

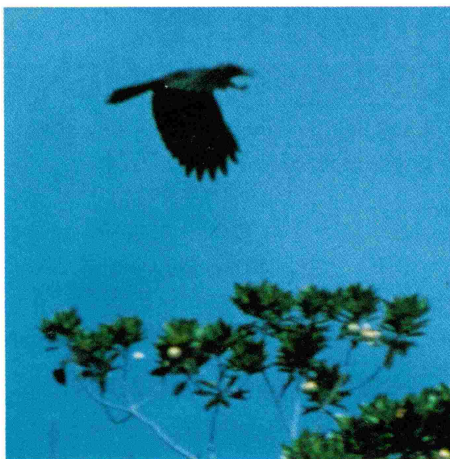
AFA Funds Study of Guam Crow, Hispaniolan Trogon and Dominican Amazons

by Jack Clinton-Eitnrear
Chairman, Conservation Committee
San Antonio, Texas

During the 13th Annual Convention of the American Federation of Aviculture held in Seattle, Washington 12-16 August 1987, the Board of Directors approved the Conservation Committee's recommendations to fund three conservation studies.

Breeding Biology of the Mariana Crow. Funding approved — \$3,000. Investigator: Gary A. Michaels.

Of the 40 true crows in the family Corvidae, the Mariana or Guam crow (*Corvus kubaryi*) is one of the least studied and only the Hawaiian crow (*Corvus hawaiiensis*) is rarer. Due to the introduction of the brown tree snake (*Boiga irregularis*) on the island of Guam the Guam crows, and other avian inhabitants of the island, have been suffering abnormal mortality rates. In 1984 the crow was one of five species and subspecies endemic to the island which were added to the U.S. Federal Endangered Species list. At that time the population was estimated to be around 50 birds. In September of 1985 Gary Michaels travelled to the island of Guam to conduct a two months study of the species. During his study he documented the species' vocalizations and pre-nuptial behavior although the one nest observed failed to produce young. The population was estimated, using recordings of crow vocalizations, to be approximately 100 individuals being composed of as few as three immature birds. Gary's current plans are to return



Guam Crow

to the island and further document the species' reproductive behavior and investigate the possibility of establishing the species in captivity. A special sub-committee of the Conservation Committee has been established to deal with this latter element of the program.

Endangered Amazona Parrots in Commonwealth of Dominica. Funding approved — \$3,000. Investigator: Dr. Peter Evans.

The distribution of both imperial (*A. imperialis*) and red-necked (*A. arausiaca*) Amazon parrots is centered upon the slopes of Morne Diablotin, Dominica. A population estimate of 300 red-necked parrots was made in 1984 but although there is no recent evidence for a decline in this species, it is clearly very vulnerable to the forest clearance which has been accelerating over the past two to three years. Only 50 imperial parrots were estimated in 1984, and this species is critically endangered. Dr. Evans' study includes: 1) carrying out a more accurate census of both species, 2) determining the range of the species, especially as it relates to various habitat types, and 3) to establish an educational center. AFA's contribution will be added

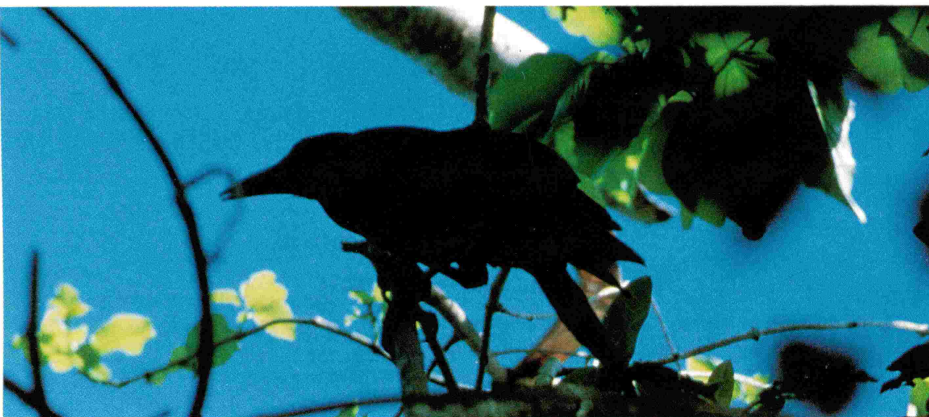
to the more than \$20,000 already raised to assist these endangered species.

Development of a Field Based Propagation Program for the Hispaniolan Trogon. Funding approved — \$2,525. Investigators: Steve Amos, Ken Reiningger, Jose Ottenwalder, Jack Clinton-Eitnrear and William Hasse.

Hispaniola has 73 species of resident land birds, the largest of any island in the West Indies. Twenty species are endemic to Hispaniola. Charles Woods, Ph.D., a researcher from the Florida State Museum, has conducted extensive research on the Haitian portion of the island and lists nine species of greatest conservation concern. Of the nine, eight are softbills, the exception being the Hispaniolan parrot. With the majority of species that inhabit tropical forests being softbills it is of great concern that our ability to deal with them aviculturally is years behind other avian groups such as parrots, waterfowl, pheasants and raptors. A propagation facility centered at the Parque Zoologico Nacional in Santo Domingo will address this issue using the endemic Hispaniolan trogon (*Priotelus roseigaster*) as a subject. Birds will be captured under the supervision of Jose Ottenwalder, Director of Zoology, Research and Conservation. A specially designed aviary will be constructed off exhibit near the zoo's spacious walkthrough aviary. Data will be collected as to the ability of the species to adjust to captivity as well as its requirements as they relate to captive propagation. A similar effort began in Belize under the auspices of the Belize Zoo. It is currently on hold until the relocation of the zoo is completed.

The Conservation Committee is also working with the various Federal and Puerto Rican authorities in hopes of establishing a captive breeding colony of the endangered black-hooded red siskin (*Carduelis cucullatus*) for possible release into the wild in Venezuela. Dallas Johnson also requested endorsement of the committee for his project, involving field studies and captive propagation, of the little known yellow-faced parrotlet (*Forpus xanthops*). The endorsement has been given and a sub-committee established to deal with this project.

Anyone interested in becoming involved with the Conservation Committee in any capacity or who is interested in obtaining the 1987 Conservation Committee Report is encouraged to write: Jack Clinton-Eitnrear, Chairman, AFA Conservation Committee, 218 Conway, San Antonio, Texas 78209-1716. Telephone (512) 828-5306. ●



Endangered Mariana (Guam) crow, (*Corvus kubaryi*). The species is being investigated by Gary Michaels, Chairman, Guam Crow Sub-committee and is funded by a grant from the Conservation Fund.