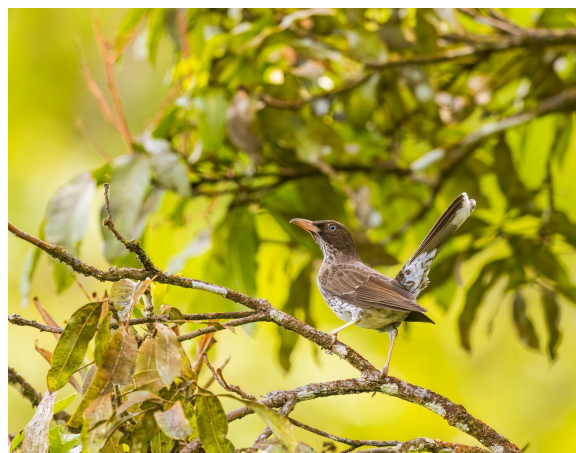
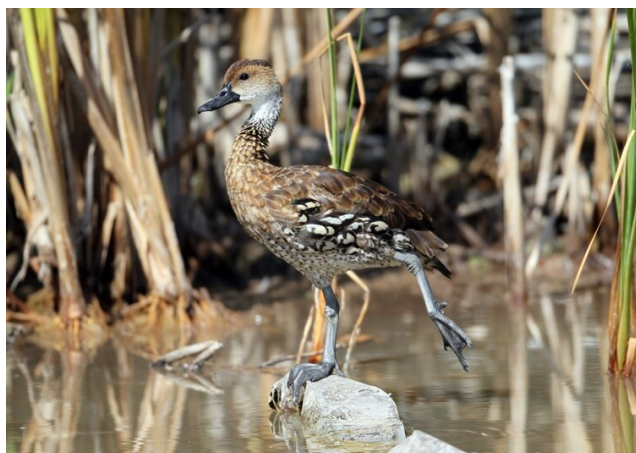


Antigua & Barbuda - "The Island of 365 Beaches"



Island Summary:

With a beach for every day of the year, capital city steeped in history, large international airport and shipping port, Antigua is a popular destination with visitors from across the globe. Yet few who visit deviate from the tourist hubs to explore the secluded wetlands, vast grasslands and coastal woodlands home to an array of fascinating resident and migrant species. In addition, located a mere 60km away across some of the most breathtakingly beautiful waters in the entire Caribbean, lies Antigua's sister island of Barbuda - a visit to which is akin to stepping back in time to a land typified by vast, remote stretches of pristine beaches, small pockets of wetland and a modicum of development. Large swathes of dry scrubland dominate Barbuda's primarily flat interior... and with this comes an introduction to an entirely new cast of avian characters.



Wetlands in Antigua offer critical habitat for the highly threatened West Indian Whistling-Duck (photo © Yves-Jacques Rey-Millet - Birding the Islands client); Antigua is also a great place to see the striking Forest Thrush (photo © Faraaz Abdool - Birding the Islands)

Highlights:

The tropical paradise of Antigua is the best island in the Lesser Antillean region on which to get reliable sightings of the **West Indian Whistling-Duck**. Large wetlands in the north west of the island provide critical habitat for this rare treasure, and by making your way there at dusk, you will have the chance of seeing small flocks feeding amongst the surrounding mangroves. While there, you will also be in the company of numerous species of resident and migrant heron, such as **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron**, **Little Blue Heron** and **Great Egret**, together with a plethora of North American shorebirds, including **Solitary Sandpiper**, **Stilt Sandpiper**, **Greater Yellowlegs** and **Short-billed Dowitcher**. Antigua's location as one of the more northerly islands in the chain ensures that it receives a wider range of North American warblers than many of the islands further south. By venturing into select copses of woodland and dry broadleaved forest, you are likely to encounter such delights as the **Cape May Warbler**, **Magnolia Warbler**, **Northern Parula** and many more. Such wooded areas also provide refuge for the **White-crowned Pigeon** and endemic subspecies of **Broad-winged Hawk**.

*Be treated to astonishingly close views of the largest Magnificent Frigatebird colony in the Western Hemisphere!
(photo © Ryan Chenery - Birding the Islands)*



The delightful Barbuda Warbler makes its home in the dry scrubland of Barbuda (photo © Philip Davis - Birding the Islands client); be treated to astonishingly close views of the largest Magnificent Frigatebird colony in the Western Hemisphere (photo © Ryan Chenery - Birding the Islands)

From Barbuda's port capital of Codrington, board a skiff and be taken across a shallow lagoon teeming with vast schools of jellyfish, young mullet, red snapper and foraging urchins, for an audience with thousands of winged giants. The low-lying mangroves in Codrington Lagoon boast the largest **Magnificent Frigatebird** colony in the Western Hemisphere, and from your position on the water, you will be afforded unparalleled views of these astonishing birds. It is quite literally impossible to get any closer! In the dry scrub of this "postcard perfect" land dwells the island's lone endemic - the plucky and inquisitive **Barbuda Warbler**. Drawn to tiny pockets of water, this bird is often in the company of other species that prefer the arid, xeric landscape, including: **Black-whiskered Vireo**, **Common Ground Dove**, **Lesser Antillean Flycatcher**, **White-winged Dove**, **Mangrove Cuckoo** and **Black-faced Grassquit**. Isolated pockets of water are oases for aquatic species such as **Clapper Rail** and **Sora**, along with **White-cheeked Pintail** and **Blue-winged Teal**. Barbuda's beaches are largely unspoiled and uninhabited, and often offer excellent sightings of resting terns, including **Least**, **Roseate**, **Royal** and **Sandwich Tern**.

Other things to do in Antigua & Barbuda:

- Visit sites of historic significance to discover more about this nation's storied past.
- Relax and unwind on one (or more) of the islands' 365 beaches!
- Explore Antigua's pop-up Travelling Artisan's Market, bursting with locally made artisan crafts and produce.
- If you are on the island in July, be sure to check out the Mango Festival when the juicy mango gets its time to shine!