

Observations on the Birds of Antigua

*A new, updated island list
of 143 species, with notes on
when and where to see them*

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ANTIGUA IS A SMALL Caribbean island (108 sq. mi.) located at the north end of the Lesser Antilles, at latitude 17°6'N, longitude 61°45'W. Barbuda, situated about 32 miles away, is the only island to the north of Antigua. Antigua is a hilly island (the highest point being Boggy Peak, 1319 feet), rimmed for the most part by white sandy beaches and outlying coral. The climate is mild year 'round, with the warmest daily mean temperatures (averaging 83° to 86°F) in August and September, and cooler temperatures (averaging 73° to 76°) in January and February. The rainy season usually begins about the middle of August and lasts until December. The dry season, from January to August, is interrupted by light rains in June. The mean annual rainfall from 1933 to 1966 was 41.50 inches, with a high of 55.26 inches in 1952 and a low of 28.29 inches in 1953.¹ Rainfall is sufficiently irregular in various parts of the island to be of ornithological importance. For instance in May 1941, the Wallings Reservoir area (see Fig. 1 for locations of places mentioned in text) reported 4.46 inches of rain and Langford reported 20.45 inches, while the all-island average was 12.77 inches.

Between 1934 and 1967, Antigua was a British Colony. In 1967, it, along with Barbuda, became an Associated State in the Commonwealth of Great Britain. Since 1967, the government has changed land usage so that sugarcane is no longer the major crop; estate holdings have been broken into smaller parcels. As of early 1977, there were approximately 1000 acres in controlled livestock pasturage, 3000 acres in corn, 750 acres in cotton (250 acres in estate holdings and the rest in small farmer's plots), and several thousand acres in small holdings for vegetable and food crops. On an estimated 14,000 acres, consisting of grasslands and "cassie" bush (*Acacia* spp.) there is uncontrolled livestock pasturage. Around the southern peaks, there are a few thousand acres of forested areas. Sugarcane, which was the main crop, had totally disappeared by 1975; it is now slowly being reintroduced.

In the most recently detailed report of the avifauna of Antigua, Danforth (1934) listed 87 species of birds (six considered hypothetical). Of these, Danforth saw or collected 61 species

during a three-week trip to Antigua from July 26 to August 17, 1933 (three days of which were spent on Barbuda). The remaining 26 species were previously recorded by other ornithologists visiting the island.

The present report is based on five years of almost daily observations by CSH from August 1972 through July 1977, and 12 days in March 1967. During March 5 - 13, 1977, JMW visited the island also, and in approximately 20 hours of observation both authors together saw 61 of the 91 species regularly seen on Antigua. No birds were collected for this report; all information is based on direct observation, usually with binoculars and telescope, unless otherwise noted.

Changes in weather and distribution of birds

OF THE TOTAL 143 SPECIES listed below, 64 were not reported by Danforth. This is undoubtedly due in part to our much longer

¹Rainfall records for 40 or more stations were kept by the Department of Agriculture between 1933 and 1966. Since 1966 only irregular rainfall records are available.

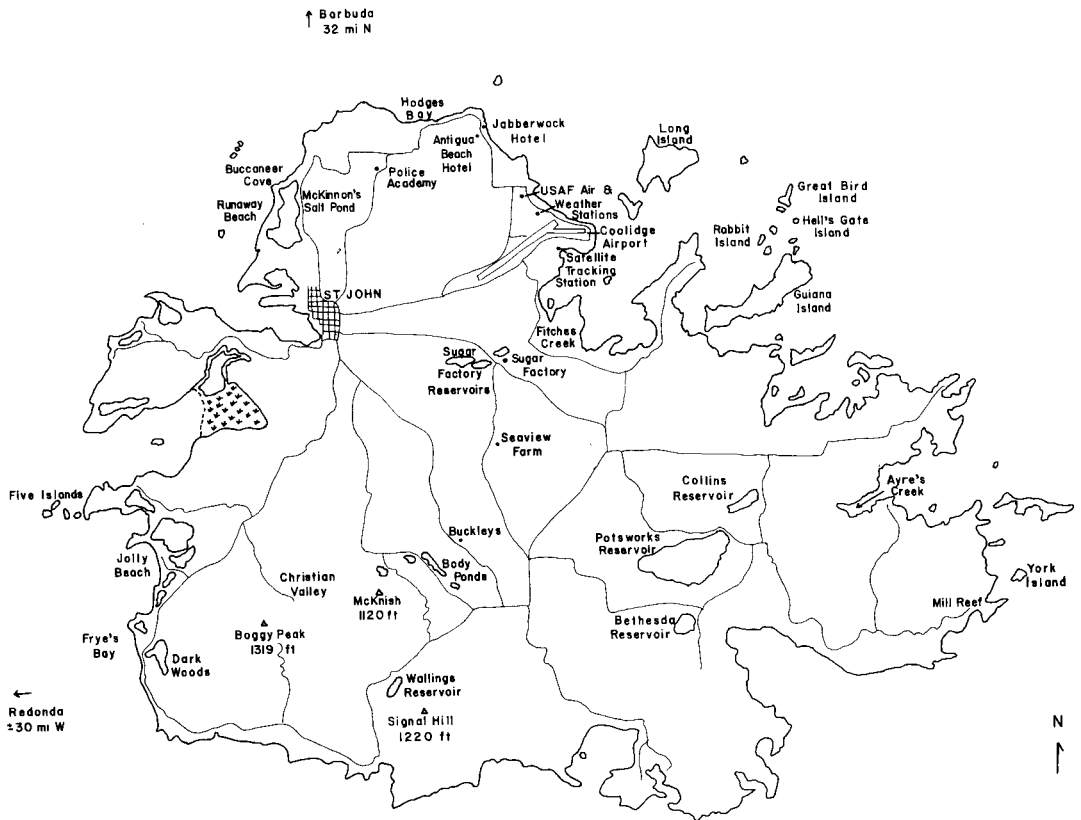


Fig. 1: Map of Antigua, indicating location of all places referred to in paper.

period of observation which has covered all seasons of the year. Another factor may be the changes in local weather which seem to affect the bird populations from year to year. In 1974 there was little or no rain from January until the middle of August; the island appeared brown when viewed from the air and cattle, which forage uncontrolled over the island, starved for lack of food and water. Insects were so scarce that Gray Kingbirds² would dive for bread thrown in the air. Ferns and small grasses, and shrubs in the forest area above Wallings Dam were dying and large trees wilted. Fresh water ponds dried up. Then heavy showers began about the middle of August and run-off was sufficient so that large grassy areas were inundated with one to three inches of water. Large flocks of migrating shorebirds were seen that year, and ducks and coots were seen on many fresh-water

²Scientific names of birds mentioned in the text will be found in the annotated list below.

ponds. Nineteen inches of rain were recorded in November 1974 and roads were flooded. These heavy rains permitted unusual insect reproduction for this time of year. At Frye's Bay, one Sunday in early February 1975, a column of moths and butterflies that was 15 feet high extended outward from the edge of the beach about 25 feet over water and passed by continuously for at least four hours. There must have been millions of insect larvae in the hills above Wallings to produce this many *Lepidoptera*. The abundance of insects at this time or the widespread rain over the area may well account for the unusual presence of 14 species of warblers seen above Wallings just after the heavy rains in November of that year.

DURING THE AUTUMNS OF 1975 and 1976, rains did not begin until around the first of September and there was little or no run-off until October. In fact, in 1976 there was so little run-off that the main source of drinking water for the island, located at Potsworks

Reservoir, had decreased from the normal eighteen months supply to seventy days. As a result of little standing water during the period from August until October in 1975 and 1976, the numbers of migrant shorebirds and passerines seen on Antigua were much diminished. In 1976, an unusual April rain produced a large hatch of fiddler crabs (*Uca* spp.) which was preyed upon by a flock of 400 Laughing Gulls, a Slender-billed Gull and a Lesser Black-backed Gull at McKinnon's Salt Pond. In other years never more than 25 Laughing Gulls were seen at one time and the two other species represented new records for the island.

Observation sites

THERE ARE SEVERAL AREAS of ornithological interest on Antigua. One of these is the beach with its brackish ponds at McKinnon's Salt Pond. The beach is narrow and has about 15 to 25 feet of sand. Tides do not vary more than a foot on the island. During a dry season, the pond area dries up completely, but during the rainy season with good run-off, 100 acres may be inundated with one to four inches of water. This area, located on the northwest corner of the island, is attractive to shorebirds arriving in the fall. Twenty-six species of shorebirds have been seen on the island, most of them in this area. Least Terns and Wilson's Plovers nest on the sand in summer, and Yellow-crowned Night Herons nest in the mangroves around the edge.

On the southwest corner of the island, fresh water at Dark Woods and brackish water at the pond north of Jolly Beach attract north-bound shorebirds in spring. Dark Woods is a large pasture area that receives much run-off and becomes a foot deep at the south edge near the woods. Gallinules, herons and egrets, whistling-ducks and Blue-winged Teal, and a few migrating coots and grebes can be found here. It is here that Glossy Ibises are seen each November along with American Wigeon and Black-headed Gulls. The brackish water pond at Jolly Beach provided the unusual opportunity of seeing two Curlew Sandpipers along with a few White-rumped and Semipalmated Sandpipers in June 1976. In addition, Black-necked Stilt, a few Brown Pelicans and some shorebirds are found here year 'round.



Fig. 2: Warbler habitat of migrant and wintering warblers in hills above Wallings Reservoir. Photo/ J.M. Williams.

In the hilly area of the south volcanic coast are Christian Valley and the hills above Wallings. Christian Valley lies northeast of Boggy Peak and is between it and McKnish. This is an area of heavy forest with high humidity (most of the ferns occur in this valley), and it is here that Ruddy and Bridled Quail-Doves and both thrashers are found. The slopes of Signal Hill to the north are paved with drainage ditches so that all north slope run-off feeds into Wallings Reservoir. This slope has a second growth forest but is more open and less humid than Christian Valley, with a small preserve of mahogany (*Swietenia mahagoni*)

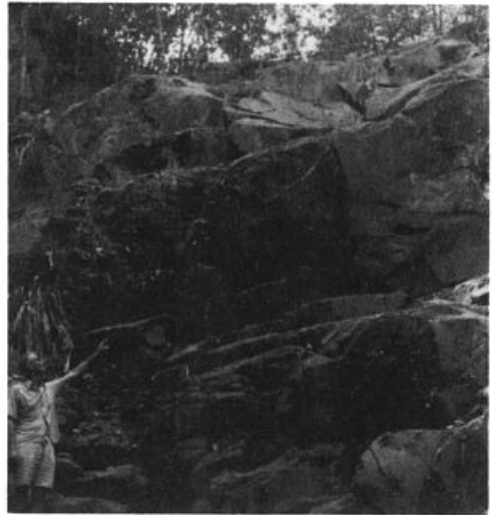


Fig. 3: Christian Valley, dry creek bed in March. The Purple-throated Carib, Ruddy and Bridled quail-doves, and Scaly-breasted and Pearly-eyed thrashers are seen regularly here. Photo/ J.M. Williams.

several acres in extent. These are the usual haunts of the Blue-hooded Euphonia, wood warblers and both Zenaida Dove and White-crowned Pigeon.

Fitches Creek is the drainage area from the central part of the island around the Sugar Factory into the sea. Less than one half mile long, it is shallow with a few channels about 18



Fig. 4: Fitches Creek where various species of shorebirds, herons, and whistling ducks can be seen. Photo/ T.C. Williams.

inches deep. Whitewood (*Terminalia* spp.), mangrove (*Avicennia nitida*) and manchineel (*Hippomane mancinella*) grow along both banks. There are usually one or two Whimbrels, a Black-bellied Plover and a few Lesser Yellowlegs to be found here at all seasons. Whistling-ducks, herons and egrets, Belted Kingfisher, and an occasional Osprey can be seen here. A few warblers pass through this area in spring.

A LARGE NUMBER OF SMALL PONDS exist, usually man-made for collecting water for livestock. The larger ponds, usually associated with a dam, are used for drinking water and irrigation. These harbor various waterfowl and attract the Solitary Sandpiper in the fall. Some of the larger bodies of water are Potsworks Reservoir, Bethesda Reservoir, Sugar Factory Reservoirs and Body Ponds.

In the list of birds below, all sightings have been made by the authors unless otherwise noted. The order and nomenclature follow the A O U. Check-List and supplements (1957) and Bond (1971). Peterson *et al.* (1974) was used for Old World species. In the following species accounts, the term resident does not necessarily mean that the bird breeds on the

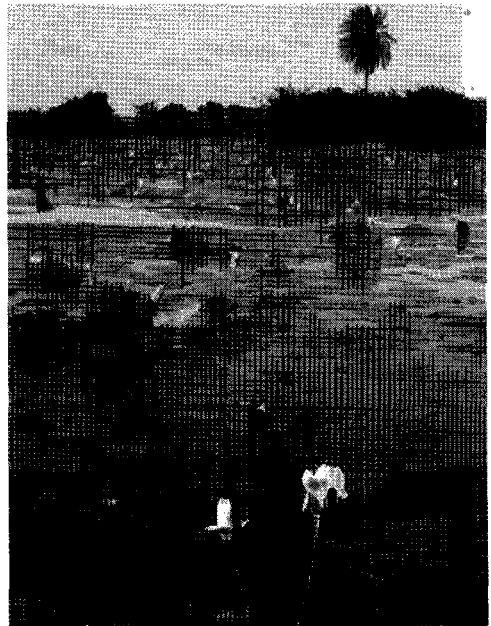


Fig. 5: Sugar Factory Dam Reservoir #3 where whistling ducks, soras, gallinules and coots can be seen. Photo/ T.C. Williams.

island. The dates of the migration seasons are approximately February 15 to April 1 for spring, and August 15 to October 1 for fall, except for the autumn warbler migration which lasts from early October through December. In the following list, we have separated the birds into four categories: Birds seen regularly on Antigua, birds seen only occasionally in recent years, birds for which identification was not positive, and birds not seen recently on Antigua, but for which there are previous reports. This last category may reflect changes in bird habitats on the island since 1967 (see above). Species marked with an asterisk (*) are those mentioned in Danforth (1934).

Birds seen regularly on Antigua

- ***Pied-billed Grebe** (*Podilymbus podiceps*). Year round breeding resident which is more common in winter. Up to seven birds have been seen on Bethesda Reservoir. In a large pond near the Sugar Factory, two adults with three immatures about one quarter the size of the adult birds were seen March 28, 1976.
- ***Red-billed Tropicbird** (*Phaethon aethereus*). Up to seven birds are seen on every visit to Great Bird and York Islands (both winter and summer)

These birds display and nest along the seaward side of Great Bird Island in May.

***Brown Pelican** (*Pelecanus occidentalis*). Known locally as "Brown Booby". A few regularly occur along the coastlines during the year; during spring migration as many as 53 adults have been seen in one large freshwater pond at Dark Woods. They are regularly seen breeding on Hells Gate and Rabbit Islands.

Blue-faced Booby (*Sula dactylatra*). Seen only offshore between Five Islands and Redonda Island.

Brown Booby (*Sula leucogaster*). Seen off the north and west coasts of Antigua, and in the Five Islands area. Numbers increase greatly during spring migrations. None known to be breeding in Antigua.

***Magnificent Frigatebird** (*Fregata magnificens*). A few seen regularly along the coast during the year. There are flocks of 20-30 birds in the harbor at St. Johns when fishing boats unload at the Fish Market docks. They perch on the tops of the masts of the fishing boats waiting for fish accidentally dropped into the water. A colony of approximately 2500 nests on Barbuda.

***Great Blue Heron** (*Ardea herodias*). Uncommon resident, although as many as 12 birds have been seen in one pond during spring migration. Can most often be seen at Potsworks.

***Green Heron** (*Butorides striatus*). Uncommon resident; one, two, or occasionally three are usually found in the larger freshwater ponds.

***Little Blue Heron** (*Florida caerulea*). An abundant breeding resident of the island, commonly known as the "Blue Gaulin", found at all freshwater ponds and along the brackish tidewater flats. Occasionally they have been seen in pasturelands with Cattle Egrets.

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*). Locally known as the "Cattle Gaulin", this bird is a very conspicuous breeding inhabitant of the pasturelands of the island, since the 1950s. There are several large roosts of 200 - 300 birds found near water at various places around the island.

***Great (Common) Egret** (*Casmerodius albus*). Listed as rare by Bond, 1971 this bird should now be considered a common resident. Three to six birds can be seen on any trip to Dark Woods or Fitches Creek, or other suitable habitats. Thirty or more together are not unusual during spring migration.

***Snowy Egret** (*Egretta thula*). One to two birds are usually seen at Dark Woods or Fitches Creek and occasionally at Factory Dams. It can be

seen at any season of the year, although 25 birds together is not unusual during spring migration.

Louisiana Heron (*Hydranassa tricolor*). Generally a scarce winter visitor, but has been seen between September and March annually. This bird usually remains in an area for several weeks before disappearing.

***Yellow-crowned Night Heron** (*Nyctanassa violacea*). Fairly common in mangroves near the coastline. As many as seven breeding birds have been seen in one small freshwater pond during May. Immature birds are generally seen in June or July, although one has been seen as late as October.

***Black-crowned Night Heron** (*Nycticorax nycticorax*). One recorded on April 28, 1974 at Dark Woods. This heron flew up from mangrove forest when disturbed by a gunshot. A group of nine was seen at Sugar Factory Reservoir #2, July 25, 1977.

Fulvous Whistling Duck (*Dendrocygna bicolor*). A resident of Antigua, as many as 35 have been seen in one flock at Colin's Reservoir. They generally feed in the vicinity of Ayre's Creek during the day, and fly to Colin's Reservoir or one of the offshore islands at sunset.

***West Indian Whistling Duck** (*Dendrocygna arborea*). Locally known as the "Whistler", these whistling-ducks are year 'round breeding residents. On February 1, 1976, four immature birds were seen with two adults on a freshwater pond near the Sugar Factory and remained for about a month. One immature bird was seen with an adult at Dark Woods on November 27, 1976. Locally reported to nest 5 feet above water in low mangroves in the vicinity of Ayre's Creek.

***White-cheeked Pintail (or Bahama Duck)** (*Anas bahamensis*). An uncommon breeding resident that is found in freshwater ponds and tidal areas both on Antigua and the small islands along the coasts. Usually seen in small numbers, one flock of 42 birds was seen April 25, 1976 in company with Fulvous Whistling-Ducks and Blue-winged Teal. Subject to hunting pressure by the local population.

Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*). Common winter resident. Subject to hunting pressure, these birds are very wary of humans. Although usually seen in small groups of 4 - 6 birds, several large flocks of up to 50 have been seen, and there are reports of flocks of 100+ birds on Barbuda.

***Broad-winged Hawk** (*Buteo platypterus*). The common hawk of Antigua, breeding on the island,

there appear to be about 15 pairs. They become uncommon during September and October, as if they migrate to another island during that time.

***Osprey** (*Pandion haliaetus*). Uncommon, although seen during all months of the year; it is possible that these birds migrate between local islands. A single Osprey was seen several miles at sea flying from the direction of Guadeloupe toward Antigua in March 1976. It did not appear to be fishing.

***Peregrine Falcon** (*Falco peregrinus*). Seen over York Island and Mill Reef during March 1977, and reported in this same area during previous migration seasons. Also seen above ridges just north of Signal Hill March 10, 1977

***American Kestrel** (*Falco sparverius*). Uncommon and probably a migrant from nearby islands, this bird is seen in small numbers throughout the year.

***Clapper Rail** (*Rallus longirostris*). Plentiful in the mangroves at Five Islands and Fitches Creek, although not seen in other suitable locations.

Sora (*Porzana carolina*). A migrant seen both spring and fall on freshwater ponds. Numerous immatures in juvenile plumage are seen during February and March.

***Common Gallinule** (*Gallinula chloropus*). Common resident found in many small ponds and in tidal flats near mangroves.

American Coot (*Fulica americana*). A regular winter visitor in small numbers. A flock of five was seen with other birds at Dark Woods November 23, 1976.

***Semipalmated Plover** (*Charadrius semipalmatus*). Regular spring and fall migrant through Antigua in small numbers.

Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*). A fall migrant only. Seen several times in September 1975.

Snowy Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*). A spring and fall migrant, although no more than three birds have been seen simultaneously, and not more than ten birds during any one season.

***Wilson's Plover** (*Charadrius wilsonia*). A common shorebird breeding on Antigua in May and June. Eight pairs were seen on the flats at Frye's Bay in June 1975.

***American Golden Plover** (*Pluvialis dominica*). A regular fall migrant, preferring grassy fields; also seen in brackish ponds and tidal flats.

***Black-bellied Plover** (*Pluvialis squatarola*). Com-

mon resident in small numbers, with small increases during migration periods.

***Ruddy Turnstone** (*Arenaria interpres*). Common resident in small groups of fewer than eight birds. Large groups of up to 100 birds/day seen during migration.

***Common Snipe** (*Capella gallinago*). Seen generally in freshwater ponds between December and April. The birds seem to remain for a few days

***Whimbrel** (*Numenius phaeopus*). A year 'round resident; present are both the American and European races. About one-fifth of the residents have the white rump. There are numerous North American migrants in spring and fall.

***Spotted Sandpiper** (*Actitis macularia*). A common resident in small numbers, but there are no breeding records.

***Solitary Sandpiper** (*Tringa solitaria*). A spring and fall migrant in small numbers, but there are no winter resident records for Antigua.

***Greater Yellowlegs** (*Tringa melanoleuca*). A regular spring and fall migrant, although in small numbers; not more than six birds seen on any one day.

***Lesser Yellowlegs** (*Tringa flavipes*). A common resident seen in all months. Large numbers of up to 300 birds in a flock pass through during migration. No breeding records.

Willet (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*). An uncommon resident in small numbers disappearing during August. A nest with four eggs was seen on Long Island May 29, 1977.

Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*). Fall and spring migrant, never more than three seen at any season.

***Pectoral Sandpiper** (*Calidris melanotos*). A common fall migrant; only a few are seen in spring migration, mostly on the west coast of the island.

***White-rumped Sandpiper** (*Calidris fuscicollis*). A fall migrant seen for only a few days in numbers of up to 60 birds in a flock; an occasional few seen during spring migration.

***Least Sandpiper** (*Calidris minutilla*). One of the scarcest migrants, only one or two seen each migration.

***Semipalmated Sandpiper** (*Calidris pusilla*). A resident throughout the year in small numbers, although up to 400 have been seen in one day during migration. No breeding records.

[**Western Sandpiper** (*Calidris mauri*). Probably a common resident and migrant, although not known since no collections have been made of this species and of *C. pusilla*.]

Sanderling (*Calidris alba*). An occasional winter visitor; a few seen during migrations, although never more than 1-3 at a time.

***Short-billed Dowitcher** (*Limnodromus griseus*). Seen during all months of the year in small numbers; large flocks of up to 200 birds pass through during migration. [Possibly the **Long-billed Dowitcher** (*L. scolopaceus*) is also in mixed groups with the Short-billed; it is difficult to distinguish the two in the field.]

***Stilt Sandpiper** (*Micropalama himantopus*). A few seen regularly during fall migration, but none has been seen in the spring during the last five years.

***Black-necked Stilt** (*Himantopus mexicanus*). Large flocks of 50-100 seen during migration; a few birds remain on the tidal flats throughout the year. Baby birds have been seen in July, indicating island nesting.

***Laughing Gull** (*Larus atricilla*). A common resident that breeds on the offshore islands of Antigua. Although generally never seen in flocks larger than 25 birds; during April 1976, 400± were observed feeding on fiddler crabs in

the tidal flats at McKinnon's Salt Pond. They remained in the area for 3 - 4 weeks.

Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*). Occasionally seen during the summer months near Hodges Bay.

***Common Tern** (*Sterna hirundo*). Generally seen during the fall migration period with the largest number during September.

***Roseate Tern** (*Sterna dougallii*). A breeding colony in May, on York Island at the eastern end of

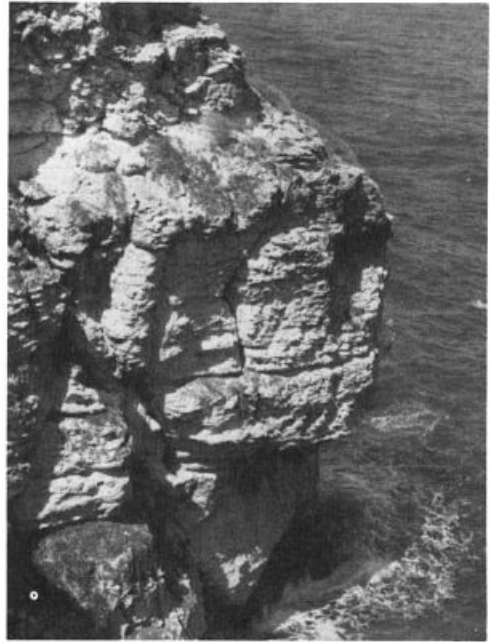


Fig. 7: Nesting cliffs of Sooty and Noddy terns on Great Bird Island. Photo/ T.C. Williams.

Antigua, near Mill Reef, attracts 100± birds each year. An occasional bird seen at other seasons.

***Sooty Tern** (*Sterna fuscata*). Uncommon, but can be seen at all seasons. Breeds in May and June on Great Bird Island and several other smaller islands on the east coast of Antigua. Several hundred nesting birds were seen May 29, 1977 on Great Bird Island.

***Least Tern** (*Sterna albifrons*). A common summer breeder, inhabiting any sandy flat area from April until September.

***Royal Tern** (*Sterna maxima*). The most common tern in winter, although no more than seven birds have been seen at a time. Scarce in summer.

***Sandwich Tern** (*Sterna sandvicensis*). Found



Fig. 6: York Island. Red-billed Tropicbirds and Roseate Terns nest on this island. A Peregrine Falcon was seen soaring directly above this spot in March 1977. Photo/ J.M. Williams.

occasionally in large flocks at sea near the coast during summer. None seen in winter.

Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*). A spring and fall migrant in small numbers.

***Noddy Tern** (*Anous stolidus*). A summer breeder in May and June, found on Great Bird Island and other small nearby islands. Several hundred were seen nesting May 29, 1977, on Great Bird Island.

***White-crowned Pigeon** (*Columba leucocephala*). The common "Baldpate" has increased in numbers since hunting was stopped by the government in 1975. Previously found only in the southern districts, it is now seen in small numbers over the entire island.

***Scaly-naped Pigeon** (*Columba squamosa*). Scarce resident, generally is seen in flocks with Zenaida and "Baldpates," but never more than one or two birds at a time.

Rock Dove (*Columba livia*). Feral; a resident bird that is common in St. Johns and some of the larger villages.

***Zenaida Dove** (*Zenaida aurita*). The common large dove of Antigua that is found in both forest and scrub "cassie". It seems able to withstand present hunting pressures.

***Ground Dove** (*Columbina passerina*). Although not generally found in the forest areas, it is an abundant small dove over the rest of the island.

***Bridled Quail-Dove** (*Geotrygon mystacea*). A few seen in the more forested areas of Wallings and Christian Valley.

Ruddy Quail-Dove (*Geotrygon montana*). Scarce; found only in the heavily forested areas of Wallings and Christian Valley, and only singly.

***Mangrove Cuckoo** (*Coccyzus minor*). A scarce resident of Antigua, seen most often during May and June, when feeding its young. Once one was seen displaying in an open roadway for about 25 minutes; generally it is secretive.

***Purple-throated Carib** (*Eulampis jugularis*). The scarcest hummingbird on Antigua, found at all elevations although it is most common in the forested areas of Christian Valley.

***Green-throated Carib** (*Sericotes holosericeus*). A common resident most often found in the lowlands, and easily seen in the gardens around most homes.

***Antillean Crested Hummingbird** (*Orthorhyncus cristatus*). The most common hummingbird; seen daily in most home gardens.

***Belted Kingfisher** (*Megaceryle alcyon*). A winter visitor seen in small numbers between September and May, and found near freshwater ponds usually near the seacoast.

***Gray Kingbird** (*Tyrannus dominicensis*). One of the abundant residents, found on telephone lines and other suitable perches all over the island.

***Caribbean Elaenia** (*Elaenia martinica*). This common resident inhabits most areas having sufficient cover, but is rarely seen because of its secretive nature; one that had cream-colored or white tail feathers and light-colored wings, was possibly an leucino.

Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*). A regular winter resident arriving in December and returning north in March.

Purple Martin (*Progne subis*). A scarce resident, more easily found at Great Bird Island than elsewhere, although a few are seen regularly hawking over the southern hills.

***Scaly-breasted Thrasher** (*Margarops fuscus*). A not-uncommon resident of the forested areas in the hills above Wallings Reservoir that is also seen in Christian Valley.

***Pearly-eyed Thrasher** (*Margarops fuscatus*). Another resident of the forested hills above Wallings and Christian Valley seen as often as *M. fuscus*. The two are separable in the field by bill size alone, once one is familiar with these species. Both species are curious and will peer from scrubbery at people engaged in outdoor activities.

Black-whiskered Vireo (*Vireo altiloquus*). This is a common, but little seen, resident found at all elevations. It is very secretive but also very noisy, especially during April and May.

***Bananaquit** (*Coereba flaveola*). One of the two most abundant residents of the island, known locally as the "Yellowbird". It eats sugar from the tables of the hotels and entertains guests at breakfast. The race here has the red mark just behind the bill.

Black-and-white Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*). One of the four common winter resident warblers; generally seen in the hills above Wallings.

Northern Parula (*Parula americana*). The second of the common winter resident warblers is also found in Antigua's hill area. As many as ten of these birds have been seen during one climb in winter in the hills above Wallings.

***Yellow Warbler** (*Dendroica petechia*). A common resident of Antigua, found most often in the

“cassie” scrub of the northern part of the island.

***Northern Waterthrush** (*Seiurus noveboracensis*). This is the third of the common winter resident warblers. It inhabits the wet areas of the island from September until April.

***American Redstart** (*Setophaga ruticilla*). The fourth of the most common winter resident warblers that also inhabits the hills above Wallings and Christian Valley, from October until March.

***Carib Grackle** (*Quiscalus lugubris*). A common resident of Antigua, and one that is fairly easily tamed. On the U.S.A.F. Air Station, one can approach these birds to within a few feet. Some land on people’s fingers in order to eat pieces of bread.

Blue-hooded Euphonia (*Euphonia musica*). Found only in heavily wooded areas near Ayre’s Creek, and the hills of the southern areas. Most easily located during the mistletoe season, eating the berries; it also eats mangoes and other fruit; seen and heard in home gardens during the spring months. Not seen or heard from June until August.

***Scarlet Tanager** (*Piranga olivacea*). A regular spring migrant in small numbers, generally seen in April and May. A pair, male and female, was seen feeding at the top of Boggy Peak near the Cable and Wireless installation where it remained for two days. Only the male is usually seen.

***Lesser Antillean Bullfinch** (*Loxigilla noctis*). This is the other abundant resident and another tourist attraction, as it also eats sugar from the guests’ tables at most of the hotels (see Bananaquit above).

***Black-faced Grassquit** (*Tiaris bicolor*). A common resident that inhabits the central and north side of the island; a few found in the southern hills.

Birds seen only occasionally in recent years

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*). One bird seen during the last week in November each year, feeding in the back areas of Dark Woods pond.

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*). One female seen on a small pond near Buckleys April 28, 1974. However, 500 birds were hatched and released on Antigua the previous year, which subsequently vanished, so this could be one of those birds and not a migrant.

Green-winged Teal (*Anas crecca carolinensis*). One pair of adults remained for three weeks on the tidal flats near the Satellite Tracking Station

during December 1974. Common in Barbuda

American Wigeon (*Anas americana*). One bird seen November 28, 1974 on the pond at Dark Woods which remained there for about a week. Another was seen in the same location in company with Common Gallinules, American Coots and a Lesser Scaup November 23, 1976

Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*). One female Lesser Scaup was seen at Dark Woods in company with other ducks on November 23, 1976 and was still there two weeks later.

***Ruddy Duck** (*Oxyura jamaicensis*). One was reported locally on a small pond near Seaview Farms in April 1974, but was not there the following day.

Marsh Hawk (*Circus cyaneus*). One female Marsh Hawk was seen January 8, 1974 being chased by a Merlin over Fitches Creek tidal flats for about ten minutes. The Marsh Hawk flew out to sea.

Merlin (*Falco columbarius*). One female Merlin was seen chasing a female Marsh Hawk over the Fitches Creek tidal flats on January 8, 1974. After the Marsh Hawk departed out to sea, the Merlin lit in the top of a small tree and remained about 15 minutes before flying north.

Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*). One seen October 26, 1973 in dense mangroves in the pond just below the Antigua Beach Hotel. This small black bird had white flecks on its back and had a black beak. Since no other rails or gallinules reside in this pond, there is little chance it was anything other than the Black Rail. The bird was in view for several seconds at a range of about four feet and then ran into the mangroves.

Purple Gallinule (*Porphyryla martinica*). One seen on a small pond near the Sugar Factory February 3, 1976. It remained there for several days and was seen by several observers.

American Oystercatcher (*Haematopus palliatus*). One seen flying north between Five Islands and St. Johns harbor March 28, 1975 by MH.

Long-billed Curlew (*Numenius americanus*). Three birds seen in company with numerous Whimbrels and several Black-bellied Plovers in the tidal flats near the Satellite Tracking Station September 4, 1973.

Little Stint (*Calidris minuta*). Three seen November 16, 1975 at Fitches Creek tidal flats by CSH and MH; attempts to photograph the bird the following morning were unsuccessful. This species is not listed in Bond (1971).

Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*). Two seen

in a pond near Jolly Beach in company with White-rumped Sandpipers and Semipalmated Sandpipers on June 16, 1976. Attempts to photograph the birds the following morning were unsuccessful.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper (*Tryngites subruficollis*). Three seen at Runaway Beach September 9, 1974, where they remained three days; one was oiled.

Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa haemastica*). One seen in the pond at Antigua Beach Hotel November 2, 1973 in the late evening, but not again.

Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*). On April 23, 1976 a large gull, identified as *L. f. graellsii*, was seen at McKinnon's Salt Pond in company with very large flocks of Laughing Gulls; it remained until April 25.

Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*). An immature first seen on February 9, 1975 at Dark Woods pond remained in the area until at least April 5, 1975; another immature seen August 24, 1976 at McKinnon's Salt Pond.

Slender-billed Gull (*Larus genei*). On April 24, 1976 one was found by CSH, MH and FLH at McKinnon's Salt Pond along with the Lesser Black-backed mentioned above; it remained in the area for about a week. This species is not listed in Bond (1971).

Caspian Tern (*Sterna caspia*). One bird seen in flight near the U.S.A.F. Weather Station beach August 23, 1973.

***Yellow-billed Cuckoo** (*Coccyzus americanus*). One seen November 16, 1975 near Fitches Creek in a small wooded area.

Guadeloupe Woodpecker (*Melanerpes herminieri*). One bird remained in the forest above Wallings Reservoir for about a month in September 1975.

Cliff Swallow (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*). One recorded September 8, 1975 near Buccaneer Cove, flying in from the north over the ocean and continuing south. It started hawking for insects after crossing the shoreline.

Trembler (*Cinlocerthia ruficauda*). One bird remained in the hills above Wallings Reservoir for about a month during February and March 1976. Seen by CHS, AW and MW and easily recognized by its habit of "trembling".

Yellow-throated Vireo (*Vireo flavifrons*). Two sightings: one in October 1974 in the hills above Wallings Reservoir, and the other in February 1975 in a patch of woods near Fitches Creek.

Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphicus*). One bird

seen April 28, 1974 in low shrubs at Fitches Creek tidal flats, by CSH, MH, and BW in good light at distances of less than 15 feet.

Worm-eating Warbler (*Helmitheros vermivorus*). Several birds seen during October and November 1974 in the hills above Wallings Reservoir

Magnolia Warbler (*Dendroica magnolia*). Several birds seen during the last three days of October 1974 in the hills above Wallings Reservoir.

Cape May Warbler (*Dendroica tigrina*). Several birds migrated through Antigua during October and November 1974 and were seen in the hills above Wallings Reservoir.

Black-throated Blue Warbler (*Dendroica caerulescens*). One female seen during October to December 1974 in the hills above Wallings Reservoir, always at the same place.

Black-throated Green Warbler (*Dendroica virens*). One recorded December 14, 1974 in the hills above Wallings Reservoir.

Chestnut-sided Warbler (*Dendroica pensylvanica*). One immature studied for about 20 minutes on a low branch in the hills above Wallings Reservoir November 30, 1974.

Bay-breasted Warbler (*Dendroica castanea*). One bird in winter plumage seen November 26, 1974 in low scrub near Fitches Creek.

Blackpoll Warbler (*Dendroica striata*). One bird seen June 1, 1974 in low shrubs near the office of Christian Valley Project by MH and BW. This species was previously reported from Antigua by Nisbet in Hilditch *et al.* (1973).

***Prairie Warbler** (*Dendroica discolor*). One sighted November 28, 1974, although not positively identified, in the hills above Wallings Reservoir. There are no other records since 1972, although it was previously reported by Nisbet in Hilditch *et al.* (1973) and Danforth (1934).

***Ovenbird** (*Seiurus aurocapillus*). This scarce migrant was seen in November and December 1974 and in November 1975 by various observers. It appears to remain in the same area for several days in the hills above Wallings Reservoir.

Kentucky Warbler (*Oporornis formosus*). Seen in December 1974 and February and November 1975, this scarce migrant visits the dense shrub area immediately above the Wallings Reservoir

Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*). A mature male identified by CSH and RB at close range at the Sugar Factory Dam #1 March 26, 1977.

Hooded Warbler (*Wilsonia citrina*). Seen during October and November 1974 and January 1975 in the hills above Wallings Reservoir.

Yellow Grass Finch (*Sicalis luteola*). One male seen on the Jabberwock Hotel grounds October 17, 1973.

Birds for which identification was not positive

Northern Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*). A large tubenosed bird seen on Great Bird Island March 3, 1974 was tentatively identified as this species.

***Upland Sandpiper** (*Bartramia longicauda*). A single bird seen flying over the Police Academy March 21, 1974 was tentatively identified as this species.

Swift (Lesser Antillean?) (*Chaetura martinica?*). Three swifts seen hawking over the barracks of the U.S.A.F. Air Station September 1, 1973, too late in the evening for good identification.

Birds not seen recently on Antigua

***American Flamingo** (*Phoenicopterus ruber*). No birds reported in this century by anyone, although it was mentioned in Danforth from the 1800s.

***Northern Pintail** (*Anas acuta*). There are no definite records for Antigua, although Bent (1923) includes Antigua in its possible winter range. Local residents call White-cheeked Pintail the "Pintail", and this could cause confusion.

Canvasback (*Aythya valisineria*). Reported shot during hunting season prior to 1972, but not seen in last five years.

***Caribbean Coot** (*Fulica caribaea*). Not seen during the last five years, although there are local records at Colin's Dam and Ayre's Creek.

***Bridled Tern** (*Sterna anaethetus*). Previously reported from Antigua by Danforth, but none seen in the last five years. Looked for at Great Bird Island during the breeding season in May, but not seen.

Smooth-billed Ani (*Crotophaga ani*). One previous record by a local resident in 1963, near Holberton Hospital. This species is not uncommon on Montserrat.

***Burrowing Owl** (*Athene cucularia*). There are no records since Danforth. Some local residents state they have seen owls [possibly Barn Owls (*Tyto alba*)] up through the late 1950s, but there are no recent sightings.

Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*). Previously reported by Gus Yaki (pers comm.) from Antigua; no records for the last five years.

***Louisiana Waterthrush** (*Seiurus motacilla*). Previously reported by Danforth, but neither seen nor heard in the last five years.

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