

## **European Museum Hires the Professional Services of A Biologist In A Caribbean Republic**

By Carlos Delaney

A director from the famous Musée de Histoire Naturelle des Tropiques in Europe hired a local biologist of a Caribbean Republic to collect 1500 specimens from 75 species of resident birds. The knowledge of the vast majority of the population and biological requirements of the birds in the Caribbean Republic is fragmented and in some cases it is inexistent.

The biologist decided to do the job in his free time, and will earn the equivalent of six months of his salary. He worked at the Ministry of Agriculture Ministry, the regulating and custodian agency of the natural heritage if the Caribbean Republic where part of his job was precisely to investigate the population and biological requirements of the birds in the Caribbean Republic.

His office partner, who was the officer who issues the permits for collecting fauna and flora specimens, questioned the amount of specimens to be collected and what it could mean to some species. He was not an expert in birds, but, because the proposal does not violate the regulations of his country, he gave the permit to his office partner.

*Question:*

Should the biologist have accepted the contract with the famous Musée while he was working for the Ministry of Agricultura of the Caribbean Republic? Why?

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In another scenario --the biologist doesn't work for the Ministry of Agriculture, but is conscious about the weaknesses of the regulations and the poor knowledge about the population and biological requirements of the birds in the Caribbean Republic. Also, he knows that the Ministry would give him the permit no matter what. In that case,

*Questions:*

1. is there something he should do before asking for the permit?
2. What should he do? Why?
3. From the ethical point of view, did the officer omit any important step in approving the permit?