

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY IN ANTIGUA-BARBUDA

Kevel Lindsay

*Island Resources Foundation, P. O. Box 103, Museum of Antigua-Barbuda, Long Street, St. John's*

### WETLANDS PROJECT

Environmental Awareness Group, Island Resources Foundation and United Nations Environment Programme/Global Environmental Facility

The Environmental Awareness Group (EAG) has just received a grant from the United Nations Environmental Programme(UNEP)/Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Small Grants Project to conduct a survey of the wetlands of Antigua and Barbuda. The project aims to catalogue all wetland sites on both islands, update current information, prepare maps, conduct a detailed study of five selected sites, and develop an action conservation plan. There is a community component, which entails a survey and mapping of wetland sites. The funding is for 18 months, starting this July.

### FRIGATE BIRD SANCTUARY PROJECT—BARBUDA

Organization of American States/Natural Resources Management Unit, Environmental Unit & Barbuda Council

The Organization of American States Natural Resources Management Unit (OECS/NRMU) is working with the Barbuda Government Council and the Environmental Unit in the Ministry of the Environment, to develop a management plan for the Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*) nesting colony in the Codrington Lagoon in Barbuda. The Colony is estimated to have over 2500 nesting pairs, and is believed to be one of the largest in the Caribbean. Dr. Betty Ann Schreiber has already paid two visits to the island to conduct surveys and provide recommendations as to the management needs of the colony. A survey is also being done on the marine habitats of the lagoon. This project is ongoing.

### AGROFORESTRY PROJECT

Gilbert Agricultural Rural Development Centre, Environmental Awareness Group (EAG), Barclays Bank & Caribbean Natural Resources Institute

During the 1995 hurricane season, the EAG nursery was completely destroyed when Hurricanes Luis and Marilyn passed the Leeward Islands. Today, the EAG and the Gilbert Agricultural and Rural Development Centre (GARDC) are collaborating on developing plant nursery facilities and tree planting programmes throughout the country. A nursery programme has been initiated in two schools. It is hoped that the nursery facilities will be producing native and introduced species for community projects, private gardens and forestry projects. A number of workshops will also be conducted to

sensitize farmers to the need to reforest their plots and help conserve and protect biodiversity, soil fertility, and increase water retention.

### CLIMATE CHANGE PROJECT

United Nation Environment Programme/Global Environmental Facility, Government of Antigua-Barbuda

In order to prepare for potential climate change, UNEP is developing methods of evaluating climate change impacts and formulating strategies to adapt to climate change, and to moderate its impacts. UNEP has selected Antigua-Barbuda as one of four countries from around the world to participate in the formulation and development of these methods and strategies. The Ministry of Planning has commissioned a national study team to undertake and to report on the expected impacts of climate change on Antigua-Barbuda, as well as possible adaptation and mitigation measures. The study team is made up of various sectors of the economy and the society. The study ends in September 1997.

### CONSERVATION OF THE ANTIGUAN RACER

Environmental Awareness Group/Island Resources Foundation/Fauna & Flora International/Forestry Unit

The conservation of the Antigua racer snake (*Alsophis antiguae*) continues. Following up on the 1995/96 effort to determine the status and biology of the rare species, Dr. Jenny Daltry conducted a follow-up survey in March 1997. Dr. Daltry spent two months on Great Bird Island, the only home of the snake, completing a mark-recapture programme of the snakes to determine the current population. Dr. Daltry was particularly interested in the breeding success of the snakes over the past two years, especially since the passage of Hurricanes Luis and Marilyn, and the eradication of introduced black rats (*Rattus rattus*).

In her preliminary report, Dr. Daltry concluded that the population of the snakes has increased from approximately 50 in 1995, to over 100 in 1997. She observed a number of year old juveniles and reported that all snakes seem to be doing quite well. No fresh scars were observed, which is a good indication that the threat of the introduced rats has been eliminated. There were no signs of rats. The project is ongoing.

### BIRD MONITORING PROGRAMME

Island Resources Foundation

The Foundation has continued its "seabird-monitoring

programme" in 1997. The project was initiated a year ago after the Rat Eradication Project on Great Bird and the nearby Galley Islands, and the Parham Harbour Project's development of the Bird Island Marine Reserve's Management Plan. The Foundation was contracted to complete the design of the management plan. Although the main focus is the island in the North Sound off of the northeastern tip of Antigua, we are also gathering data from other small offshore island, Redonda and Barbuda. This is an ongoing project of the Foundation.

#### NEEM PROJECT

Organization of American States & Environmental Unit

The Organization of American States has provided funding for the development of organic pesticides and other products from the neem tree (*Azadirachta indica*). The two major aims are to encourage local cottage industries and encourage farmers to look at alternative to synthetic pesticides. The project is based at the Environmental Unit, Ministry of Environment. The initial duration is a year and a half, with the hopes of further extension.

#### BIODIVERSITY PROFILES & SPECIES & ECOSYSTEM RECOVERY PROGRAMMES/UPDATED VEGETATION CLASSIFICATION Island Resources Foundation

The Foundation has prepared a draft of the Antigua-

Barbuda Biodiversity Profile. The profile is a synthesis of the current information on the information available on the flora and fauna of Antigua-Barbuda. Out of this synthesis will arise a Species and Ecosystem Recovery Programme for Antigua-Barbuda and Redonda. The recovery programme will examine various approaches to the conservation of rare and endangered species and ecosystems, and the institutional framework needed ensure their future survival. This is an ongoing project of Island Resources Foundation.

#### SEATONS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

SC, Environmental Awareness Group(EAG), German Government and Caribbean Natural Resources Institute

Members of Seatons Village, a small coastal community on the northeastern end of Antigua, have gotten together to sustainably manage their coastal resources, and encourage self reliance. The person spearheading the programme is Foster Derrick, who is also a member of the EAG. Funding has been secured from the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) and the German Government to develop artificial reefs in Seatons Harbour and the cultivation of seamoss. The artificial reef foundation has been created using discarded tyres. It was established two years ago and is already showing signs of life as lobsters, soft coral and juvenile fish have moved in. The seamoss project is now in its initial stages. This project is ongoing.

### STATUS OF ORNITHOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN THE BAHAMAS

CAROLYN WARDLE

*Bahamas Representative, P. O. Box N3189, Nassau, Bahamas*

#### RESEARCH PERMITS ISSUED

##### GENETIC STUDIES OF THE WEST INDIAN WOODPECKER (*MELANERPES SUPERCILIARIS*)

Dr. Lowell Overton

Department of Biological Sciences

University of Arkansas

Fayetteville, Arkansas 72701, U. S. A.

Research Locations: Abaco, San Salvador, Grand Bahama

##### STUDY OF THE INTER-ISLAND VARIATION OF THICK-BILLED VIREOS (*VIREO CRASSIROTRIS*)

Dr. John Barlow and Ms. Marlene Walker

Royal Ontario Museum

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Research Locations: New Providence, Abaco, Andros,

Rum Cay, San Salvador and Crooked Island

#### CURRENT AND PROPOSED PROJECTS

##### TRAPPING OF SHINY COWBIRDS (*MOLOTHRUS BONARIENSIS*) ON ANDROS ISLAND (PROPOSED PROJECT)

Funding being sought

Michael Baltz

Division of Biological Sciences

University of Missouri

Columbia, Missouri 65211, U. S. A.

##### THE NATURE CONSERVANCY: KIRTLAND'S WARBLER (*DENDROICA KIRTLANDII*) WINTER HABITAT SURVEY

Mr. Eric Carey, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries,

Mr. Paul Dean, Bahamas National Trust (BNT), Mr.

Rick Oliver, BNT and Mrs. Aileen Bainton, BNT were

invited by The Nature Conservancy to visit the summer