

THE LESSER ANTILLES: ***Aboard the *Sea Cloud****

FEBRUARY 10-18, 2016



Red-necked Parrot, *Amazona arausiaca*

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By David Ascanio

Once again, a sea with pastel blue or green colors, an incredible and rich history, outstanding cuisine, and the beautiful and breathtaking *Sea Cloud*, combined with exquisite birds resulted in a memorable journey across six of the Lesser Antilles to see all of the endemic parrots, tremblers, hummingbirds, orioles, and bullfinches that these islands offer.

Our treasure wasn't gold, nor sugar. It was every one of the endemic or the restricted distribution birds. It seemed as if every island offered a unique challenge to finding these treasures. Barbados was the easy task. In Dominica and Martinique we practiced patience. In Guadeloupe we built a successful group dynamic, while St. Lucia and St. Vincent challenged us with trails. Each day offered a unique experience, as if each of the Lesser Antilles had a distinctive personality.



We started in British-flavored Barbados. A visit to the Graeme Hall Reserve allowed views of one of the few populations of Little Egret in the Americas. We also saw our first target species, the Barbados Bullfinch, one that's so common that you can see it wandering around the swimming pool area of the hotel.

After a full day sailing north, we made it to Dominica. There, an early departure from the port of Cabrits found us in the right place to search for the most threatened Psittacid in the Caribbean, the Imperial Parrot. Although an unexpected rain delayed the morning bird activity, the day eventually warmed up, and birds started moving around. Divided into groups, we visited the Syndicate Forest and explored the trails and the edges of the access road. In the forest we dedicated time at the viewpoint, a small clearing in the forest that overlooks a deep creek and usually allows views of parrots in flight. Despite much time spent, at noon we had only nailed the commoner Red-necked Parrot, but the more difficult Imperial Parrot remained as heard only. But, birders don't give up, and even less so when we're talking about parrots. Thus, many of us decided to stay there and asked Victor to bring picnic lunches when he came back from the ship in the afternoon. They say that good luck is about being in the right place at the right time, with continuous effort. We practiced this and were rewarded with great scope views of the Imperial Parrot. What an experience! Anyone who happened to be in the viewpoint or near the trail got to see it! Once the pressure of finding the parrot was off, we dedicated the afternoon to finding other target species including Blue-headed Hummingbird, Lesser Antillean Bullfinch, Lesser Antillean Pewee, Mangrove Cuckoo, and the ubiquitous House Wren, one that has a distinctive repertoire, plus distinctive plumage and forest habitat preference. Its voice is very different from the North and South America populations, which makes it a good candidate for a future split.



House Wren, Dominica © David Ascanio

A successful visit to Dominica was followed by a half-day visit to a European nation in the Americas: the islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique, two overseas departments of France. In Guadeloupe we visited the Point a Pitre National Park. Here, the rain delayed our morning activity again, but I can assure you that it actually played to our side. Bridled Quail-Dove was active (we saw 5 individuals!), and the endemic Guadeloupe Woodpecker was scoped perched in a fairly open branch from the picnic area. And, thanks to Mike, several of us saw a Forest Thrush sunning on an open branch as well!

Once we nailed the endemic birds of Guadeloupe, we headed south to the windward islands of Martinique, St Lucia, and St. Vincent. Another early morning departure took us to the Atlantic side of Martinique, in the Caravelle Peninsula. Here, Martinique Oriole proved to be one of the most difficult birds of the trip and, despite our search, only a few of us saw it briefly on a portion of the trail located at one side of the ruins. Despite hours spent at the fig tree, the oriole never gave a concession. But, we also came to this peninsula to look for one of the most threatened species in the Lesser Antilles, the White-breasted Thrasher. Unlike the oriole, everyone saw this bird well! We enjoyed not only seeing it, but also admiring his foraging behavior as he tossed leaves to hunt for arthropods.

Our next destination was the island-nation of St. Lucia. Assisted by an incredible team of local birders, we were able to see secretive birds such as the St. Lucia Black Finch (seen at a very close distance by everyone) and commoner species such as the St. Lucia Pewee (considered by some a separate species from the Lesser Antilles Pewee), the local form of Bananaquit (with a dotted wing bar), and the inspiring Rufous-throated Solitaire. Some of us walked along a spectacular trail filled with ferns, orchids, and enormous trees. Being exposed to such richness gave Peter the opportunity to identify several plants and share his incredible botanical knowledge of the Caribbean.

Back to the ship, we sailed south, to the last location of our unforgettable trip, the island-nation of St. Vincent. Here, we were given two birding options. The most intrepid had to negotiate a steep trail, starting with flashlights, to reach a viewpoint area at the crack of

dawn to enjoy views of St. Vincent Parrots perched and in flight alike. But, there was a second reason for doing this. One of the most difficult-to-see birds of this trip was the unique and endemic Whistling Warbler, whose taxonomic position is still in debate. As we were enjoying the parrots at the outlook, it started raining and, as you may guess, it played again in our favor because the warbler became very active. After playback, one individual approached close to us, and we enjoyed views of not one, not two, but three different individuals! Happy about seeing the two most wanted species of the island, we walked down the trail since there were more birds to look for. Our efforts paid off again; right at the trail's exit we came across the Lesser Antilles Tanager. A clean sweep! Victor and Barry were able to show the parrot for those that wanted to reach the park in daytime. All groups met at the Botanical Garden where views of the Grenada Flycatcher rounded-up a successful birding cruise.



I have to tell you that this voyage will stick with me for many years. There are various reasons: first, because we saw all of the possible-to-see endemic birds and specialties that occur in the Lesser Antilles; second, because we sailed aboard the *Sea Cloud*; and third, because we learned about birds and also about plants and history alike, but most important, because of all of you! Thank you very much for joining us. We look forward to seeing you on another birding adventure.

Photo album link:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/davidascanio/albums/72157664273395320>



Zenaida Dove, Barbados © David Ascanio

Now that you have learned about much of the Lesser Antilles flora, fauna, and history, I want to invite you to join us in other destinations equally interesting and beautiful, but remarkably different from the Lesser Antilles.

The Amazon Cruise

We sail aboard a small ship to explore the Amazon and its tributaries. We use two skiffs to reach the flooded forest and other distinctive Amazonian habitats such as the sedimentary river islands. We also offer an optional walk in *terra firme* forest. Non-birding spouses like to join this cruise because of the variety of wildlife, including several species of primates, and encounters with local people along the river. We offer at least one optional visit to a community. You can enjoy the photos and the video of our 2016 Amazon Cruise at:

Photo album

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/davidascanio/albums/72157663616158820>

Video link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1b3xYG0cPSo>

Cuba: Birds and People

Cuba has always been the bucket-list island to visit. Until recently it was only a dream to go birding there. Not anymore! We bird three major areas of the island and look for most of the endemic birds including the Bee Hummingbird, the smallest bird in the world. See the photos and the video of our 2015 Cuba tour at:

Photo album

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/davidascanio/albums/72157651912764991>

Video link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIRHvB1jzdI>

The Panama Canal: A Relaxed & Easy tour.

Panama offers a unique opportunity to enjoy first class birding at a relaxed and easy pace. We spend most of the nights in a small inn located in the town of Gamboa, by the Panama Canal. Short walks around the town, plus a boat trip to the Chagres River and a visit to the famous Pipeline Road, offer views of a nice mix of hummingbirds, tyrant flycatchers, tanagers, woodpeckers, and honeycreepers. We offer an optional visit to the Canopy Tower where we can see canopy species at eye level. You can enjoy the photos and the video of our 2015 Panama Canal tour at:

Photo album

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/davidascanio/albums/72157648765567967>

Video link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kgnkUxwd5kw>

Costa Rica: A Relaxed & Easy tour.

Our relaxed and easy Costa Rica tour is for those who wish to bird various altitudinal levels, from cloud forest to lowland rain forest, and still do it at a slow pace. On this tour we include a ride along the aerial tram, and besides seeing birds, we also learn about the flora and other fauna of this spectacular country. This tour is designed for seeing gaudy species such as tanagers and honeycreepers, as well as many hummingbirds. For that, we visit various hummingbird feeder stations. See the photos and video of our 2015 tour at:

Photo album

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/davidascanio/albums/72157659475059484>

Video link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mzgD6NfVNSE>



ITINERARY

10 Feb 2016. Arrival to Barbados.

11 Feb 2016. Morning in Graeme Hall and Colleton House. Embarkation.

12 Feb 2016. At sea.

13 Feb 2016. Dominica. Syndicate Estate.

14 Feb 2016. Guadeloupe. Parc National de la Guadeloupe (Guadeloupe National Park) and Les Jardins de Valombreuse (Gardens of Valombreuse).

15 Feb 2016. Martinique. *Réserve naturelle nationale de la presqu'île de la Caravelle*

(Caravelle Peninsula natural reserve).

16 Feb 2016. St. Lucia. Des Cartier trail in Quillesse Forest Reserve and Bouton community road. Wetlands in souther tip of the island.

17 Feb 2016. St. Vincent. Vermont Forest trail and St. Vincent Botanical Gardens.

18 Feb 2016. Barbados. Disembarkation. Departure for international flights.

BIRDS

Phaethontidae

Red-billed Tropicbird. *Phaethon aethereus*. 3 individuals were seen in Atlantic Ocean, off the coast of Barbados, and in the Caribbean Sea off the coast of Guadeloupe and Martinique.

White-tailed Tropicbird. *Phaethon lepturus*. Seen only in the transit from Barbados to Dominica. We noticed its distinctive wing patches. First observed by Pete Dunne, a lifer for him!

Frigatebirds / Fregatidae

Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens*. Daily views.

Boobies and Gannets / Sulidae

Brown Booby. *Sula leucogaster*. Various individuals were seen in the Caribbean Sea off the coast of Dominica, Guadeloupe, and Barbados.

Red-footed Booby. *Sula sula*. First seen off the coast of Barbados and later off the coast of St. Vincent.

Masked Booby. *Sula dactylatra*. Only seen once off the coast of Barbados.

Pelicans / Pelecanidae

Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis*. Particularly common near Dominica and Guadeloupe. Not seen in other islands.

Hérons, Egrets and Bitterns / Ardeidae

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*. Observed three times, Barbados, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent.

Great Egret. *Ardea alba*. Seen only in the wetland in St. Lucia.

Little Egret. *Egretta garzetta*. A breeding colony was observed in Graeme Hall, Barbados. Seen also by some in the wetland in St. Lucia.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*. Barbados, Dominica, and St. Lucia.

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea*. St. Lucia and St. Vincent.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*. A common species in the Lesser Antilles. Apparently, arrived to these islands during the second wave of individuals (first documented in Suriname, in the late 1800s). Seen in Barbados, Dominica, Guadeloupe, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent.

Green Heron *Butorides virescens*. Seen in Barbados, Dominica, Guadeloupe, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron *Nyctanassa violacea*. Seen only once in Graemne Hall, Barbados.

Ducks and Allies / Anatidae

Green-winged Teal. *Anas crecca*. Seen only once in a small pond in Barbados.

Blue-winged Teal. *Anas discors*. About a half-dozen were seen in a small pond in Barbados.

Ospreys / Pandionidae

Osprey. *Pandion haliaetus*. Observed in Barbados and Guadeloupe.

Hawks, Eagles and Kites / Accipitridae

Common Black-Hawk. *Buteogallus anthracinus*. A single individual was observed in St Vincent. This subspecies (*cancrivorus*) is sometimes regarded as a separate species.

Broad-winged Hawk. *Buteo platypterus*. Although a Boreal migrant species in South America, the Lesser Antilles host a resident population of this species. Seen in Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and Barbados.

Rails, Gallinules and Coots / Rallidae

Common Gallinule. *Gallinula galeata*. A wetland species found in Barbados and St. Lucia.

Purple Gallinule. *Porphyrio martinicus*. Seen only in Barbados.

American Coot. *Fulica americana*. Seen along with the next species in the wetland in St. Lucia.

Caribbean Coot. *Fulica caribaea*. Seen along with previous species in the wetland in St. Lucia.

Sora. *Porzana carolina*. 3 individuals were observed in a small wetland in Barbados.

Plovers and Lapwings / Charadriidae

Semipalmated Plover. *Charadrius semipalmatus*. One individual was observed in Graeme Hall, Barbados. Also observed in the wetlands of St. Vincent.

Sandpipers and Allies / Scolopacidae

Greater Yellowlegs. *Tringa melanoleuca*. St. Lucia wetland.

Lesser Yellowlegs. *Tringa flavipes*. St. Lucia wetland.

Spotted Sandpiper. *Actitis macularius*. Single individuals were observed in Barbados, Guadeloupe and St. Vincent.

Solitary Sandpiper. *Tringa solitaria*. A pair was seen in Graeme Hall, Barbados.

Gulls, Terns and Skimmers / Laridae

Laughing Gull. *Leucophaeus atricilla*. Seen once in Guadeloupe. Later, 50+ individuals were seen in the bay of St. Lucia.

Royal Tern. *Thalasseus maximus*. Only a few pairs in Martinique and St. Vincent.

Pigeons and Doves / Columbidae

Rock Pigeon (I). *Columba livia*. Common in urban areas in all islands.

Scaly-naped Pigeon. *Patagioenas squamosa*. Particularly common and easy-to-see in Barbados. A forest species in Guadeloupe, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent.

Eurasian Collared-Dove (I). *Streptopelia decaocto*. Few individuals were observed in Barbados, Guadeloupe and Martinique. Introduced.

Common Ground-Dove. *Columbina passerina*. Seen in all islands.

Ruddy Quail-Dove. *Geotrygon montana*. Victor and Barry's group in St. Vincent flushed a single individual.

Bridled Quail-Dove. *Geotrygon mystacea*. As I mentioned in the previous cruise birdlist, when it comes to quail-doves, this one wins the beauty contest. A fabulous group dynamic allowed us to see five individuals in various locations surrounding the picnic area and the waterfalls trail in Guadeloupe. Well done!

Zenaida Dove. *Zenaida aurita*. Particularly common and easy-to-see in Barbados. Also seen in Martinique and St. Vincent.

Eared Dove. *Zenaida auriculata*. Called in St. Lucia and St. Vincent only.

Cuckoos / Cuculidae

Mangrove Cuckoo. *Coccyzus minor*. Seen first in the forest in Dominica and later on an open branch in St. Lucia.

Smooth-billed Ani. *Crotophaga ani*. Seen only in Dominica.

Swifts / Apodidae

The swifts are probably the least-known family of birds in the Americas. That is because of their habit of traveling long distances and roosting in hard-to-find locations. We came across what seemed like a larger *Chaetura* swift in Dominica, and I believe it might have been Chimney Swift *Chaetura pelagica*. Nevertheless, we are not including this sighting as part of the birdlist, rather mentioning it here just in case this species is confirmed to occur in the island in the future.

Short-tailed Swift. *Chaetura brachyura*. Probably seen first in Dominica by a few participants and later seen by all in St. Lucia.

Lesser Antillean Swift. *Chaetura martinica*. A common species found in most of the Lesser Antilles.

Hummingbirds / Trochilidae

Purple-throated Carib. *Eulampis jugularis*. This exquisite hummingbird was enjoyed by everyone on the cruise. We came across it many times in the islands of Dominica, Guadeloupe, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent.

Green-throated Carib. *Eulampis holosericeus*. This species was another gem of the Lesser Antilles. It was seen in Barbados, Guadeloupe, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent.

Blue-headed Hummingbird (E). *Cyanophaia bicolor*. We enjoyed amazing views of a male (and a female by some participants) along the road to the forest, in Dominica.

Antillean Crested Hummingbird. *Orthorhyncus cristatus*. Another little gem of the Lesser Antilles. We noticed the crest color difference among some islands. It was seen in every island.

Kingfishers / Alcedinidae

Belted Kingfisher. *Megaceryle alcyon*. Seen only in Barbados and in the wetlands in St. Lucia.

Woodpeckers / Picidae

Guadeloupe Woodpecker. *Melanerpes herminieri*. Endemic to Guadeloupe. A male was observed in the picnic area of the Guadeloupe national park. The epithet *herminieri* was given after Felix Louis l'Herminiere, a French naturalist in Guadeloupe. We enjoyed a second but active individual in a parking area along the main road of the park.

Falcons / Falconidae

American Kestrel. *Falco sparverius*. Seen only once in St. Lucia, along the road on the way back to the ship.

Merlin. *Falco columbarius*. First reported on the tour by the participants that visited the wetland in St. Lucia. Later seen also in St. Vincent.

Peregrine Falcon. *Falco peregrinus*. Observed in Barbados.

Parrots / Psittacidae

Red-necked Parrot (E). *Amazona arausiaca*. Endemic to Dominica. The commonest and probably the easiest-to-see parrot in the Lesser Antilles. We saw it perched, in flight, and at close distance.

St. Lucia Parrot (E). *Amazona versicolor*. S Endemic to Saint Lucia. Everyone enjoyed great views of this parrot in two different locations, the Des Carties trail and the Bouton community road. Towards the end of the afternoon, one was scoped!

St. Vincent Parrot (E). *Amazona guildingii*. Endemic to St Lucia. To find this species we tried two locations in the same slope. Those that were ready to walk a steep trail to the lookout area joined me, while Barry, Victor, and Peter led the group to see the parrot from the forest edge. Despite the rain, everyone enjoyed good views!

Imperial Parrot. *Amazona imperialis*. Endemic to Dominica. Seeing this endemic parrot is always a challenge, and seeing a parrot of which there are only less than 300 individuals left is a privilege. Patience was something we practiced with this species and, after a downpour, we saw one flying at eye level. Even better, we saw it landing, and it allowed us to enjoy its unique and impressive plumage through the scope. What a magical moment! It was an unforgettable experience.

Tyrant Flycatchers / Tyrannidae

Caribbean Elaenia. *Elaenia martinica*. A common species seen in all the islands but Barbados.

Yellow-bellied Elaenia. *Elaenia flavogaster*. SV. Seen only in St. Vincent. A common species in northern South America.

Lesser Antillean Pewee. *Contopus latirostris*. This little tyrant-flycatcher is fond of the forest edge. It was first found in a citrus plantation in Dominica and later in St. Lucia. Some taxonomist have suggested that the St. Lucia population might be a separate species, the St. Lucia Pewee, *Contopus oberi*.

Grenada Flycatcher. *Myiarchus nugator*. A target species of St. Vincent. It was seen nicely in the botanical gardens. We noticed its incredible resemblance to Brown-crested Flycatcher.

Lesser Antillean Flycatcher. *Myiarchus oberi*. A pair was observed in Dominica and a second pair in St. Lucia. Prefers edge or inside forested areas.

Gray Kingbird. *Tyrannus dominicensis*. This species was seen in all islands. Some Lesser Antilles populations of this species do migrate to northern South America.

Vireos / Vireonidae

Black-whiskered Vireo. *Vireo altiloquus*. Heard only in Barbados and later seen in all the other islands. It was particularly common and visible in St. Vincent.

Swallows / Hirundinidae

Caribbean Martin. *Progne dominicensis*. A single individual was observed in Barbados and another in St. Lucia. The migratory route of this species is not yet understood.

Wrens / Troglodytidae

House Wren. *Troglodytes aedon*. House Wren in Dominica is a forest species, has white dots in the tips of the flight feathers, and its song is different from the populations in North and South America. We enjoyed extended views in the Quillesse forest. Later, those who went to the wetland in St. Lucia were fortunate to see it near there, and this population prefers much drier habitat. Who knows... maybe we're talking about two separate species!

Thrushes and Allies / Turdidae

Rufous-throated Solitaire. *Myadestes genibarbis*. We were serenaded by the wonderful voice of this solitaire in Dominica and eventually saw it foraging in berries at the edge of the forest trail. It was also seen on the forest trail in St. Lucia. Hearing this solitaire giving its unique, beautiful, and mysterious voice, as we were surrounded by gigantic trees, was another magical experience of this tour.

Cocoa Thrush. *Turdus fumigatus*. SV. One individual was glimpsed in St. Vincent.

Spectacled Thrush. *Turdus nudigenis*. An unexpected individual was observed in Guadeloupe. Apparently, its range is expanding with the increase of clearings. It was later seen at the Botanical Gardens of St. Vincent.

Forest Thrush. *Turdus lherminieri*. A big Thank You! to Mike for spotting this one sunning in an open tree at the forest edge in Guadeloupe. Well done, Mike!

Mockingbirds and Thrashers / Mimidae

White-breasted Thrasher (E). *Ramphocinclus brachyurus*. Endemic to Martinique and St Lucia. Barry was able to show a pair of this shy and endangered species to

everyone, from the road! This has been the fastest we have ever showed this species compared to any previous cruise.

Scaly-breasted Thrasher. *Allenia fusca*. First seen in Dominica and later in all the remaining islands except St. Vincent.

Pearly-eyed Thrasher. *Margarops fuscatus*. A common species in Guadeloupe and St. Vincent.

Brown Trembler. *Cinclocerthia ruficauda*. The tremblers are comical birds with a unique behavior of shaking the wings constantly. It has been suggested that the population from Guadeloupe may represent a separate species. There are currently two species of tremblers recognized, and this one is more widespread. We saw it in Dominica and Guadeloupe. Later, it was seen also in St. Vincent.

Gray Trembler (E) *Cinclocerthia gutturalis*. Found only in St. Lucia and Martinique. Once considered conspecific with the previous species, this trembler has paler underparts. Everyone enjoyed views of it in St. Lucia.

Tropical Mockingbird. *Mimus gilvus*. Common in Martinique and St. Vincent.

New World Warblers / Parulidae

Black-and-white Warbler. *Mniotilta varia*. Only one individual was reported in Dominica.

Whistling Warbler (E). *Catharopeza bishopi*. Endemic to Saint Vincent. We were astonished to see this species at such close distance! Furthermore, we saw three different individuals and I believe we have set a record for any previous VENT cruise to this island. This species was described in 1879.

Plumbeous Warbler (E). *Setophaga plumbea*. An easy-to-find warbler. It was seen in Dominica and Guadeloupe.

Yellow Warbler. *Setophaga petechia*. This interesting species is resident in the Lesser Antilles. The Barbados form is also called Golden Warbler while the Martinique form (with complete chestnut-maroon hood) is called Mangrove Warbler.

St. Lucia Warbler (E). *Setophaga delicata*. Endemic to St Lucia. Another easy-to-find warbler. Seen by everyone in St. Lucia. It favors open areas.

Tanagers and Allies / Thraupidae

Lesser Antillean Tanager. *Tangara cucullata*. This tanager is a relative to the commoner and more widespread Burnished-buff Tanager in northern South America. Those that walked the steep trail in St. Vincent saw it.

Bananaquit. *Coereba flaveola*. Anywhere you see bananaquits you sort of see it once and ignore for the rest of the trip. Not in the Lesser Antilles! We saw individuals with a dotted wingbar, some with a broader throat patch, and others with a reduced throat patch. Furthermore, there is an all-black form in St. Vincent! We enjoyed the three forms of bananaquits in the Lesser Antilles.

Black-faced Grassquit. *Tiaris bicolor*. A common species seen in open areas of all of the Lesser Antilles except for Guadeloupe.

Lesser Antillean Bullfinch. *Loxigilla noctis*. A common and gregarious species that visits open areas, forest edge, and is tolerant to human disturbance. It was seen in all the islands except Barbados, where it's replaced by the endemic bullfinch there.

Barbados Bullfinch. *Loxigilla barbadensis*. This bullfinch was the first of the endemic birds seen on our tour. They're so conspicuous that they can be seen virtually in every open area of Barbados. Some were trying to take bread from the buffet breakfast!

St. Lucia Black Finch (E). *Melanospiza richardsoni*. Endemic to St Lucia. We owe a big *Thank You!* to Adams for getting this bird to us. We enjoyed views of this rare and secretive bird in the morning and in the afternoon.

Lesser Antillean Saltator. *Saltator albicollis*. Common in all the islands except Barbados.

Troupials and Allies / Icteridae

Carib Grackle. *Quiscalus lugubris*. Our first sighting of this species was in Barbados, which host an interesting and distinctive population since there's no sexual dimorphism! Furthermore, the populations of Guadeloupe, Martinique, and St. Lucia are vocally distinct from the ones inland South America. Here you got a good example of what's likely to be two cryptic species, and probably both will be restricted to the Lesser Antilles. We saw both forms.

Shiny Cowbird. *Molothrus bonariensis*. Seen in Barbados and St. Lucia.

Martinique Oriole (E). *Icterus bonana*. Endemic to Martinique. This oriole has proved to be the most difficult-to-find endemic bird in the Lesser Antilles. Despite our search in several locations along the trail inside the Caravelle Peninsula, we only nailed it twice, and only for seconds. Victor and Barry saw it along with some participants near the fig tree, and I saw it with three other participants at the forest edge in the ruins. The epithet *bonana* refers to the false belief by the local farmers that this species ate the bananas in the plantations.

Siskins, Crossbills and Allies / Fringillidae

Antillean Euphonia. *Euphonia musica*. A male and a female were observed for those that joined us in the Des Cartier trail in St. Lucia.

OTHER SPECIES

Sperm Whale. *Physeter macrocephalus*. At Sea.

Small Asian Mongoose. *Herpestes javanicus*. Introduced in the Lesser Antilles.

Antillean Fruit-eating Bat. *Brachyphylla cavernarum*. Dominica.

Dominican Ground Lizard. *Ameiva fuscata*. Dominica.

Dominican Anole. *Anolis oculatus*. Dominica.

St. Lucia Anole. *Anole luciae*. St. Lucia.

Guadeloupe Anole. *Anolis marmoratus*. Guadeloupe.

Saint Vincent's Bush Anole. *Anolis trinitatis*. St. Vincent.

Johnstone's Whistling Frog or Coqui Frog. *Eleutherodactylus johnstonei*. Introduced. Dominica.

Flying Fish. Exocoetidae (This family comprises about 64 species of flying fish).

Leaf-cutter Ants.

Arboreal Termite.

MOST PROMINENT PLANTS OF THE LESSER ANTILLES

Compiled by Peter Zika

* = endemic to one island

Common name (Scientific name)

11 February Barbados

Australian pine (*Casuarina equisetifolia*)

callabash (*Crescentia cujete*)

coconut (*Cocos nucifera*)

mahogany (*Swietenia mahagoni*)

pudding pipe tree (*Cassia fistula*)

red mangrove (*Rhizophora mangle*)

sugar cane (*Saccharum officinarum*)

13 February Dominica

clubmoss (*Lycopodium cernuum*)

David's flower (*Spathoglottis plicata*)

magnolia (*Magnolia dodecapetala*)

palicourea (*Palicourea crocea*)

sabinea (*Sabinea carinalis*)

sandbox tree (*Hura crepitans*)

14 February Guadeloupe

chataignier (*Sloanea caribaea*)

marcgravia (*Marcgravia umbellata*)

hippobroma (*Hippobroma longiflora*)

spikemoss (*Selaginella* sp.)

water lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes*)

15 February Martinique

coral vine (*Antigonon leptopus*)

fig (*Ficus citrifolia*)

lignum vitae (*Guaiacum officinale*)

mancineel (*Hippomane mancinella*)

tabebuia (*Tabebuia* sp.)

16 February St. Lucia

incense tree (*Protium attenuatum*)

monkey's goblet (*Clusia major*)

piper (*Piper dilatatum*)

Swartzia (*Swartzia caribaea*)

17 February St. Vincent

anthurium (*Anthurium* sp.)

begonia (*Begonia* sp.)

cannonball tree (*Couropita guianensis*)

costus (*Costus* sp.)
forking fern (*Gleichenia* sp.)
nutmeg and mace *Myristica fragrans*
St. Vincent spiny palm *Aiphanes vincentiana* *

18 February Barbados

hibiscus (*Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*)
lead plant (*Plumbago scandens*)
pride of Barbados (*Caesalpinia pulcherrima*)
rubber tree (*Ficus elastica*)
screw pine (*Pandanus tectorius*)