

Guadeloupe - "The String of Jewels of the French Caribbean"



Island Summary:

The archipelago of Guadeloupe is a land of intrigue whose contemporary culture blends together the rich ethnic diversity that characterises its history and heritage, and with over 70% of its territories classified as a Natural Reserve, a visit to its shores promises wonderful opportunities to encounter the multitude of wildlife that abounds on this French-Caribbean island.



The somewhat unusual Guadeloupe Woodpecker is endemic to Guadeloupe, and is in fact the only woodpecker to be found in the Lesser Antilles (photo © Beatrice Henricot - Birding the Islands client);

Highlights:

This island is home to the Lesser Antilles' only endemic woodpecker, in fact the only woodpecker to be found in the region - the rather unconventional **Guadeloupe Woodpecker**. Visit a reliable site where from within a sheltered copse of trees, overhanging a serene mountain lake, comes the tell-tale drumming of a pair of these striking jet-black birds. Delve further into the lush mature forests that dominate the Basse Terre region of the island, where at dawn you will be treated to incredibly close views of two typically secretive species: the colour-infused **Bridled Quail Dove** and the chevron-chested **Forest Thrush**. Spend the remainder of the morning taking part in some relaxed forest birding while seated beside crystal clear streams alive with crayfish and shoals of river trout. Here you are likely to gain an audience with two of the smallest near-endemics in the region: the delightful, and positively mouse-like **Lesser Antillean Pewee** and the often inquisitive **Plumbeous Warbler**, in addition to other regional endemics such as **Brown Trembler**, **Lesser Antillean Saltator** and **Lesser Antillean Bullfinch**. As is in keeping with the sedate nature of the birding on this, the larger of the two French Territories in the Lesser Antilles, you will access your next site via a clearly demarcated footpath lining the forest edge where a coursing river is lined by steep clay banks - home to nesting **Ringed Kingfisher**. Depending on the timing of your trip, in the surrounding woodland can often be seen migrant North American warblers.



The likelihood of spotting the secretive Bridled Quail-Dove is higher on Guadeloupe than on other islands in the region (photo © Beatrice Henricot - Birding the Islands client); endemic to the region, the Forest Thrush can be found foraging in the leaf litter of Guadeloupe's lush primary forests (photo © Faraaz Abdool - Birding the Islands)

Other things to do in Guadeloupe*:

- Tickle your taste buds with a spot of chocolate tasting or even make your own slab of chocolate!
- Take a guided tour of the largest known concentration of petroglyphs left behind by the Arawak people in the Antillean region.
- Explore on foot with a hike along one of Guadeloupe's 110 miles of trails.
- From snorkelling and diving through unforgettable underwater landscapes, to kayaking the mangrove-lined lagoons around the island, Guadeloupe's waters are also brimming with life that is yours to discover!