

■ ANGUILLA

LAND AREA **98 km²** ALTITUDE **0–65 m**
HUMAN POPULATION **13,480** CAPITAL **The Valley**
IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS **7, totalling 53 km²**
IMPORTANT BIRD AREA PROTECTION **7.9%**
BIRD SPECIES **139**
THREATENED BIRDS **0** RESTRICTED-RANGE BIRDS **4**



KARIM HODGE (DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, GOVERNMENT OF ANGUILLA), STEVE HOLLIDAY (ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS) AND FARAH MUKHIDA (ANGUILLA NATIONAL TRUST)



Sombrero, one of Anguilla's larger outlying islands.
(PHOTO: STEVE HOLLIDAY/RSPB)

INTRODUCTION

Anguilla, a UK Overseas Territory, is at the northernmost end of the Lesser Antilles, to the east of the Virgin Islands and just 8 km north of the island of St Martin. It is an archipelago of 22 islands, with the main island (Anguilla) being c.26 km long, 5 km at its widest point, and covering c.91 km². The largest of the outlying islands include Anguillita, Dog Island, Prickly Pear Cays, Scrub and Little Scrub islands, Seal Island, Sombrero and Sandy Island. Anguilla and its many outer islands and cays are low-lying and flat. They are mostly rocky, with limestone, corals and sandstone predominating, and have generally thin, poor soils. Habitats range from coral reefs to coastal cliffs, degraded evergreen woodland with scattered areas of grassland and scrub, to small areas of mangrove. Anguilla and three of the offshore cays have brackish coastal lagoons and a few ponds on the mainland are fed by springs from the water table. Porous rocks capture rainfall as groundwater and these have traditionally provided the island's water resources, although recent concerns over water quality have led to the development of a new desalination plant.

With generally poor soils, Anguilla is largely unsuitable for agriculture (although several pockets of rich soil are

cultivated). However, the mainland and a few of the offshore islands have extensive beaches, clear seas and inshore coral reefs, providing a rich basis for Anguilla's primary industries of tourism and fishing. The offshore banking, finance and insurance industries are also important for the territory's economy.

Anguilla has a tropical dry climate. Average annual rainfall is 970 mm but can range from 460 to over 2,050 mm. The wet season extends from June to November and coincides with the Atlantic hurricane season, although most of the island's annual rainfall can fall within a few weeks, causing localised flooding in low-lying areas. Anguilla is periodically hit by hurricanes—such as Luis in 1995 and Lenny in 1999—and these can result in extensive wind damage, torrential rain and flooding.

Although Anguilla is a small territory, it is culturally and ethnically diverse in its own right. This is a result of the migratory habits of people throughout the Caribbean region, from slavery times to the present day. The majority of the native population are those of the African Diaspora, but there is a small population of Irish descendants. The rest is made up of immigrants from the Caribbean region, and some expatriates from North America and Europe. The population is supplemented by more than 150,000 visitors a year, helping

to make tourism the most important economic activity. However, this focus on tourism is placing many pressures on the environment, from destroying grassy savannahs and limestone pavements for new development to building golf courses and draining and dredging wetlands for marina developments. As a UK Overseas Territory, the islands are governed by the locally elected Government of Anguilla with a governor representing the UK Government.

■ Conservation

The Anguilla National Trust (ANT) was established by law in 1988 to act as custodian of Anguilla’s heritage, preserving and promoting the island’s natural environment and its archaeological, historical and cultural resources for present and future generations. It has worked with a growing number of stakeholders and partners on a range of collaborative projects that help further its aims. The Trust has maintained particularly close working relationships with the Government of Anguilla in their efforts to implement national, regional and international environmental policy. However, effective conservation efforts are impeded by the lack of appropriate environmental legislation and land use planning. National parks have been designated through the Anguilla National Trust Act, and five marine parks were legally demarcated in 2007 through the 1991 Marine Parks Act. Environmental legislation has been drafted and is currently being reviewed by government departments and statutory bodies before a final public review and their submission to Executive Council. This draft legislation is quite comprehensive and includes environmental protection, biodiversity and cultural conservation, fisheries management, and environmental health.

However, as tourism expands and development pressures increase, any decisions relating to land use (including the establishment of a protected areas system) will remain a challenge as only c.3% of land is in government ownership. Although the government has increased the resources available to the Environment Department there is a need to invest further in recruitment, training and retention of staff. Establishment of a national conservation fund would greatly assist such investment in the territory’s long-term, sustainable future.

Biodiversity on Anguilla is under more serious threat than ever before. A surge in development for housing and tourism-

related activities, and an increase in population growth on the island and from immigration have placed severe pressures on an increasingly stressed environment. These pressures will be exacerbated by any impacts of global climate change. The main problems facing biodiversity conservation on Anguilla are habitat loss due to an increase in economic activity, and a lack of public awareness and appreciation about the importance of the environment to the island. Despite the many ecological services Anguilla’s dry evergreen forest, wetlands and coral reefs provide, many are being destroyed or compromised for the sake of economic development. Other threats that are less widespread but capable of creating similar environmental problems include invasive alien species, and disturbance to important breeding or feeding areas for a range of species. There are also potential threats from pollution incidents and the growth in domestic and industrial waste from high levels of tourism and its related activities. The ANT has been working to address some of these threats through actions such as environmental education programmes; assisting with the development of marine park management plans; on-going wetland and terrestrial bird monitoring programmes; and a rat eradication study of Dog Island—a joint OTEP project with Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), and with assistance provided by the Department of Environment, Government of Anguilla.

■ Birds

To date, 139 bird species have been recorded on Anguilla, of which 38 are recorded as breeding and a further 101 occur as non-breeding Neotropical migrants. Four (of the 38) Lesser Antilles EBA restricted-range birds occur in Anguilla, none of which is endemic to the territory. The four species are Green-throated Carib *Eulampis holosericeus*, Caribbean Elaenia *Elaenia martinica*, Pearly-eyed Thrasher *Margarops fuscatus* and Lesser Antillean Bullfinch *Loxigilla noctis* all of which are widely dispersed across the Anguilla mainland. A number of other Lesser Antilles restricted-range birds have occurred on the island: Antillean Crested Hummingbird *Orthorhynchus cristatus* disappeared from the island in the wake of Hurricane Luis, but a few individuals have recently been recorded; Purple-throated Carib *Eulampis jugularis* is a rare visitor; and Antillean Euphonia *Euphonia musica* was reported in the past but is only known from one recent record.

Long Pond IBA—like most of Anguilla the land is privately owned and under pressure from development. (PHOTO: FARAH MUKHIDA/ANT)





The restricted-range Caribbean Elaenia (left) and Pearly-eyed Thrasher (right) occur throughout Anguilla. (PHOTOS: GILLIAN HOLLIDAY)

Four globally threatened birds have been recorded in Anguilla but their status is such that they have not been considered in the IBA analysis. The Vulnerable West Indian Whistling-duck *Dendrocygna arborea* is a rare visitor from other Caribbean populations with recent records in 2003 and 2006. The remaining three species are all Near Threatened: Piping Plover *Charadrius melodus* is a rare migrant with at least three individuals seen in recent years; Caribbean Coot *Fulica caribaea* is a scarce visitor and rare breeding bird with 1–2 birds seen annually; and White-crowned Pigeon *Patagioenas leucocephala* is a rare visitor (one was seen in 2005) following a local extinction in the 1960s through hunting and habitat loss.

Anguilla is important for seabirds. At least 15 species breed, with a further two species—Audubon’s Shearwater *Puffinus lherminieri* and Black Noddy *Anous minutus*—reported as former or possible breeding species. Surveys of Anguilla and its outer islands during 1999–2000 found more than 10,000 nesting pairs of gulls and terns, and over 2,000 nesting pairs of boobys *Sula* spp., tropicbirds *Phaethon* spp. and Magnificent Frigatebirds *Fregata magnificens*. Surveys in 2007 documented significantly higher numbers of nesting terns. Although one of the smallest island groups in the West Indies, Anguilla holds up to 10% of the West Indian Masked Booby *Sula dactylatra*



Brown Boobys on Prickly Pear East. (PHOTO: FARAH MUKHIDA/ANT)

Table 1. Key bird species at Important Bird Areas in Anguilla.

Key bird species	Criteria	National population	Anguilla IBAs						
			AI001	AI002	AI003	AI004	AI005	AI006	AI007
Red-billed Tropicbird <i>Phaethon aethereus</i>	■	129	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Magnificent Frigatebird <i>Fregata magnificens</i>	■	930	■	■					
Brown Pelican <i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>	■	87			■				
Masked Booby <i>Sula dactylatra</i>	■	210	■	■	■				
Brown Booby <i>Sula leucogaster</i>	■	6,669	■	■	■	■			
Laughing Gull <i>Larus atricilla</i>	■	9,870		■	■				■
Royal Tern <i>Sterna maxima</i>	■	381							■
Roseate Tern <i>Sterna dougallii</i>	■	630							■
Least Tern <i>Sterna antillarum</i>	■	978			■	■	■	■	■
Bridled Tern <i>Sterna anaethetus</i>	■	1,390	■	■	■				
Sooty Tern <i>Sterna fuscata</i>	■	340,000		■	■				
Brown Noddy <i>Anous stolidus</i>	■	1,815	■	■					
Green-throated Carib <i>Eulampis holosericeus</i>	■	75				■	■	■	
Caribbean Elaenia <i>Elaenia martinica</i>	■						■	■	■
Pearly-eyed Thrasher <i>Margarops fuscatus</i>	■								■
Lesser Antillean Bullfinch <i>Loxigilla noctis</i>	■					■			

All population figures = numbers of individuals.
 Restricted-range birds ■. Congregatory birds ■.

and Bridled Tern *Sterna anaethetus* populations, the region's largest population of Sooty Tern *S. fuscata* and 30% of the Brown Boobys *Sula leucogaster*. Anguilla's seabirds mostly breed on seven small, uninhabited islands. These are all easily accessible from the mainland except for the remote rocky outcrop of Sombrero (IBA AI001). The mainland currently holds small populations of White-tailed *Phaethon lepturus* and Red-billed *P. aethereus* tropicbirds, nesting in holes on low cliffs, and several colonies of Least Terns *Sterna antillarum* breeding around coastal lagoons and ponds. Anguilla's pond network provides important habitats for wintering and passage of Neotropical migratory shorebirds including plovers and sandpipers, and also resident breeding and migratory waterbirds. National population estimates for the waterbirds/seabirds that meet the IBA criteria are given in Table 1.

IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

Anguilla's seven IBAs—the territory's international priority sites for bird conservation—cover 53 km² (including marine areas), and about 8% of the islands' land area. The IBAs have been identified on the basis of 17 key bird species (listed in Table 1) that variously trigger the IBA criteria. These 17 species comprise all four restricted-range species (that have viable populations in Anguilla), and 13 congregatory seabirds. The Near Threatened Caribbean Coot *Fulica caribaea*, Piping Plover *Charadrius melodus* and White-crowned Pigeon *Patagioenas leucocephala* have not been considered in the analysis due to the nature of their current status on the islands (see above).

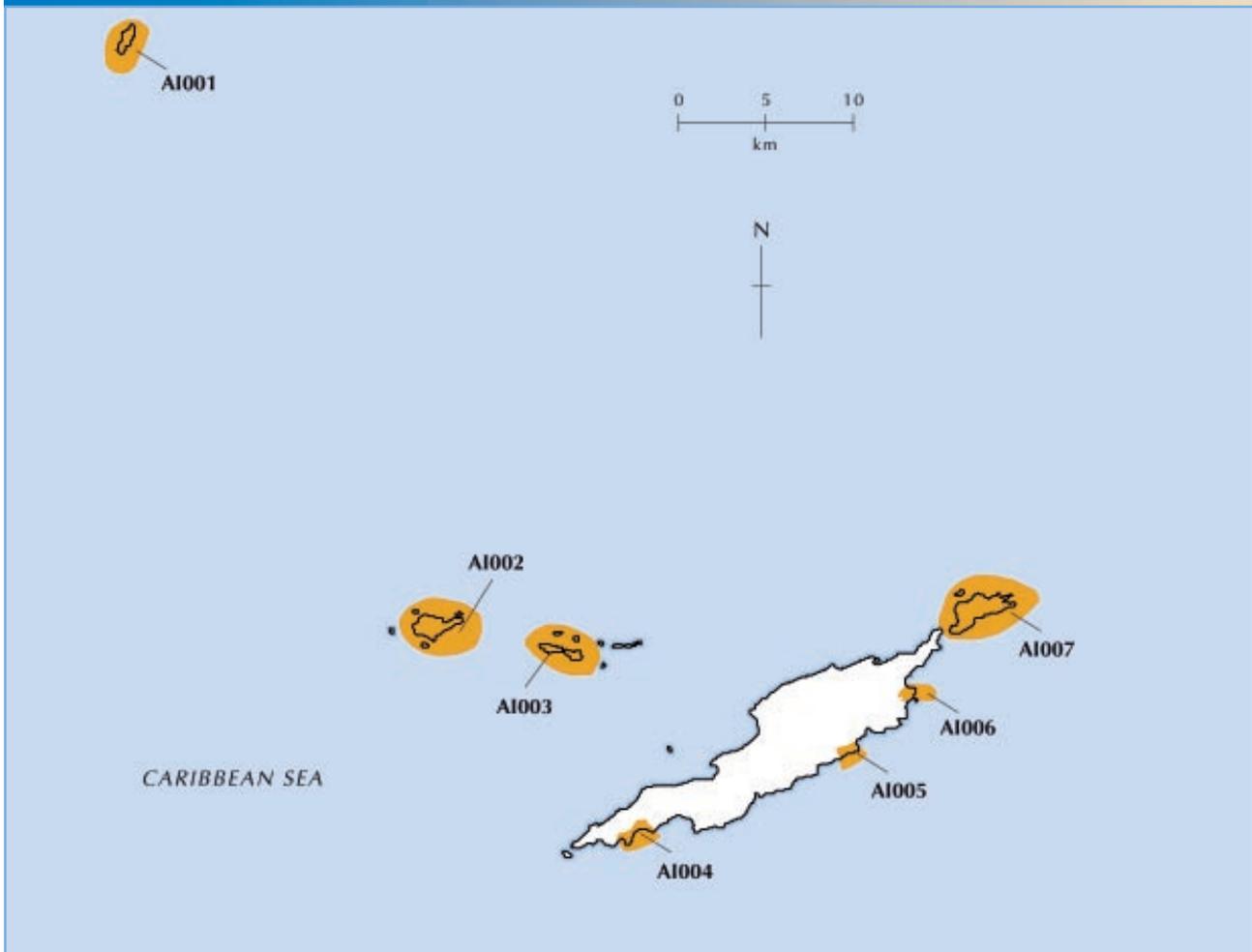
Anguilla's IBAs are focused on four of the larger offshore islands (Sombrero, Dog Island, Prickly Pear and Scrub Island),



Like many of Anguilla's larger offshore islands, Scrub Island IBA supports large numbers of breeding seabirds. (PHOTO: JACKIE CESTERO)

all of which support globally significant seabird colonies. Dog Island IBA (AI002) with 113,000 pairs of Sooty Tern *Sterna fuscata* and many other species of breeding seabird is one of the largest seabird colonies in the insular Caribbean. These seabirds are afforded little legal protection as Anguilla's marine parks only cover only aquatic (not terrestrial) areas, and Dog Island, Scrub, and Prickly Pear East are privately owned. However, for any sort of development to occur on any of the cays, licenses and permission must technically be granted by the Government of Anguilla. The three IBAs on mainland Anguilla are all coastal ponds supporting a range of waterbirds,

Figure 1. Location of Important Bird Areas in Anguilla.



but particularly breeding colonies of Least Tern *S. antillarum*. None of these IBAs are protected, and all face varying degrees of pressure from encroaching, inappropriate, or the threat of development.

State, pressure and response variables at each IBA should be monitored annually to provide an objective status assessment and highlight management interventions that might be required to maintain these internationally important biodiversity sites. This basic site status monitoring would be best informed by regular survey results focused on the key bird species, in particular the seabirds, listed in Table 1. Such surveys should include any additional “potential” IBAs such as Anguillita and Little Scrub Island, both of which support seabird colonies that in time could meet regionally significant population thresholds.

KEY REFERENCES

- BRYER, M., FISHER, I., HOLLIDAY, S. H. AND HUGHES, J. (2000) Birds of Anguilla and outer islands, November 1999 to June 2000. Sandy, U.K.: Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (Unpublished sabbatical report).
- COLLIER, N. AND BROWN, A. C. (2004) Anguilla's offshore islands: seabird census and nest monitoring, May–June 2004. Riviera beach, USA: Environmental Protection in the Caribbean (Unpublished report to Anguilla Min. Env.: EPIC contribution 25).
- HILTON, G. M., BOWDEN, C. G. R., RATCLIFFE, N., LUCKING, V. AND BRINDLEY, E. (2001) Bird conservation priorities in the UK Overseas Territories. Sandy, U.K.: Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB Research Report 1).
- HODGE, K. V. D., CENSKY, E. J. AND POWELL, R. (2003) *The reptiles and amphibians of Anguilla, British West Indies*. Anguilla: Anguilla National Trust.

- HODGE, K. V. D. AND HOLLIDAY, S. H. (2006) Anguilla. Pp.9–18 in S. M. Sanders, ed. *Important Bird Areas in the United Kingdom Overseas Territories*. Sandy, U.K.: Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.
- HOLLIDAY, S. H. AND HODGE, K. V. D. (in press) Anguilla. In Bradley P. E. and Norton, R. L. eds. *Breeding seabirds of the Caribbean*. Gainesville, Florida: Univ. Florida Press.
- HOLLIDAY, S. H., HODGE, K. V. D. AND HUGHES, D. E. (2007) *A guide to the birds of Anguilla*. Sandy, U.K.: Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.
- ICF CONSULTING (1998) Biological surveys on Sombrero Island. Unpublished report to Beal Aerospace.
- ICF CONSULTING (1999) Supplemental biological surveys on Sombrero and other Anguillian islands. Unpublished report to Beal Aerospace.
- PRITCHARD, D. (1990) The Ramsar Convention in the Caribbean with special emphasis on Anguilla. Sandy, U.K.: Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (Unpublished report).
- PROCTER, D. AND FLEMING, L. V., EDs. (1999) *Biodiversity: the UK Overseas Territories*. Peterborough, U.K.: Joint Nature Conservation Committee.
- WILKINSON, C., POLLARD, M. AND HILTON, G. (in prep.) A survey of breeding seabirds on Anguilla in 2007. (To be submitted to *J. Carib. Orn.* in 2008).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank Sir Emile Gumbs (Chief Minister, 1981–94), Judith Dudley (UN Volunteer, 1996–97), Ian Fisher, Melanie Bryer, Julian Hughes, Mike Pollard and Colin Wilkinson (RSPB, BirdLife in the UK), Natalia Collier and Adam Brown (EPIC), and Jackie Cestero (ANT volunteer) and all the volunteers who have provided data for wetland bird counts and other surveys.

AI001 Sombrero		Marine Park/Unprotected
COORDINATES 18°36'N 63°25'W		THREATENED BIRDS <input type="checkbox"/>
ADMIN REGION —		RESTRICTED-RANGE BIRDS <input type="checkbox"/>
AREA 618 ha		BIOME-RESTRICTED BIRDS <input type="checkbox"/>
ALTITUDE 0–12 m		CONGREGATORY BIRDS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
HABITAT Sea, cliff, coastline		

Site description

Sombrero IBA is a remote, 38-ha flat-topped rocky island lying 65 km north-west of Anguilla. The island is currently stark and bare following damage by Hurricane Luis in 1995 when large areas of cacti and other plants were destroyed. The vegetation is now in an early stage of recovery. Extensive phosphate deposits were mined in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries leaving the island's surface pitted with craters up to 10 m deep, and also the remains of industrial buildings. A manned lighthouse with associated buildings was in use until 2002 when it was replaced with an automated light.

Birds

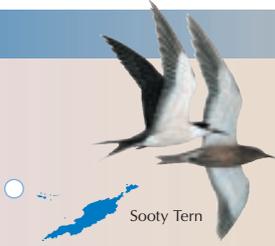
The cliffs and rocky areas of this IBA support a significant mixed-species seabird colony. Seven seabird species currently breed, and the numbers of Bridled Tern *Sterna anaethetus* are globally important, while those of Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster* and Brown Noddy *Anous stolidus* are regionally so. This remote rocky outpost has long been important for breeding seabirds with confirmed (historic) reports of 14 species breeding suggesting that with adequate protection and management this island can support even more birds.

Other biodiversity

The endemic Sombrero ground lizard *Ameiva corvina* is widespread and easily seen on the island. A recently discovered dwarf gecko *Sphaerodactylus* sp. has been tentatively named Sombrero dwarf gecko.

Conservation

Sombrero IBA is crown land. The Government of Anguilla has approved that the island (the terrestrial area and a portion of the marine environment) shall be designated a Marine Protected Area. However, the park boundaries (which need to make provision for the continued use of traditional fishing grounds) have not yet been determined. A few stark buildings from the phosphate industry remain alongside those from Sombrero's long-time use as a lighthouse station. Until recently the island was permanently inhabited by a small number of lighthouse staff who were transported by small boat from mainland Anguilla. With the installation of the unmanned lighthouse, visitation has been limited to the occasional fisherman and biologists engaged in fieldwork. The principal threat to Sombrero's seabirds in recent years was an application in 1999 to build a satellite-launching station on the island, though this has since been withdrawn. Rats *Rattus* spp. and mice *Mus musculus* are not thought to be present on the island, although this possibility should be monitored along with the breeding seabirds.

AI002 Dog Island		Marine Park/Unprotected
<p>COORDINATES 18°16'N 63°15'W ADMIN REGION — AREA 1,333 ha ALTITUDE 0–30 m HABITAT Sea, shrubland, cliff, coastline, wetlands</p>	 <p>Sooty Tern</p>	<p>THREATENED BIRDS <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>RESTRICTED-RANGE BIRDS <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>BIOME-RESTRICTED BIRDS <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>CONGREGATORY BIRDS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>

Site description

Dog Island IBA is situated 13 km north-west of Anguilla. It is an uninhabited, 202-ha low rocky island with three smaller cays off its west and north coasts. The coastline is characterised by low cliffs interspersed with sandy beaches. Weathered limestone rocks reach sea-level on parts of the west and north-east coast, and two large ponds lie inside beaches at Spring Bay and Stoney Bay. The centre of the island is covered in impenetrable, low, thorny scrub and prickly pear cacti. A herd of c.200 feral goats are a remnant of previous periods of livestock farming.

Birds

The cliffs and inland areas of scrub in this IBA support Anguilla’s largest seabird colonies with nine species breeding. Surveys in May 2007 documented a globally-significant 113,000 pairs of Sooty Tern *Sterna fuscata* breeding in the IBA. Populations of Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster* and Laughing Gull *Larus atricilla* are also globally important, while those of Red-billed Tropicbird *Phaethon aethereus*, Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens*, Masked Booby *Sula dactylatra*, Bridled Tern *Sterna anaethetus* and Brown Noddy *Anous stolidus* are regionally so.

Other biodiversity

The Endangered green turtle *Chelonia mydas* nests, and the ground lizard *Ameiva plei* (endemic to Anguilla, St Martin and St Barthélemy), little dwarf gecko *Sphaerodactylus parvus* (an Anguilla Bank endemic) and island dwarf gecko *Sphaerodactylus sputator* (northern Lesser Antilles endemic) all occur on Dog Island.

Conservation

Dog Island IBA is privately owned and the surrounding waters are protected within a marine park. At least two development proposals, for tourism and a coastguard station, have been proposed since the early 1990s, but have been rejected by the owners. Disturbance is currently minimal (due to the lack of habitation) and is restricted to the west end where, however, c.16% of the *Sula leucogaster* breed and where *Phaethon aethereus* nest among boulders almost down to sea-level. It is unknown if the area of scrub in the centre of the island is expanding now that grazing pressure from goats has been reduced. The low scrub affords protection to huge population of nesting *Sterna fuscata*. However, the *Sula* spp. nest in a narrow band on bare cliff-tops where encroachment by cacti may limit the colony. Rats *Rattus* spp. could be eradicated from the island according to a 2007 feasibility study.

AI003 Prickly Pear (East and West)		Marine Park/Unprotected
<p>COORDINATES 18°15'N 63°10'W ADMIN REGION — AREA 973 ha ALTITUDE 0–10 m HABITAT Coastline, sea, shrubland, rocky areas, wetlands</p>	 <p>Brown Booby</p>	<p>THREATENED BIRDS <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>RESTRICTED-RANGE BIRDS <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>BIOME-RESTRICTED BIRDS <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>CONGREGATORY BIRDS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>

Site description

Prickly Pear (East and West) IBA is 8 km north of mainland Anguilla. Prickly Pear East is a low, rocky island with sandy shores on the north and east coasts and heavily fissured limestone cliffs on the remaining coastline. A small pond lies behind the northern beach, and the centre of the island contains areas of scrub. The island has no permanent habitation although two restaurants operate along its northern coast. The island is accessed primarily by water. Prickly Pear West is separated from its smaller sister island by a narrow channel. Apart from one small beach, the island is a low limestone outcrop with low cliffs. It is the more rockier and rugged of the two islands. The islands cover an area of 98 ha.

Birds

This IBA is significant for its breeding seabirds. The population of Laughing Gull *Larus atricilla* are globally important, while those of Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster*, Red-billed Tropicbird *Phaethon aethereus*, Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis* and Least Tern *Sterna antillarum* are regionally so. The majority of *Sula leucogaster* (495 pairs in 2004) nest on Prickly Pear West (along with Brown Noddy *Anous stolidus* and small

numbers of Red-footed Booby *S. sula*, while most of the *Larus atricilla* (2,500 pairs in 2004) are on Prickly Pear East (along with Bridled Tern *Sterna anaethetus*).

Other biodiversity

The beaches on Prickly Pear are important for nesting Critically Endangered hawksbill *Eretmochelys imbricata* and Endangered green *Chelonia mydas* turtles.

Conservation

Prickly Pear East is privately owned while Prickly Pear West is crown owned. Neither cay is protected, but the surrounding waters fall within the Seal Island and Prickly Pear Cay East Marine Park. Prickly Pear East’s inshore coral reef system and two peak-season restaurants are popular with visitors from the mainland and from neighbouring St Martin. It represents Anguilla’s most accessible and most visited small island. Threats to the IBA have not been documented although it seems likely that there is some disturbance to the seabird colonies from visitors to the islands. It is unknown if rats *Rattus* spp. are present and/or impacting the seabird populations.

AI004 Cove Pond

COORDINATES 18°10'N 63°08'W

ADMIN REGION —

AREA 287 ha

ALTITUDE 0 m

HABITAT Shrubland, wetland, sand dune, mangrove, saltmarsh



Least Tern

Unprotected

THREATENED BIRDS

RESTRICTED-RANGE BIRDS 2

BIOME-RESTRICTED BIRDS

CONGREGATORY BIRDS

Site description

Cove Pond IBA is at the south-west end of Anguilla. It is part of a larger coastal lagoon complex that includes Gull Pond to the west and Merrywing Pond to the east. Anguilla's highest dune system borders the pond's southern shoreline. Cove Pond is divided by a causeway built as an access road to the Cap Juluca Resort. The IBA is recovering from hurricane damage (Luis in 1995 and Lenny in 1999) which swept sand from the dune into the pond making it relatively shallow. High-end resort development borders the south-west and northern shores and a road runs along its eastern end. A golf course, constructed in 2005–2006, is located east of the road.

Birds

This IBA supports regionally significant populations of Least Tern *Sterna antillarum* (up to 34 pairs breeding). Two (of the four) Lesser Antilles EBA restricted-range birds occur at this IBA, namely Green-throated Carib *Eulampis holosericeus* and Lesser Antillean Bullfinch *Loxigilla noctis*. A vagrant Antillean Euphonia *Euphonia musica* (also a Lesser Antilles restricted-range bird) was found at Gull Pond in 2000, and both Caribbean Elaenia *Elaenia martinica* and Pearly-eyed Thrasher *Margarops fuscatus* occur, but are not resident.

Snowy Plovers *Charadrius alexandrinus* and Wilson's Plover *C. wilsoni* breed in the IBA, and the Near Threatened Piping Plover *C. melodus* has been recorded.

Other biodiversity

Nothing recorded.

Conservation

Cove Pond IBA is a mix of land ownership, but is unprotected. Pockets of crown-owned property line the crown-owned pond and sand dunes, and the entire Cap Juluca Resort was constructed on crown-owned, though privately leased land. The Government of Anguilla has indicated that the pond, from its most eastern edge to the Cap Juluca causeway, and the protective sand dunes, will be legally designated a "protected area". There has been some discussion of opening the pond to the sea using horizontal channels through the dune. Construction is underway to develop Gull Pond into a mega-yacht marina. As both Gull Pond and Cove Pond are a connected system, the impacts of the marina and the accompanying built development may have significant negative impacts on the pond, despite its soon-to-be protected status.

AI005 Long Pond

COORDINATES 18°12'N 63°01'W

ADMIN REGION —

AREA 182 ha

ALTITUDE 0 m

HABITAT Wetland, shrubland, sand dune, saltmarsh



Least Tern

Unprotected

THREATENED BIRDS

RESTRICTED-RANGE BIRDS 2

BIOME-RESTRICTED BIRDS

CONGREGATORY BIRDS

Site description

Long Pond IBA is a large brackish-water pond located on the south-east coast of Anguilla. It is separated from the sea to the east by low sand-dunes and an open sandy area. The pond is bordered to both the east and the west by dirt roads lined with seagrape. The pond's south shore is c.100 m from the sea from which it is separated by wind-swept shrubland (growing on coralline limestone). Its northern shore is lined by villas and smaller homes. A limited buffer area of pioneering buttonwood bushes separates the buildings from the pond. Power lines were recently installed along the eastern dirt road, presumably to provide electricity for a planned built development.

Birds

This IBA supports regionally significant populations of Least Tern *Sterna antillarum* (130 pairs breeding in 2007). The *S. antillarum* colony is the largest in Anguilla and represents 40% of the territory's population. Snowy Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* and Wilson's Plover *C. wilsoni* breed

in the IBA and the Near Threatened Piping Plover *C. melodus* has been recorded. Two (of the four) Lesser Antilles EBA restricted-range birds occur at this IBA, namely Green-throated Carib *Eulampis holosericeus* and Caribbean Elaenia *Elaenia martinica*.

Other biodiversity

Nothing recorded.

Conservation

Long Pond IBA (or at least the land around it) is privately owned by a number of families, and the pond is not protected by any form of legislation. Built development (villas and houses) has occurred along the northern shore and it is now expanding to the eastern and southern sides. Dirt roads and tracks have been cut through the vegetation on both of these sides to allow for such expansion. While the sea rarely breaches the dune, the pond can overflow into the sea after heavy rains. In dry periods the pond begins to dry out but rarely to more than half its full extent.

AI006 Grey Pond		Unprotected
COORDINATES 18°14'N 62°59'W ADMIN REGION — AREA 191 ha ALTITUDE 0 m HABITAT Shrubland, wetland, sand dune		THREATENED BIRDS <input type="checkbox"/> RESTRICTED-RANGE BIRDS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 BIOME-RESTRICTED BIRDS <input type="checkbox"/> CONGREGATORY BIRDS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Site description

Grey Pond IBA is a large shallow, brackish lagoon on the south-eastern coast of the mainland. It has relatively steep-sided limestone slopes on its southern and eastern shores and has formed behind a belt of sand-dunes on its north-eastern corner at Savannah Bay. The rocky limestone pavement is covered by low, wind-swept scrub vegetation. Sile Bay is located c.375 m to the south while the tip of Gibbon Point lies approximately 500 m to the east. There is limited residential and villa development on the sloping hills south of the pond.

Birds

This IBA supports a regionally important breeding population of Least Tern *Sterna antillarum*. Up to 150 terns have bred at this site, although more recently this has declined to c.45 birds. A diversity of waterbirds frequent the site, including breeding Snowy Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*, Willet *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus* and White-cheeked Pintail *Anas bahamensis*. Two (of the four) Lesser Antilles EBA restricted-range birds occur at this IBA, namely Green-throated Carib *Eulampis holosericeus* and Caribbean Elaenia *Elaenia martinica*.

Other biodiversity

The ground lizard *Ameiva plei* (endemic to Anguilla, St Martin and St Barthélemy) occurs throughout the limestone pavement.

Conservation

Grey Pond IBA is not protected by any form of legislation. It is privately owned by a land development company, along with surrounding property in Sile Bay and Savannah Bay. Permission to develop the area was granted in 2006. A development comprising of 825 rooms on 100 ha of land has been approved and construction is expected to commence in 2011 and continue through to 2026. Initially, a marina had been proposed for the area. The creation of a marina would have involved opening Grey Pond to the sea and dredging the coastal and pond area. Following the completion of a series of assessments, it was decided that Grey Pond was not a suitable site for a marina. The pond remains earmarked for development and depending on the type of alteration, resting and nesting habitat for *Sterna antillarum* and other wetland birds may be affected.

AI007 Scrub Island		Unprotected
COORDINATES 18°17'N 62°56'W ADMIN REGION — AREA 1,672 ha ALTITUDE 0–24 m HABITAT Sea, coastline, shrubland, wetlands		THREATENED BIRDS <input type="checkbox"/> RESTRICTED-RANGE BIRDS <input type="checkbox"/> BIOME-RESTRICTED BIRDS <input type="checkbox"/> CONGREGATORY BIRDS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Site description

Scrub Island IBA is the largest of Anguilla's outer islands (348 ha) and is separated from the north-easternmost point of the mainland by a 500 m wide channel. The island is low lying with a rocky, fractured limestone coast punctuated by four sandy beaches. There is a large pond on the west side (at Scrub Bay) and a complex of lagoons at Deadman's Bay. The ponds are lined in places by mangroves and low trees. The centre of the island is largely scrub stretching to the coastline of heavily fissured limestone and low, rocky cliffs. The island is uninhabited although the windblown remains exist of a former tourism development in the east and a wide, grassy disused airstrip in the centre.

Birds

This IBA supports significant seabird colonies. Populations of breeding Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii* and Laughing Gull *Larus atricilla* are globally important, while those of Royal Tern *S. maxima* and Least Tern *S. antillarum* are regionally so. Eight species of seabird breed on the island, and the ponds and lagoons attract a diversity of waterbirds. Two (of the four) Lesser Antilles EBA restricted-range birds occur at this IBA, namely Caribbean Elaenia *Elaenia martinica* and Pearly-eyed Thrasher *Margarops fuscatus*.

Other biodiversity

Both the Critically Endangered leatherback *Dermochelys coriacea* and Endangered green *Chelonia mydas* turtles are thought to nest. The Endangered Anguillan racer *Alsophis rijgersmaeri* (Anguilla's only native snake) occurs, as do the ground lizard *Ameiva plei* (endemic to Anguilla, St Martin and St Barthélemy), little dwarf gecko *Sphaerodactylus parvus* (an Anguilla Bank endemic) and island dwarf gecko *Sphaerodactylus sputator* (northern Lesser Antilles endemic).

Conservation

Scrub Island IBA is privately owned and is unprotected. There are large numbers of goats present on the island (presumably impacting the vegetation). An unsurfaced airstrip still remains in the centre of the island although scrub is slowly regenerating across this area. Rats *Rattus* spp. are present and must be suppressing the seabird populations. There are occasional proposals for hotel or resort developments on the island, a venture which has been tried before without success as the ruins testify on the south-east end of the island.