

# Endemics and birds of the Eastern Caribbean

The Lesser Antilles island group straddles the Eastern Caribbean region between the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean. In total, we visit nine islands: Antigua, Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Montserrat, St Lucia and St Vincent. Most islands have at least one endemic bird species with St Lucia holding the largest number of seven. Our travels take us to some truly breathtaking areas in this little-watched area of the world for birds. You can expect to observe many of the Caribbean region's endemic birds in addition to several which are shared with the larger islands of the Western Caribbean.

■ Please note the following itinerary is subject to change due to inter-island flight schedules.

**Day 1:** Fly to St John's in Antigua where we have a three-night stay. On arrival we should locate the common birds of Antigua - Grey Kingbird, Zenaida Dove and White-crowned Pigeon.

**Day 2:** Today, a ferry to Barbuda, a dry, flat island north of Antigua, which makes up the other half of this two-island country. Our main interest is locating the endemic Barbuda Warbler. Other Lesser Antillean endemic species we may locate include - Green-throated Carib and Lesser Antillean Bullfinch. Barbuda is also home to a large colony of Magnificent Frigatebirds, Brown Pelican, Brown Booby, American Royal



**Barbuda Warbler**

Photo: Antigua Tourist Board

## Dates

Saturday November 19th –  
Saturday December 3rd 2022

Leader: Mark Finn and local guides

Group Size: 8

Birds: 90-120

Tern, West Indian Whistling Duck, Black-whiskered Vireo, Golden Warbler and Carib Grackle.

**Day 3:** This morning we embark on a short flight to Montserrat, an island which was partially destroyed by the Soufriere Hills Volcano which erupted in 1995. Our main interest is the Montserrat Oriole found in the Central Hills Reserve. Other species present include Purple-throated Carib, Brown Trembler, Pearly-eyed Thrasher and the shy Forest Thrush. With a little luck, we may find the uncommon Bridled Quail-dove and Antillean Crested Hummingbirds. More widespread species on Montserrat are Red-billed Tropicbird, Little Blue Heron, Great and Snowy Egrets, American Kestrel, Merlin, Common Ground Dove and Mangrove Cuckoo. Return to Antigua for the night.

**Day 4:** Antigua has several lagoons and salt pans which we can explore this morning. The island holds a good population of White-cheeked Pintail and the Caribbean



**Trinidad Motmot** *Photo: Barry Lancaster*

race of American Coot. Wintering shorebirds from the High Arctic include Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Willet and Solitary Sandpipers. Among the resident species, we may find Black-crowned and Yellow-crowned Night Herons, Wilson's Plover, Great Blue, Little Blue, Tricoloured and Green Herons and White-crowned Pigeon which reaches the southern end of its range on Antigua. Later in the day, we take a flight south to the forested island of Dominica for a three-night stay.

**Days 5-6:** Today we start our exploration of Dominica by travelling from Portsmouth to the Northern Forest Reserve on the lower slopes of Morne Diablotin. Dawn is the best time to encounter the endemic Red-necked Parrot from a viewpoint. A little more time and luck is required to locate the extremely rare Imperial Parrot, probably the hardest of the Lesser Antilles endemics to see. The reserve has extensive trail systems bordered by tree ferns and huge trees. Species we expect to find include Lesser Antillean Swift, Blue-headed Hummingbird, Lesser Antillean Peewee, Lesser Antillean Flycatcher and the recent-

ly split Dominica House Wren. As we wander around the trails, sightings of Caribbean Elaenia, Scaly-breasted Thrasher, Plumbeous Warbler, Red-legged Thrush and Antillean Euphonia should be possible. Lower down in the mango stands, we search for the uncommon Lesser Antillean Saltator and Scaly-naped Pigeon. Returning to Portsmouth, we should see more widespread species – Broad-winged Hawk, Ruddy Quail-dove and the impressive Belted and Ringed Kingfishers. The coast road also offers us Roseate Tern, Cliff Swallow, Caribbean Martin and Tropical Mockingbird. On the morning of Day 6, we have another visit to the Northern Forest Reserve in case we have missed anything on the previous morning. In the afternoon we visit Portsmouth on the coast road where we may find Grey and Semipalmated Plovers, Spotted Sandpiper, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Yellow-billed Cuckoo and Scaly-breasted Munia. Stands of scrub may hold wintering American Redstart.

**Days 7-8:** We leave Dominica with a ferry journey across to Guadeloupe, a French overseas territory. Guadeloupe is a forest-



**Copper-rumped Hummingbird** Photo: Barry Lancaster

ed island holding Bridled Quail-dove and an endemic race of Forest Thrush. Our main interest is locating the endemic Guadeloupe Woodpecker which prefers to feed in dangling branches laden with berries and fruit. The forests of Guadeloupe also attract wintering North American warblers and we may encounter American Redstart, Prothonotary, Chestnut-sided and Blackpoll Warblers. Two night stay in Guadeloupe.

**Day 9:** Today we take a short flight to Martinique. The island is well forested and has some of the oldest trees in the Caribbean. Our main target is the endemic Martinique Oriole. The forest is also home to Black-whiskered Vireo and Blue-headed Hummingbirds whilst coastal areas have Golden Warbler and Ruddy Quail-dove. Nights in Martinique.

**Day 10:** Depending on flight times, we explore another area on Martinique before making the short flight to St Lucia and a two-night stay.

**Days 11-12:** St Lucia is an island dominated by lofty peaks rising from the Caribbean Sea. The island also has seven endemic birds which we hope to find. Our main interest is the Edmund Forest Reserve holding St Lucia Parrot, St Lucia Warbler, St Lucia Black Finch and St Lucia Oriole. The dry north-eastern area of St Lucia has the localised and rare St Lucia Wren. We also have further opportunities for St Lucia Peewee, White-breasted Thrasher and Bridled Quail-dove. Other species we may see include Purple-throated and Green-throated Caribs, Grey Trembler, Bare-eyed Thrush and Black-whiskered Vireo. On the afternoon of Day 12, we make the flight to the island of St Vincent where we stay for two nights. The flight sometimes goes via Barbados where the airport holds the endemic Barbados Bullfinch.

**Day 13:** St Vincent is a mountainous island with extensive stands of forest. Our main interest is in locating the three endemic birds – St Vincent Parrot, St Vincent Wren and the beautiful Whistling



**Red-necked Parrot** *Photo: Barry Lancaster*

Warbler. Other species we may find include Common Black Hawk, Cocoa Thrush, Grenada Flycatcher, Lesser Antillean Tanager and Eared Dove.

**Days 14-15:** This morning we fly to Grenada, the most southerly of the Lesser Antilles, for a two-night stay. Grenada is also known as the spice island and is famous for the production of nutmeg. Our target species here is the highly endangered Grenada Dove which has a population numbering around 60 birds and occurs in the dry forest woodlands along with the critically endangered Grenada Hook-billed Kite. Other species present include Rufous-breasted Hermit, Yellow-bellied Elaenia, Yellow-bellied Seedeater and Shiny Cowbird. Grenada has around 35 resident land-birds. Other range-restricted species present include Grenada Flycatcher, Lesser Antillean Tanager and Lesser Antillean Bullfinch.

**Day 16:** Fly to either Antigua or Barbados for onward connections to the UK. Arrival is on the following morning.

## Prices

Ground Price: £6250  
 Single room: £350  
 Deposit: £500  
 \*Air Fare: £1500

This holiday is fully inclusive of flights, accommodation and meals, transport, permit fees, guidance, tips and taxes.

**Not included:** drinks, insurance, items of a personal nature.

\* Please refer to our terms and conditions relating to flights