

## **Lesser Antilles 1–17 Dec 2010 (Guadeloupe, Dominica & Martinique)** **Erling Jirle, Sweden**

**Web site:** [www.joerl.se/travelreports.html](http://www.joerl.se/travelreports.html)

The order follows Raffaele et al. 2003. *Birds of the West Indies*. Helm Field Guides. Christopher Helm, London. Taxonomy from *The Clements Checklist of the Birds of the World*, Sixth edition, 2007 and annual updates by Cornell Lab. Orn.  
Shortenings: G: Guadeloupe, D: Dominica, M: Martinique, m: male.

### **LOCALITIES:**

#### **Guadeloupe:**

Part of France, and EU

**Guadeloupe National Park**, Basse-Terre.

There are several sites along road D23 (Route de la Traversée). A good trail was the one starting at Maison de la Forêt, along the stream Bras David; Trace de Ruisseaux.

**Morne à Louis**, Basse-Terre.

The paved road just west of the national park leading up to a mountain top with Pylônes (antennas) was also good. The mountain top is called Morne à Louis (743 m).

**Hotel:** Karaïbes Hotel, Le Gosier (east of Pointe-à-Pitre).

**Rental car** from Avis, Pointe-à-Pitre Airport.

#### **Dominica:**

A small country, much less populated than G. and with a lot of intact forest. Very lush, and rainy. But the weather along the coast is sunnier than up in the mountains.

**Layou River** enters into the sea on the west coast south of Salisbury.

**Syndicate Reserve** has a fine Nature Trail in pristine mountain rainforest with 3 lookouts for parrots and a Visitors Center. It is part of the Morne Diablotins National Park. The road up is very steep and narrow, but tarmaced. I made it in a normal sedan car. There are no minibuses up here.

**Emerald Pool** has a Visitors Center with a bar and a fine Nature Trail with 2 View Points (one Carib and one Atlantic), plus the beautiful view of the Emerald Pool. Fine pristine mountain rainforest. It is situated in the northernmost part of the Morne Trois Pitons National Park. The road from Canefield had brand new tarmac, but is very winding. Easier driving from Layou.

**Sulphur Springs**, east of Soufrière. Trail towards Cobbs Head. This is segment 1 of the trail system that covers (or is planned to cover) Dominica from south to north; Waitukbuli National Trail. The trail I walked partly within an old abandoned coffee plantation.

**Whale Watching trip.** Pick-up at the Fort Young Hotel jetty. Good shots on dolphins and a glimpse of a sperm whale we chased for 1 hour with a hydrophone. No seabirds at all.

**Hotel:** Fort Young Hotel for 8 days. Very relaxing. Well equipped hotel. Roseau must be one of the worlds smallest capitals.

**Rental car** two last days from Bakes Rentals, Roseau.

In Dominica you need to pay fees for:

Dominica temporary driving licence.

National Parks fee (xx ECX for a pass valid a week).

## **Martinique:**

Part of France, and EU.

Overpopulated island with too many cars and too little forest. Crappy birding here.

Spend my time on the many fantastic beaches instead, they are beautiful.

Tried to find good forest on the southern part of the island, but very few birds seen here.

### **Localities:**

**Étang des Salines.** Has a boardwalk. At the southern tip of the island.

**Morne Aca Road.** West of Le Marin. Winding road up to pylons. Too much traffic.

**Morne Acajou,** Montagne du Vouclin (road D18).

**Lac St.-Pierre,** at road N6 Lamentin – Le François.

### **Hotels in Martinique:**

Fairbay Hotel, Fort-de-France. Good room with seaview.

Hotel la Dunette, Sainte-Anne. Good room at seafront. Sainte-Anne is a nice quiet town.

**Rental car** from Budget. Pickup in Fort-de-France city, return at Aimé Césaire Airport, Lamentin.

### **Travel:**

**Air France** from Copenhagen – Charles du Gaulle Airport, Paris – Orly Airport, Paris – Guadeloupe.

**Fast ferry** "L'Express Des Iles" from Guadeloupe via Dominica to Martinique.

**Air France** from Martinique – Orly Airport, Paris – Charles du Gaulle Airport, Paris – Copenhagen.

## **BIRDS**

### **Brown Pelican, *Pelecanus occidentalis occidentalis***

G: Widespread in low numbers.

D: Widespread in low numbers.

### **Brown Booby, *Sula leucogaster leucogaster***

D: 1 Fort Young Hotel, Roseau, 7.12, 1 Soufrière 7.2, 3 Portsmouth 9.12.

### **Magnificent Frigatebird, *Fregata magnificens***

G: 20 Saint-Francois 4.12 and 10 Pointe-à-Pitre harbour 5.12.

D: Widespread in low numbers.

M: Widespread in low numbers.

### **American Herring Gull, *Larus smithsonianus***

D: 1 Fort Young Hotel, Roseau, 7.12.

### **Royal Tern, *Thalasseus maximus maximus***

G: 30 Anse Caraïbe, Basse-Terre 3.12.

D: Widespread in low numbers. Highest number 30 Portsmouth 9.12.

M: Widespread. 20 Étang des Salines 13.12.

### **Pomarine Skua, *Stercorarius pomarinus***

D: 2-3 almost daily at Fort Young Hotel, Roseau.

**Little Blue Heron, *Egretta caerulea***

G: 5 en route 4.12.

D: 3 Layou River 10.12.

**Great Blue Heron, *Ardea herodias occidentalis***

M: 1 Étang des Salines 13.12.

**Great Egret, *Ardea alba egretta***

D: 2 Layou River 10.12.

**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, *Nyctanassa violacea bancrofti***

D: 1 Layou River 10.12.

**Green Heron, *Butorides virescens virescens***

D: 1 Roseau 6.12, 1 Soufrière 7.12, 1 Layou River 10.12.

**Cattle Egret, *Bubulcis ibis ibis***

D: Widespread in low numbers.

M: Common. 50 Étang des Salines 13.12.

**Semipalmated Plover, *Charadrius semipalmatus***

M: 3 Étang des Salines 13.12.

**Spotted Sandpiper, *Actitis macularius***

D: 1 Layou River 10.12.

**Greater Yellowlegs, *Tringa melanoleuca***

D: 3 Layou River 10.12.

M: 10 Étang des Salines 13.12.

**Common Moorhen, *Gallinula chloropus cerceris***

M: 1 Lac St.-Pierre 15.12.

**Pied-billed Grebe, *Podilymbus podiceps antillarum***

M: 6 Lac St.-Pierre 15.12.

**Merlin, *Falco columbarius***

M: 1 Morne Acajou 15.12.

**Northern Harrier, *Circus cyaneus hudsonius***

M: 1 f Étang des Salines 13.12.

**Broad-winged Hawk, *Buteo platypterus rivieri***

D: 1 Syndicate Nature Trail 10.12.

M: 2 Morne Acajou and 2 Lac St.-Pierre 15.12.

**Osprey, *Pandion haliaetus ridgwayi***

D: 1 Roseau 9.12, 1 Portsmouth 9.12.

M: 1 Étang des Salines 13.12.

**Rock Dove, *Columba livia*** Introduced

G: In towns in low numbers.

D: Common in Roseau.

M: Fairly common.

**Ruddy Quail-Dove, *Geotrygon montana martinica***

[This subspecies has been considered as a separate species. Occurs from Guadeloupe to St. Lucia]

G: 1 Trace de Ruisseaux, Guadeloupe NP 3.12.

D: 3 Soufrière Sulphur Springs trail 7.2.

**Bridled Quail-Dove, *Geotrygon mystacea***

G: 2 Trace de Ruisseaux, Guadeloupe NP 3.12.

**Eurasian Collared Dove, *Streptopelia decatao*** Introduced

G: In towns in low numbers.

D: Fairly common in towns.

M: In towns in low numbers.

**Common Ground-Dove, *Columbina passerina nigrirostris***

G: 1 Le Gosier 5.12.

**Zenaida Dove, *Zenaida aurita aurita***

G: Common.

D: Common.

M: Common.

**Red-necked Parrot, *Amazona arausiaca*** DOMINICA ENDEMIC

D: About 20 Syndicate 10.12 and 2 Emerald Pool View Point 11.12.

**Lesser Antillean Swift, *Chaetura martinica*** LESSER ANTILLEAN ENDEMIC

D: At least 50 Syndicate 10.12.

**Antillean Crested Hummingbird, *Orthorhyncus cristatus exilis***

G: Fairly common both in forest and at sea level in gardens etcetera.

D: Common.

M: Common.

**Purple-throated Carib, *Eulampis jugularis*** LESSER ANTILLEAN ENDEMIC

G: 1 m Mourne a Louis Road 2.12.

M: 1 m Morne Acajou 15.12.

**Green-throated Carib, *Eulampis holosericeus holosericeus***

G: 1 m Le Gosier beach 2.12.

D: Fairly common.

M: 1 m Morne Aca Road 14.12.

**Blue-headed Hummingbird**, *Cyanaphaia bicolor* LESSER ANTILLEAN ENDEMIC

D: 1 m Syndicate Nature Trail 10.12.

**Ringed Kingfisher**, *Ceryle torquatus stictipennis*

D: 1 Layou River 10.12.

**Guadeloupe Woodpecker**, *Melanerpes herminieri* GUADELOUPE ENDEMIC

G: 1 Trace de Ruisseaux, Guadeloupe NP 3.12.

**Lesser Antillean Flycatcher**, *Myiarchus oberi* LESSER ANTILLEAN ENDEMIC

D: Common in mountain forest (ssp. *oberi*).

M: Uncommon (ssp. *sclateri*).

**Grey Kingbird**, *Tyrannus dominicensis vorax*

G: Common.

D: Very common.

M: Very common.

**Caribbean Eleania**, *Elaenia martinica martinica*

G: 1 pair Le Gosier beach 2.12.

D: 1 Syndicate Visitors Centre 10.12.

**Lesser Antillean Pewee**, *Contopus latirostris brunneicapillus*

[*Contopus latirostris* sometimes divided into three separate species. This subspecies then becomes Lesser Antillean Pewee, *Contopus brunneicapillus*. Rafaele divides into three species, but have the wrong species epithets on the corresponding three taxa! Compare with HBW vol. 9, page 370.]

M: 1 Morne Acajou and 1 Lac St.-Pierre 15.12.

**Barn Swallow**, *Hirundo rustica erythrogaster*

D: Common in Roseau.

M: Common. Over 100 Étang des Salines 13.12.

**(Southern) House Wren**, *Troglodytes aedon rufescens*

[This taxon belongs to the Southern House Wren complex, *T. musculus*, which most likely constitutes several distinct species, separated from Northern House Wren, *T. aedon*.]

D: 1 Soufrière Sulphur Springs trail 7.2 and 5 Syndicate 10.12.

**Brown Trembler**, *Cinclocerthia ruficauda* LESSER ANTILLEAN ENDEMIC

G: Fairly common in Guadeloupe NP; 8 at Bras David picknick site 3.12 (ssp. *tremula*).

D: 1 Syndicate Visitors Centre 10.12 and 3 Emerald Pool 11.12 (ssp. *ruficauda*).

**Tropical Mockingbird**, *Mimus gilvus antillarum*

M: 1 Sainte-Anne beach 14.12 and 1 Le Vauclin beach 15.12.

**Scaly-breasted Thrasher**, *Allenia fuscus* LESSER ANTILLEAN ENDEMIC

G: Fairly common in Guadeloupe NP 3.12 (ssp. *hypenemus*).

D: 1 Emerald Pool 11.12 (ssp. *fuscus*).

**Pearly-eyed Trasher**, *Margarops fuscatus densirostris*

D: 5 Syndicate 10.12.

M: 2 Morne Acajou 15.12.

**Rufous-throated Solitaire**, *Myadestes genibarbis dominicanus*

D: 2 + 5 heard Syndicate 10.12 and 5 Emerald Pool 11.12.

**Forest Thrush**, *Cichlherminia lherminieri lherminieri* LESSER ANTILLEAN ENDEMIC

G: 1 Trace de Ruisseaux, Guadeloupe NP 3.12.

**Yellow Warbler**, *Dendroica petechia*

G: 1 Anse Caraïbe, Basse-Terre 3.12 (ssp. *melanoptera*).

M: 1 Morne Aca Road 14.12 (ssp. *ruficapilla*).

**American Redstart**, *Setophaga ruticilla*

D: 1 m Soufrière Sulphur Springs trail 7.12.

**Plumbeous Warbler**, *Dendroica plumbea* LESSER ANTILLEAN ENDEMIC

G: Fairly common in Guadeloupe NP.

D: Common.

**Antillean Euphonia**, *Euphonia musica flavifrons*

G: 2 Mourne a Louis Road 2.12.

**Bananaquit**, *Coereba flaveola*

G: Very common, especially in beach restaurants (ssp. *bartholemica*).

D: Very common (ssp. *bartholemica*).

M: Very common (ssp. *martinicana*).

**Carib Grackle**, *Quiscalus lugubris guadeloupensis*

G: Common along the coast.

D: Fairly common along the coast.

M: Very common.

**Black-faced Grassquit**, *Tiaris bicolor omissus*

D: 10 Syndicate 10.12.

M: Common.

**Lesser Antillean Saltator**, *Saltator albicollis* LESSER ANTILLEAN ENDEMIC

D: 2 Layou River 10.12 (ssp. *guadelupensis*).

M: 2 Étang des Salines 13.12 (ssp. *albicollis*).

**Lesser Antillean Bullfinch**, *Loxigilla noctis* LESSER ANTILLEAN ENDEMIC

G: Very common (ssp. *dominicana*).

D: Very common (ssp. *dominicana*).

M: Very common (ssp. *noctis*).

**Nutmeg Mannikin**, *Lonchura punctulata* Introduced

G: 1 Le Gosier beach 2.12.

**IN SUMMARY:** 56 species in 15 days. 13 Lesser Andean endemics. 18 lifers.

Dip in Dominica: Imperial Parrot.

Possible in Martinique: White-breasted Thrasher, Grey Trembler, Martinique Oriole.

Number of other birdwatchers met on the trip: 0.

## **OTHER**

**Bat sp.** (there are only two species on the island).

G: 1 pair mating, 700 m.a.s.l., Mourne a Louis Road 2.12.

**Small Indian Mongoose**, *Herpestes auropunctatus* Introduced

G: 1 Mourne a Louis Road 3.12.

**Sperm Whale**, *Physeter macrocephalus*

D: 1 on whale watching trip 8.12.

**Pantropical Dolphin**, *Stenella attenuata*

D: 50-75 on whale watching trip 8.12.

**Iguana sp.** (photo)

G: 1 Le Gosier beach 2.12.

**Xxxxxx Snake**, *Liophis juliae juliae* ENDEMIC

D: 1 Sofrière – Cobbs Head Trail 7.12.

**Anolis Lizard**, *Anolis oculatus* ENDEMIC?

D: >100 Sofrière – Cobbs Head Trail 7.12.