

Supervisors :

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Project title :

Population size, stress, and reproductive success in the White-breasted Thrasher, *Ramphocinclus brachyurus*

Keywords :

Lesser Antilles, Behaviour, Conservation, Demography

Summary (150 words at the maximum):

The White-breasted Thrasher, *Ramphocinclus brachyurus*, is a Caribbean endemic bird, with *R. brachyurus brachyurus* occurring only in Martinique and *R. brachyurus santaeluciae* occurring only in St. Lucia. Although the species was considered to be extinct in Martinique by the middle of the 20th century, a population ranging in size between 200 and 400 individuals is now spread over a limited number of spots located in the Caravelle Nature Reserve. The aim of the present project is to estimate population size through capture-mark-recapture data, and to assess the level of stress experienced by individuals in various parts of the Reserve and to relate it to variation in reproductive success. Stress will be assessed from three biological variables: body condition, prevalence of infection with blood parasites, and vigilance behaviour. To that end, individuals will be captured using mist-nets and banded using combinations of colour rings allowing subsequent individual identification in the field.

Relevant literature (up to two references):

Gros-Désormeaux, J.R. et al. (2015) Behavioral observations on the White-breasted Thrasher (*Ramphocinclus brachyurus brachyurus*): conservation implications. *Acta Ethologica* 18: 197-208.

Temple, H.J. et al. (2006) Dispersal, philopatry and intergroup relatedness: fine-scale genetic structure in the whitebreasted thrasher, *Ramphocinclus brachyurus*. *Mol Ecol* 15:3449-3458.

Techniques involved in the project:

Field collection of biological samples, morphometrics, molecular analyses, behavioural observations

Desired skills and abilities:

Good command of English language (written and spoken), ability to work meticulously, interest in evolutionary parasitology, behavioural ecology, and conservation biology

A retourner avant le 15 juin 2015 : bollache@u-bourgogne.fr