

## Bird Watching Caribbean Cruise

Who said you can't enjoy two pleasures at the same time? If you have to go on a Caribbean cruise, another thing you can do is bird watching given that there are a lot of bird species living out there in the tropics. Here are some of them.

First is the Trinidad Asa Wright Nature Center that is ten miles north of the town of Arima on Blanchisseuse Road. This place is situated in 200 acres of rain forest so you can walk around here and catch different bird species hiding amongst the trees. If you have the time, try to spend at least 2 to 3 days here so you can take your time doing your hobby.

Next is the Bubali Pond in Aruba that is on the north side of Eagle Beach and south of De Olde Molen that happens to be a known windmill restaurant. This isn't a wildlife preserve but rather a pond that is kept wet all year round. You can expect to see brown pelicans here in large groups as well as the Black crowned Night Herons. It is best to see these near dusk and dawn.

In Aruba's Spanish Lagoon, you can get to see brown pelicans, egrets, herons and frigates. Don't be surprised to see large green and yellow parakeets that are twice the size of those you see in the pet store that are often seen at sunset.

The Barbuda Frigate Bird Sanctuary is considered to be a secluded because the only way to get here is by boat. With the help of a guide, you can get to this place and see thousands of Fregata Magnificens or "man of war" birds that live here. The best time to visit is during the fall which happens to be the breeding season. Aside from them, you may also get to see 170 species of birds living together with them.

Your ship may make a port call to the island of Jamaica. If it does, you can visit the Rockland's Bird Sanctuary. Here, you will get to see 289 bird species of which 28 are endemic and 6 have just been introduced. There are also 10 bird species on the endangered list which includes the Black billed and Yellow billed parrots.

Visitors can pay the entrance fee and wonder on their own or pay extra for a guided tour. You will get to see hummingbirds, Red billed Streamertails, Jamaican Mango, Black and Yellow faced Grassquits as well as their relative the Orangequits. These can be hand fed so you don't have to play hide and seek just to see them hiding in the trees.

The places just mentioned are just a few you can visit while you are on a Caribbean cruise. Since your trip will last a week or even longer, plan already

where you want to go so more time can be spent with the birds rather than thinking about where you can see the birds.

The Caribbean cruise packages being offered do not come with bird watching tours but you can sign up for one once the ship docks to port. Make sure you have all your equipment with you which include a hat, small backpack, vest, sun tan lotion, binoculars and a camera so you won't miss out on anything during your visit.