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## **PRESUMED OR CONFIRMED NESTING ATTEMPTS BY BLACK-HOODED PARAKEETS (*Nandayus nenday*) IN FLORIDA**

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The monotypic Black-hooded Parakeet (*Nandayus nenday*) is native to palm groves, scrublands, and agricultural areas in the central interior of South America. Naturalized populations have developed in California and Florida as a result of individuals that were imported for the avicultural trade and then either subsequently escaped or were released (Pranty and Garrett 2003, Pranty and Lovell 2004). The first report of Black-hooded Parakeets in Florida was of two individuals at Eckerd College, St. Petersburg, Pinellas County, in 1969 (D. Goodwin pers. comm.). Since 1980, parakeet range and numbers have increased dramatically. We documented a population of 882 or more parakeets in nine peninsular counties from December 2002 through January 2004, and showed that the population increase approached exponential levels (Pranty and Lovell 2004). In 2004, the Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee ratified the Black-hooded Parakeet as an established exotic, and added the species to its official Florida list (Bowman and Greenlaw 2006). Since our paper was published, Black-hooded Parakeets have continued to expand their range along the central Gulf coast. Parakeets have recently colonized western Hillsborough County (Pranty 2009b, c; 2010) and northwestern Charlotte County (Pranty 2009a, b), and they have greatly increased their range and numbers in western Pasco County (e.g., 108 on the West Pasco CBC, 2 January 2009; NAS 2010). Black-hooded Parakeets now are the most common psittacid in parts of the Tampa Bay area (Pranty pers. obs.).

Black-hooded Parakeets breed and roost in natural cavities or those excavated by woodpeckers, in various natural or artificial substrates. Initial drafts of our manuscript on parakeet range and abundance (Pranty and Lovell 2004) included a section on nesting observations. Primarily to reduce the length of the manuscript, one reviewer recommended that we remove this section, and we complied. However, because the data that we had compiled represent the only information available on the nesting behavior of Black-hooded Parakeets in Florida, we present our data here.

#### METHODS

We sought to compile all known presumed or confirmed nesting observations of Black-hooded Parakeets in Florida. Historical information came from the original field data cards of the Florida Breeding Bird Atlas project (Kale et al. 1992), from Stevenson and Anderson (1994), and from the Florida Region reports in *American Birds*. To supplement these meager data, we posted requests to selected birding listservers in Florida during 2002 and 2009, and we communicated via e-mail with several birders (see acknowledgments). To gather nesting data of Black-hooded Parakeets in their native range, we posted a request to the ORNITH-L listserv, and this post was forwarded to the NEOORN-L listserv. Black-hooded Parakeets roost nightly inside cavities year-round (T. Mossbarger in litt., K. Tracey pers. comm.; Pranty pers. obs.), so we were careful to consider as active nests only those cavities that were occupied during mid-day. Many cavities were occupied on multiple occasions—several for weeks at a time (Table 1)—which strengthens our confidence that these cavities represented active parakeet nests rather than observations of parakeets prospecting potential nest sites.

#### RESULTS

We compiled 71 reports of presumed or confirmed nesting attempts by Black-hooded Parakeets in Florida since the 1980s (Table 1). All but one of these observations represent active nests; the single exception involved adults feeding juveniles. Most observations occurred during 2000-2002 and 2009, which represented the periods when we were actively gathering data on the parakeet. Dates of active nests range from 28 October to 23 July, with most nests (30 of 45 nests with dates; 66%) active in April, May, or June (Table 1). Active nests have been observed in 11 counties in Florida (Table 1), with recent activity observed in all but Bay, Lee, and Polk counties. Pinellas County, which contains by far the largest number of Black-hooded Parakeets (Pranty and Lovell 2004), accounted for 33 nesting reports, followed by nine in Broward County, seven each in Pasco and Sarasota counties, and lesser numbers in four other counties (Table 1). Some cavities, primarily those in utility poles, were used for two or more years; one cavity in Sarasota County was occupied for six consecutive years (Table 1). One palm snag in Broward County that supported an active parakeet nest in 2002 was bulldozed for the construction of a parking lot (Pranty and Epps 2002, S. Epps in litt.).

**Table 1. Observations of presumed or confirmed nesting attempts by Black-hooded Parakeets in Florida, 1982-2010 (*n* = 71). Observations are arranged alphabetically, then chronologically, by county and location.**

COUNTY	LOCATION	DATE	EVIDENCE	SUBSTRATE	REFERENCE
Bay	Laguna Beach Quadrangle, Block 4 Davie	5 Jun 1986 ff 19 Apr 2002	two active nests <sup>1</sup> two active nests <sup>2</sup>	palm snag royal palm snag	Kale et al. (1992) Pranty and Epps (2002)
Broward	Fort Lauderdale, Bayview	11 Jun 2001	two juveniles fed by adults	n/a	Pranty and Epps (2002)
Broward	Fort Lauderdale, Bonnet House	18 Apr 2009	active nest	royal palm snag	A. Wiley in litt.
Broward	Fort Lauderdale, northeast	15 Dec 2001- 25 Jun 2002	active nest; nestling visible on latter date	Chinese fan palm snag	Pranty and Epps (2002)
Broward	Hugh Taylor Birch State Park	22 Apr 2008	active nest	palm snag	R. Leatto in litt.
Broward	Wilton Manors	11 Feb-30 May 2001	active nest	royal palm snag	Pranty and Epps (2002)
Broward	Wilton Manors	3 Mar-late May 2002	active nest <sup>3</sup>	royal palm snag	Pranty and Epps (2002)
Lee	Pine Island	1 May 1985	active nest	unknown	Kale (1985)
Manatee	Bradenton	17-23 July 2002	active nest	wooden utility pole	W. Stinehelfer in litt.
Manatee	?	spring 2006	active nest	palm snag	M. Snyder in litt.

<sup>1</sup>... Pair nesting in cavity in top of dead palm. [Palm] later cut down, pair attempted another nest in second palm but disappeared (probably captured!). Undoubted escapees - at least one [had] colored band on leg."

<sup>2</sup>Same snag; both nests active simultaneously.

<sup>3</sup>Snag removed by 5 Jun 2002 for construction of a parking lot.

<sup>4</sup>"A number" of birds reportedly nesting.

<sup>5</sup>"Nest blown down in storm—eggs taken to South Kendall Animal Clinic."

<sup>6</sup>Same pole used in both years.

<sup>7</sup>Same pole used in at least three years.

<sup>8</sup>Same snag used in both years; two nests active simultaneously in July 2002.

<sup>9</sup>Snag photographed in Robbins et al. (2006).

<sup>10</sup>Snag fell down, two eggs inside cavity.

<sup>11</sup>Snag cut down; both nestlings rescued and raised in captivity.

<sup>12</sup>Same cavity used for six consecutive years.

**Table 1. (Continued) Observations of presumed or confirmed nesting attempts by Black-hooded Parakeets in Florida, 1982-2010 (*n* = 71). Observations are arranged alphabetically, then chronologically, by county and location.**

COUNTY	LOCATION	DATE	EVIDENCE	SUBSTRATE	REFERENCE
Miami-Dade	eastern Kendall	18 Feb 2003	active nest	wooden utility pole	B. Boeringer in litt.
Miami-Dade	Goulds Quadrangle, Block 4	9 Jun 1991	nest with young	unknown	Kale et al. (1992)
Miami-Dade	Larry and Penny Thompson Park, Miami	May 2009	active nest <sup>4</sup>	slash pine snag	R. Hammer in litt.
Miami-Dade	South Miami Quadrangle, Block 3	7 Jun 1989	nest with eggs <sup>5</sup>	unknown	Kale et al. (1992)
Palm Beach	near Palm Beach International Airport	Jun 2000	active nest; three juveniles on 23 June	royal palm snag	Pranty (2001); J. Kern in litt.
Pasco	Anclote	26 May 2001, 2 Feb 2002	same active nest <sup>6</sup>	wooden utility pole	K. Tracey in litt.
Pasco	Anclote	12 May 2003	active nest	wooden utility pole	Pranty (2003)
Pasco	New Port Richey, Plathe Road	8 May 2003	active nest	wooden utility pole	K. Tracey in litt.
Pasco	New Port Richey, US-19	8 May 2003 ff, Apr-Jun 2009, Apr 2010	same active nest <sup>7</sup>	wooden utility pole	Pranty (2003), K. Tracey pers. comm., Pranty and Lovell pers. obs.

<sup>1</sup>... Pair nesting in cavity in top of dead palm. [Palm] later cut down, pair attempted another nest in second palm but disappeared (probably captured!). Undoubted escapees - at least one [had] colored band on leg."

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**Table 1. (Continued) Observations of presumed or confirmed nesting attempts by Black-hooded Parakeets in Florida, 1982-2010 (n = 71). Observations are arranged alphabetically, then chronologically, by county and location.**

COUNTY	LOCATION	DATE	EVIDENCE	SUBSTRATE	REFERENCE
Pinellas	Clearwater	9-23 May 2000	active nest	Mexican fan palm snag	J. Fisher in litt.
Pinellas	Clearwater	9 May 2001	active nest	Mexican fan palm snag	J. Fisher in litt.
Pinellas	Clearwater, Bellevue Biltmore	3 Jun 2002	active nest	palm snag	K. Nelson in litt.
Pinellas	Clearwater Quadrangle, Block 3 (near Dunedin Hammock Park)	1988	active nest	Mexican fan palm snag	Kale et al. (1992); D. Goodwin pers. comm.
Pinellas	Clearwater	3 Jun 2009	active nest	wooden utility pole	T. Wright in litt.
Pinellas	Dunedin Hammock Park	28 Apr 2000	active nest	wooden utility pole	J. Fisher in litt.
Pinellas	Dunedin Quadrangle, Block 6	1987	active nest	unknown	Kale et al. (1992)
Pinellas	Dunedin, near Palm Harbor Middle School	2001, 27 May-15 Jul 2002	same active nest (two nests in 2002), nestling visible 15 July 2002 <sup>8</sup>	Mexican fan palm snag	M. Korosy in litt.
Pinellas	Isla del Sol	2001	active nest	royal palm snag	J. Bouton in litt.
Pinellas	Fort De Soto Park, campground	20 Apr 2002	active nest, removing material	cabbage palm snag	Pranty (2002)

<sup>8</sup> . . . Pair nesting in cavity in top of dead palm. [Palm] later cut down, pair attempted another nest in second palm but disappeared (probably captured!). Undoubted escapees - at least one [had] colored band on leg.”  
<sup>9</sup>Same snag; both nests active simultaneously.  
<sup>10</sup>Snag removed by 5 Jun 2002 for construction of a parking lot.  
<sup>11</sup>“A number” of birds reportedly nesting.  
<sup>12</sup>Nest blown down in storm—eggs taken to South Kendall Animal Clinic.”  
<sup>13</sup>Same pole used in both years.  
<sup>14</sup>Same pole used in at least three years.  
<sup>15</sup>Same snag used in both years; two nests active simultaneously in July 2002.  
<sup>16</sup>Snag photographed in Robbins et al. (2006).  
<sup>17</sup>Snag fell down, two eggs inside cavity.  
<sup>18</sup>Snag cut down; both nestlings rescued and raised in captivity.  
<sup>19</sup>Same cavity used for six consecutive years.

**Table 1. (Continued) Observations of presumed or confirmed nesting attempts by Black-hooded Parakeets in Florida, 1982-2010 (*n* = 71). Observations are arranged alphabetically, then chronologically, by county and location.**

COUNTY	LOCATION	DATE	EVIDENCE	SUBSTRATE	REFERENCE
Pinellas	Fort De Soto Park, North Beach	12 May 2002	active nest	cabbage palm snag	D. Roemer in litt.
Pinellas	Fort De Soto Park	15 Mar 2007	active nest	cabbage palm snag	D. Roemer in litt.
Pinellas	Gulfport, Clam Bayou Park	14 Apr 2003	two active nests	Mexican fan palm snags	T. Davidowicz in litt.
Pinellas	Gulfport	9 Jun 2004	active nest	wooden utility pole	M. Oberle in litt.
Pinellas	Gulfport, Clam Bayou	22 Mar 2006	active nest <sup>9</sup>	slash pine snag	D. Margeson in litt.
Pinellas	Largo	20 Nov 2000	active nest	wooden utility pole	J. Fisher in litt.
Pinellas	Pasadena	4 Feb 2002	active nest	wooden utility pole	H. Warren in litt.
Pinellas	St. Petersburg Quadrangle, Block 3	28 May 1991	active nest	unknown	Kale et al. (1992)
Pinellas	St. Petersburg Quadrangle, Block 6	1986	active nest	unknown	Kale et al. (1992)
Pinellas	St. Petersburg Quadrangle, Block 6	1987	active nest	unknown	Kale et al. (1992)
Pinellas	St. Petersburg, Eckerd College	1999	active nest; nestlings fledged	Mexican fan palm snag	B. Forys in litt.
Pinellas	St. Petersburg, Eckerd College	Feb 2000	nest with eggs <sup>10</sup>	Mexican fan palm snag	B. Forys in litt.

<sup>14</sup> . . . Pair nesting in cavity in top of dead palm. [Palm] later cut down, pair attempted another nest in second palm but disappeared (probably captured!). Undoubted escapees - at least one [had] colored band on leg."

<sup>9</sup>Same snag; both nests active simultaneously.

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COUNTY	LOCATION	DATE	EVIDENCE	SUBSTRATE	REFERENCE
Pinellas	St. Petersburg, Eckerd College	21 Apr 2002	active nest, pair copulated	Mexican fan palm snag	Pranty pers. obs.
Pinellas	St. Petersburg, Weedon Island	2004	two active nests	Mexican fan palm snags	L. Margesson in litt.
Pinellas	Seminole, Bay Pines Hospital	1 Jun 2000	active nest	palm snag	J. Fisher in litt.
Pinellas	Seminole, Boca Ciega Park	28 Oct 2000	active nest	wooden utility pole	J. Fisher in litt.
Pinellas	Seminole, Boca Ciega Park	27 Mar 2001	active nest	wooden utility pole	J. Fisher in litt.
Pinellas	Seminole, Boca Ciega Park	17 Jun 2001	active nest	wooden utility pole	J. Fisher in litt.
Pinellas	Seminole, Lake Seminole Park	1-2 Jun 2002	active nest	wooden utility pole	K. Nelson in litt.
Pinellas	Seminole, Walsingham Park	26 Mar 2001	active nest	wooden utility pole	J. Fisher in litt.
Polk	near Dundee	Nov 1982	active nest	unknown	Atherton and Atherton (1983); L. Cooper in litt.
St. Johns	Crescent Beach	1 Jul 2001	active nest; nestling visible	cabbage palm snag	P. Bowen in litt.

<sup>14</sup>... Pair nesting in cavity in top of dead palm. [Palm] later cut down, pair attempted another nest in second palm but disappeared (probably captured). Undoubted escapees - at least one [had] colored band on leg.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup>Same snag; both nests active simultaneously.

<sup>30</sup>Snag removed by 5 Jun 2002 for construction of a parking lot.

<sup>31</sup>"A number" of birds reportedly nesting.

<sup>32</sup>Nest blown down in storm—eggs taken to South Kendall Animal Clinic."

<sup>33</sup>Same pole used in both years.

<sup>34</sup>Same pole used in at least three years.

<sup>35</sup>Same snag used in both years; two nests active simultaneously in July 2002.

<sup>36</sup>Snag photographed in Robbins et al. (2006).

<sup>37</sup>Snag fell down, two eggs inside cavity.

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COUNTY	LOCATION	DATE	EVIDENCE	SUBSTRATE	REFERENCE
St. Johns	Anastasia Island	1980s	active nest	Monk Parakeet nest	Robertson and Woolfenden (1992); P. Powell in litt.
St. Johns	St. Augustine Quadrangle, Block 6 (Anastasia Island)	1988	active nest	palm snag	Kale et al. (1992)
St. Johns	St. Augustine	1996 or 1997	active nest	palm snag	van Doorn (1997)
Sarasota	Sarasota	May or Jun 2004	active nest with two nestlings <sup>11</sup>	palm snag	B. Mathie in litt., photos provided
Sarasota	northeast Sarasota	spring 2004-2009	same nest with young <sup>12</sup>	wooden utility pole	T. Mossbarger in litt.

<sup>14</sup> . . . Pair nesting in cavity in top of dead palm. [Palm] later cut down, pair attempted another nest in second palm but disappeared (probably captured!). Undoubted escapees - at least one [had] colored band on leg.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Same snag; both nests active simultaneously.

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Substrates are known for 61 presumed or confirmed nests in Florida: 34 (55%) in palm snags, 24 (40%) in wooden utility poles, two (3%) in slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*) snags, and one (1%) in an active Monk Parakeet (*Myiopsitta monachus*) nest (Table 1). Four species of palms have served as nesting substrates: Mexican fan palm (*Washingtonia robusta*;  $n = 13$ ), Cuban royal palm (*Roystonea regia elata*;  $n = 7$ ), cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*;  $n = 4$ ), and Chinese fan palm (*Livistona chinensis*;  $n = 1$ ), along with palms not identified to species ( $n = 9$ ). Cabbage palms are native to Florida, while the other palms have been imported for landscaping.

## DISCUSSION

Information about the nesting biology of Black-hooded Parakeets in their native range is limited. The only such observations known to Forshaw (1977), del Hoyo et al. (1997), and Juniper and Parr (1998) were by Naumburg (1930), who reported that Black-hooded Parakeets nested in corral posts in the state of Mato Grosso, Brazil, during the latter half of November. Clutch size (four eggs) was known from a single nest! During the 1990s, Tony Pittman (in litt.) found “many” Black-hooded Parakeet nests in Brazil that were built in palm snags and fence posts. Christina Morales (in litt.) studied Black-hooded Parakeets at Bajo Chaco, Paraguay, between September 1995 and January 1996. She found 32 nests: 31 in snags of caranday palms (*Copernicia alba*) and one in a snag of a yellow tabebuia (*Tabebuia caraiba*). Clutch size varied from one egg to seven eggs, with a mean of four eggs (C. Morales in litt.). Breeding success across all nests was 0.7 fledglings per nest. During her study, parakeets were single-brooded but laid replacement clutches if the first attempt failed (C. Morales in litt.).

Although nesting activity in Florida takes place primarily during spring and summer (April-June), Black-hooded Parakeets appear to have an extended breeding season in the state. Active nests have been observed in all months except August and September (Table 1). The two egg-dates available are sometime in February (2000) and 7 June (1989). In some cases, parakeets defended cavities for several weeks before incubation appeared to begin. Nesting substrates in Florida are similar to those observed in Brazil (Naumburg 1930, T. Pittman in litt.) and Paraguay (C. Morales in litt.).

Interactions between Black-hooded Parakeets and three other bird species have been observed in Florida. Parakeets successfully defended a nest cavity in Manatee County from European Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) in July 2002 (W. Stinehelfer in litt.), and were seen “fighting starlings” over a potential cavity in Broward County (G. Cashin *vide* S. Epps in litt.). Competition over cavities between Black-hooded Para-

keets and Pileated Woodpeckers (*Dryocopus pileatus*) has been noted in Pinellas County (D. Margeson in Robbins et al. 2006, J. Fisher in litt.) and in Sarasota County (A. Bishop in litt., T. Mossbarger in litt.). Sometimes the parakeets were successful in defending the cavities from woodpeckers, while at other times the woodpeckers repelled the parakeets. Not related to nesting activity was an American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) that repeatedly dove on a Black-hooded Parakeet, which then flew up and chased the kestrel, at Fort De Soto Park, Pinellas County, on 11 March 2003 (I. Hernandez in litt.). A cavity in a utility pole in Pasco County used as a parakeet nest from April to June 2009 (Table 1) contained an abandoned honeybee (*Apis mellifera*) honeycomb on 14 November 2009 (Pranty photograph). This honeycomb had been removed by April 2010, when a pair of Black-hooded Parakeets again occupied the cavity (Table 1). Honeybees also temporarily usurped a utility-pole cavity in Pasco County during September-October 2009 that was occupied by Sun Parakeets (*Aratinga solstitialis*; Pranty and Lovell 2011). Given their reliance on suburban and urban areas, and considering the few, minor interactions noted here, it appears that the impacts of Black-hooded Parakeets in Florida to native species and habitats are negligible.

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