♂ 101
<i>Glaucidium s. siju</i> ♂ 47
<i>Otus</i> (' <i>Gymnoglaux</i> ') <i>l. lawrencii</i> ♀ 80
<i>Chlorostilbon r. ricordii</i> ♂ 3.3; ♀ 2.6
<i>Todus multicolor</i> ♀? 5.8
<i>Melanerpes s. supercilialis</i> ♂ 111; ♀ 89
<i>Tyrannus d. dominicensis</i> ♂ 49
<i>Tyrannus c. caudifasciatus</i> ♀ 38, 39
<i>Myiarchus s. sagrae</i> ♀ 18.5
<i>Contopus c. caribaeus</i> ♀ 11.5, 13
<i>Corvus nasicus</i> ♂ 347, 365, 385; ♀ 330, 365, 366
<i>Turdus plumbeus schistaceus</i> ♂ 83; ♀ 69
<i>Turdus plumbeus rubripes</i> ♂ 67.5, 74; ♀ 65, 66
<i>Poliophtila lembeyi</i> ♂ 4.5, 4.6; ♀? 4.5; sex? 4.5, 4.6
<i>Vireo g. gundlachi</i> ♀ 13
<i>Vireo g. orientalis</i> ♂ 12.5, 13; ♀ 13.3
<i>Mniotilta varia</i> ♀ 7.5
<i>Teretistris fernandinae</i> ♂ 9; sex? 9
<i>Teretistris fornsi</i> ♀ 10
<i>Quiscalis niger gundlachii</i> ♂ 92, 93; ♀ 64, 68, 69
<i>Dives atrovireaceus</i> ♂ 85, 86, 89, 90, 90; ♀ 73
<i>Agelaius phoeniceus assimilis</i> ♂ 46, 49, 50, 50, 51, 51, 51, 52, 52, 54; ♀ 36, 37, 38, 38, 39, 39, 39, 40, 42, 42, 43
<i>Agelaius h. humeralis</i> ♂ 37; ♀ 27, 28, 30, 32
<i>Sturnella magna hippocrepis</i> ♂ 87, 91, 92; ♀ 62, 68, 72, 72, 75
<i>Tiaris o. olivacea</i> ♂ 7, 7.6, 8; ♀ 7, 10
<i>Melopyrrha n. nigra</i> ♀ 13
<i>Torreornis i. inexpectata</i> ♂ 28; ♀ 25; sex? 24
<i>Torreornis i. sigmani</i> ♂ 26, 27, 28.5, 29; ♀ 27.3, 28

Specimens were collected in 2 very different parts of the island. The first series was obtained from 24 to 30 October 1979, mainly near the village of Santo Tomás, a classic collecting locality at the edge of the Zapata Swamp in what is now Matanzas Province, with additional specimens from the resort of Playa Larga at the head of the infamous Bahía de Cochinos. The second series was taken from 2 to 5 November 1980 in the extremely arid southeastern part of the island, mainly near the town of Baitiquirí and east along the coast to Imías, in what is now the province of Guantánamo (formerly part of Oriente Province).

All specimens were weighed with Pesola spring balances, on the day of capture, never more than 8 hours subsequent to their having been collected. The sequence and nomenclature in general follows that of Garrido & Garcia (1975). The specimen of *Tyrannus dominicensis*, taken 3 km east of San Antonio del Sur on 3 November 1980, represents a late date for this migratory species. The smallest male of *Agelaius phoeniceus* (46 gm) was captured by hand in apparently ill health; despite this, it weighed more than the largest female. The specimens of *Quiscalis niger* are assumed to be referable to the subspecies *gundlachii* on the basis of Garrido's (1973) analysis of the distribution of the Cuban forms of this species.

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A recent record of the endangered St Lucia Wren *Troglodytes aedon mesoleucus*

by Gary R. Graves

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The St Lucia Wren *Troglodytes aedon mesoleucus* is listed as critically endangered and possibly extinct by the ICBP Red Data Book (1981) and Bond (1978). Although formerly more widespread on St Lucia, the wren has been restricted since the 1930's to the region between Le Marquis and Grand Anse



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