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Knowing the birds of Aruba (Caribbean)

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by Antonio Silveira

Between 11 and 21 November 2010, were (Antonio Silveira) on the Caribbean island of Aruba, where we had the opportunity to make some observations of fauna, especially its birds.

Aruba in the Caribbean Sea situated about 24 km offshore Venezuela has 182 km² and is 31.36 km long by 9.6 km wide. The highest point is Mount Jamanota with 185 m / al (or 617 feet).

Its capital is Oranjestad, a charming town that closely resembles the Netherlands, which is not least being that because Aruba is part of Dutch territory, although the degree of autonomy achieved long ago.

Despite being one of Aruba's most popular resorts in the world and one of the best diving destination, with its large hotel chain, also has natural areas represented mainly by the National Park and Arikok Bubali Bird Sanctuary.

Interestingly, natural areas and even in altered areas met the Divi-divi (Caesalpinia CORI), whose distribution extends from the Caribbean, Mexico, Central America and northern South America, but they are very famous and somewhat protected in island.

According to information obtained on the Internet (and www.birdlist.org www.arubabirds.com), Aruba has 207 species of birds, 70 residents and 164 migrants. The rarest bird of the island is the chicken of *water-Fulica caribaea* (Caribbean Coot), with only about 100 individuals in the wetlands of the island, which we were lucky to see one.

Arikok National Park created in 2000 is administered by a foundation, has 20 miles of trails and protect natural areas and arid part of the island and its coast, with



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caves and natural swimming pools (<http://www.arubanationalpark.org/>). But the Bubali Bird Sanctuary protects one of the main wetlands of the Caribbean, including a site is RAMPS. But there are other flooded areas, especially in Palm Beach, home to major hotels and easy to be visited, as are adjacent to the coastal road that passes behind the hotels.

In our stay in this beautiful island, we made these observations in the flooded areas, areas of hotels and visit in the afternoon of 16/11 Sancturay Bubali Bird, where he delighted in the beauty of the place.

The Bubali Plas, as is known, is a public reserve, formed by a complex of interconnected lakes and wetlands, providing an important refuge for wildlife, especially waterfowl. There are dozens of species living on the island and many migrants use their lakes and wetlands to rest and feed.

On site there is a viewpoint of about 6 feet tall, which allows the observer to be comfortably protected from the sun and with a fantastic view of much of the area.

Following is a list of 34 species of birds observed and identified in our stay in Aruba, with annotations of sites, in alphabetical order:

Legend:

APB - flooding of Palm Beach.

HPB - areas of hotels in Palm Beach

BBS - Bubali Bird Sanctuary

Species: English and scientific name

- *Aratinga pertinax*; Brown-throated Parakeet **BBS**
- *Ardea alba*; Great Egret **APB - HPB - BBS**
- *Ardea herodias*; Great Blue Heron **BBS**
- *Bubulcus ibis*; Cattle Egret **APB BBS**
- *Butorides virescens*; Green Heron **BBS**
- *Plancus Caracara*; Southern Caracara **APB - BBS**
- *Coereba flaveola*; Bananaquit **APB - BBS**
- *Corenso Columba*; Bare-eyed Pigeon **APB - HPB - BBS**
- *Columba squamosa*; Scaly-naped Pigeon **APB - HPB - BBS**
- *Columbina passerina*; Common Ground-Dove **BPH**
- *Dendrocygna autumnalis*; Black-bellied Whistling-Duck **APB**
- *Dendroica Petechia*; Yellow Warbler **BBS**
- *Falco columbarius*; Merlin **BBS**
- *Falco sparverius*; American Kestrel **APB - HPB - BBS**
- *Fregata magnificens*; Magnificent Frigatebird (on the edge of the city to Palm Beach)
- *Fulica caribaea*; Caribbean Coot **BBS**
- *Gallinula chloropus*; Common Moorhen **BBS**
- *Himantopus mexicanus*; Black-necked Stilt **APB**
- *Icterus icterus*; Troupial **APB - HPB - BBS**
- *Mimus gilvus*; Tropical Mockingbird **APB - HPB - BBS**

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- *Molothrus bonariensis*; Shiny Cowbird **BPH**
- *Nycticorax nycticorax*; Black-crowned Night-Heron **BBS**
- *Pandion haliaetus*, Osprey - **BBS**
- *Passer domesticus*, House Sparrow **BPH**
- *Pelecanus occidentalis*; Brown Pelican **BBS**
- *Phalacrocorax brasilianus*; Neotropic Cormorant **BBS**
- *Porzana carolina*, Sora **BBS**
- *Quiscalus lugrubi*; Carib Grackle **APB - BPH**
- *Tiaris bicolor*; Black-faced Grassquit **BPH**
- *Tringa flavipes*; Lesser Yellowlegs **APB**
- *Tyrannus dominicensis*; Grey Kingbird (in downtown Oranjestad)
- *Vanellus chilensis*; Southern Lapwing **APB**
- *Zenaida auriculata*, Eared Dove **APB - HPB - BBS**
- *Zonotrichia capensis*; Rufous-collared Sparrow **BPH**

OBS: Besides the birds we have seen a few lizards, including the iguana, common in natural areas of hotels, and frogs, as the photos below.

Faced with what we saw and found so far, Aruba is very interesting in terms of ornithological what motivates us to go back to get to know their birds.

We thank the company Gianini Luiza

Beach and Palm Beach wetlands





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Bubaliplas (Bird Sanctuary)





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Fauna of Aruba





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