

FIELD REPORT

THE LESSER ANTILLES

Aboard the Sea Cloud

FEBRUARY 16–24, 2023



Saint Lucia Parrot. Photo: D. Ascanio.

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The Lesser Antilles aboard the *Sea Cloud*
February 16–24, 2023
By David Ascanio

eBird Trip Report:

<https://ebird.org/tripreport/107652>

Photo album link:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/davidascanio/albums/72177720309769237>

Beautiful, diverse, strange, mysterious . . . I could share an extensive list of adjectives describing the Lesser Antilles and you would still probably find that I am missing some that would match your perception. From the minute we landed in Barbados we found ourselves in a reality very different from that of the rest of the Americas. Historically speaking, these islands are a result of confrontation between the main colonial powers in Europe to control the trading of one the most important commodities at the time, sugar. Culturally speaking, they are an amazing mix of religions and backgrounds that are still in the process of defining their uniqueness and flavor. From the ornithological point of view, it gets more complicated and interesting: they are labs of evolution. Every time I come to the Lesser Antilles, I feel as if I were taken off of planet Earth and dropped on a different planet less diverse but more fascinating.

The Lesser Antilles are isolated by a vast ocean or sea, with vertebrates found only here. Accompanying these endemic species are a group of fascinating outsiders, coming either from other regions in the Caribbean (Trans-Caribbean migrants) or from North America (boreal migrants, mainly wood-warblers and sandpipers from their breeding grounds).

What seems common in other biomes is bizarre here. For example, the widespread House Wren in Dominica occurs only in forested habitat. Also, there is a black finch (a member of the tanager family found in St. Lucia) that is seen in edge vegetation contiguous to forest, whose closest relative in South America is reported in open areas. There is also an odd-looking warbler that looks as if it took its own evolutionary path (Whistling Warbler in St. Vincent). These are only a few examples of our daily encounters with the wonders hosted by these small but interesting islands.

In addition, the Lesser Antilles hosts some of the most wonderful (and threatened) parrots in the world, as well as a dark woodpecker (Guadeloupe Woodpecker, of course in Guadeloupe) and a thrasher that is facing severe habitat loss (White-breasted Thrasher, in St. Lucia and Martinique). Here are some of the highlights from our wonderful cruise aboard one of the most iconic vessels in the Caribbean, the *Sea Cloud*.

BARBADOS

Sugar, Spanish Moss, and an endemic bullfinch!

Upon arrival in Barbados, we noticed various Zenaida Doves walking along the airport parking area. Later, on the hotel grounds, more doves were observed, and the first of many endemic birds to be seen on this cruise appeared, the Barbados Bullfinch. Bananaquits were already wandering around the open restaurant area, and Carib Grackles were giving their unique explosive call

under the bright sunny skies. Exploring the island, we learned about the origin of the island's name (given by the Spaniards), which refers to the "bearded trees" appearance due to the presence of the Spanish Moss on what used to be an extensively forested island.

In the morning, we made several stops at various birding and historical locations, and one that caught our attention was the Walkers Reserve, where we nailed Black-faced Grassquit and Scaly-naped Pigeon (two Caribbean specialties). In the afternoon we boarded the beautiful *Sea Cloud* and started a cruise to be remembered for many years.

AT SEA

From the Atlantic to the Caribbean Sea

The day opened with distant views of a whale (maybe Humpback) and a few boobies flying around. As we turned into the Caribbean Sea, we enjoyed views of St. Lucia and were able to identify Brown Booby (juvenile) and Red-footed Booby (brown morph). Eventually, we found ourselves accompanied by Clymene Dolphins as the trade-winds allowed the ship to set sail. In the afternoon, Larry gave a wonderful presentation providing a brief introduction to the post-Columbus history of the Lesser Antilles and ending with an overview of the political evolution of Barbados turning into a Republic.



Clymene Dolphin. Photo: D. Ascanio.

DOMINICA

Dominica, two endemic parrots!

A beautiful view of Mount Diablotin welcomed us to the island of steep hills. Still in the dark, we boarded buses and drove to the Syndicate Forest, where we split into groups and proceeded to walk along the trails to reach the overview clearings facing a deep valley. Soon after entering the forest we were serenaded by the sweet (and quite distinctive) song of the House Wren, a forest species here. It was followed with views of the active Plumbeous Warbler and even the secretive Blue-headed Hummingbird. Some Caribbean specialties appeared as well, providing us with

wonderful views of Caribbean Elaenia, Lesser Antillean Swift, and Broad-winged Hawk (resident population).



Plumbeous Warbler. Photo: D. Ascanio.

As we reached the overview area, we waited patiently, and it paid off well. For many of us, the view of two Imperial Parrots in flight was a celebration of the great conservation effort preceding the survival of this species. Once almost driven to extinction (due to illegal trapping and habitat loss by hurricanes), a resilient population remains, and hope for its survival increases by the year.

We learned about an interesting bird-related legend regarding the origin of the name of Mount Diablotin, the highest mountain in Dominica. It owes its name to a belief that an evil spirit lived there, reaching the beaches at night. Fear surrounded this legend, and years later it was discovered that flying around at night was a seabird that nests in the mountains, the Black-capped Petrel. Having seen the target species for this wonderful island, we boarded the ship and sailed north to another island and a different country.

GADELOUPE

Welcome to La France in the Caribbean!

With a very early departure, the morning orchestra greeted us in Guadeloupe National Park. The light was poor, and there was a reason for that. Getting everyone comfortable before light was critical. We were asked to keep looking at the forest edge next to the parking area. As the day gained light, a wonderful parade of birds occurred, incredibly synchronized like a beauty contest. First, the Lesser Antillean Bullfinch, later the Gray Kingbird, then Brown Trembler followed by the ever-present Bananaquit and, eventually, the queen of the show, the Bridled Quail-Dove.



Imperial Parrot. Photo: D. Ascanio.



Bridled Quail-Dove. Photo: D. Ascanio.

Having this impressive quail-dove walking in front of us showing its intense white malar stripe accompanied by soft structural emerald-green at the sides of the neck, and purple and magenta towards the nape and the upper back, was a beautiful experience. It seemed as if it had stepped out of a fairy tale. Having seen this beauty, it was time to search for two other target species, the Guadeloupe Woodpecker and the Forest Thrush.

Finding the woodpecker was straightforward. It sang and perched on an open branch, allowing everyone to see this weird blackish woodpecker (its closest relative might be the Puerto Rican Woodpecker in the Greater Antilles).



Guadeloupe Woodpecker. Photo: D. Ascanio.

The third and most wanted of the target species in Guadeloupe was the Forest Thrush, and it showed up nicely as well. Having everyone stand still was critical for this secretive bird to feel confident to hop out of the forest and be enjoyed by all. What a moment! Everyone admired the scallops on the breast and the prominent yellow eye ring. For me, seeing this thrush was like reading a poem about mysterious forest creatures surrounded by a concert of crickets and frogs celebrating life.

Having nailed all three target species, we paid a visit to the lush Valombreuse Botanical Garden, where a parade of Purple-throated and Green-throated caribs, plus the Antillean Crested Hummingbird, welcomed us. It was a delightful walk with these demons (hummingbirds)

fighting among themselves, defending their foraging territories. The walk allowed us better views of various Caribbean specialties and the wonderful plants in this garden.



Forest Thrush. Photo: D. Ascanio.

MARTINIQUE

Where an endangered thrasher survives

Martinique is an example of an island where industrial agriculture took off, and extensive land was transformed to sugar cane plantations, first for sugar and later for rum. In fact, it is the home of the agricultural rum in the Caribbean.

Our targets were two species that are nowadays threatened due to habitat loss, the White-breasted Thrasher and the Martinique Oriole. Seeing either one requires concentration and sometimes extensive searching. An early departure was arranged to the Reserve Naturelle de La Caravelle.

Upon arriving, we added Lesser Antillean Bullfinch and Lesser Antillean Saltator to our list, as well as Bananaquit and interesting lizards (*Anole* sp.). We divided into groups and explored the trails around the reserve in search of the thrashers, and again, luck was on our side—a family group was foraging long enough for everyone to see!

Having enjoyed a wonderful morning there, we headed back to the *Sea Cloud* and proceeded to sail to another island-nation, Saint Lucia.



White-breasted Thrasher. Photo: D. Ascanio.

SAINT LUCIA

The Pitons, an extremely colorful parrot, and an inquisitive black finch

To me, Saint Lucia is the most beautiful of the Lesser Antilles. A mix of laid-back culture, beautiful scenery, the wonderful Pitons, and a versicolor parrot represent a mix difficult to match in the rest of the Caribbean.

We took small vans and drove to the little village of Bouton, where most of the target species are located. Upon arrival, a short but steep walk gave us views of the pretty and charming Lesser Antillean Pewee and the hyperactive St. Lucia Warbler. We continued downhill along a paved road and added Lesser Antillean Flycatcher, and we also claimed our first view of St. Lucia Parrot, in flight.

After lunch, we returned to the Bouton Road to try for the parrot, and what a way to nail it! As we walked the road, a pair of St. Lucia Black Finches appeared along the forest edge, and later, the king and the queen appeared and landed in wonderful afternoon light, the St. Lucia Parrot! Having seen this wonder of nature marked our grand finale on the picturesque island of St. Lucia. Now we were ready for the next island-nation, St. Vincent.



Lesser Antillean Pewee. Photo: D. Ascanio.



St. Lucia Black Finch. Photo: D. Ascanio.



St. Lucia Parrot. Photo: D. Ascanio.

SAINT VINCENT & THE GRENADINES

*I hate you then I love you,
then I love you, then I hate you,
but I love you, I love you more...*

I am sure you have heard the lyrics of this beautiful song famously performed in tandem by Celine Dion and Luciano Pavarotti. It is about a way of loving that involves pain, but love always wins. And you might wonder why I am referencing this song here. It is because that is exactly my feeling when I look for the Whistling Warbler. The reason for such a hate-love relationship with this bird is that you never know what is going to happen when looking for it. It is a wonderful spirit in the forest, and locating it on a branch can be a real challenge. An interesting mystery is that its nest remains undocumented. The most optimistic published data suggests that there might be 3,000–5,000 individuals left. It is considered an Endangered Species.

Each time I walk the steep trail in the Vermont Forest to look for it, I can only pray to mother nature to find one. There are times when it has shown up rapidly and other times when it has been a complete nightmare to locate. Once everyone has seen it, an enormous amount of tension

is released. It is a moment for celebration, as I declare my absolute love for it (despite the nightmare of finding it).

As in previous years, finding it involved a great mystery, a search in all forest strata with the wind blowing in the canopy. An explosive excitement happened when a pair arrived at a branch (one with cocked tail) and stayed there for 3 to 5 glorious seconds, allowing many of us to see it. That day, we celebrated again the magic of birding!

Closing the day, we drove to the Botanical Gardens where we added Grenada Flycatcher (a relative of the complicated group of *Myiarchus* flycatchers), Yellow-bellied Elaenia, and Spectacled Thrush, rounding up another wonderful day in these magical islands.

AT SEA & BARBADOS

Heading back to Barbados

Our last full day in the great Caribbean was filled with great encounters with Brown, Red-footed, and Masked boobies. As we sailed, we enjoyed great history and botany lectures and got ready for disembarkation.

Once in Barbados, we enjoyed a delightful morning with visits to historical sites, and after lunch we got ready to take our flight back home, leaving behind the great arc of islands in the East Caribbean, and a trip that will probably remain in our memories for many years to come.

Now that you have enjoyed the Lesser Antilles, I would like to invite you to consider some of the tours that we lead in other bird-rich countries such as:

Cuba: Supporting the Cuban People and its Birds.

Photo album (2022 tour):

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/davidascanio/albums/72177720298138694>

Video (2015 tour):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yLRHvB1jzdl>

The Amazon River Cruise

Photo album (2023 cruise):

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/davidascanio/albums/72177720308130339>

Video (2016 cruise):

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

Colombia, Magdalena River Valley & Western Andes: A Relaxed & Easy Tour

Photo album:

<https://ventbird.com/view-photo-gallery/5d425b427c74350df010200f/Colombia-Magdalena-River-Valley--Western-Andes-7132019-7212019>

I look forward to seeing you again!

THE LESSER ANTILLES ABOARD THE *SEA CLOUD* ITINERARY

February 16–24, 2023

16 February 2023. Arrival to Barbados.

17 February 2023. Morning in Barbados. Embarkation.

18 February 2023. At sea.

19 February 2023. Dominica. Syndicate Estate.

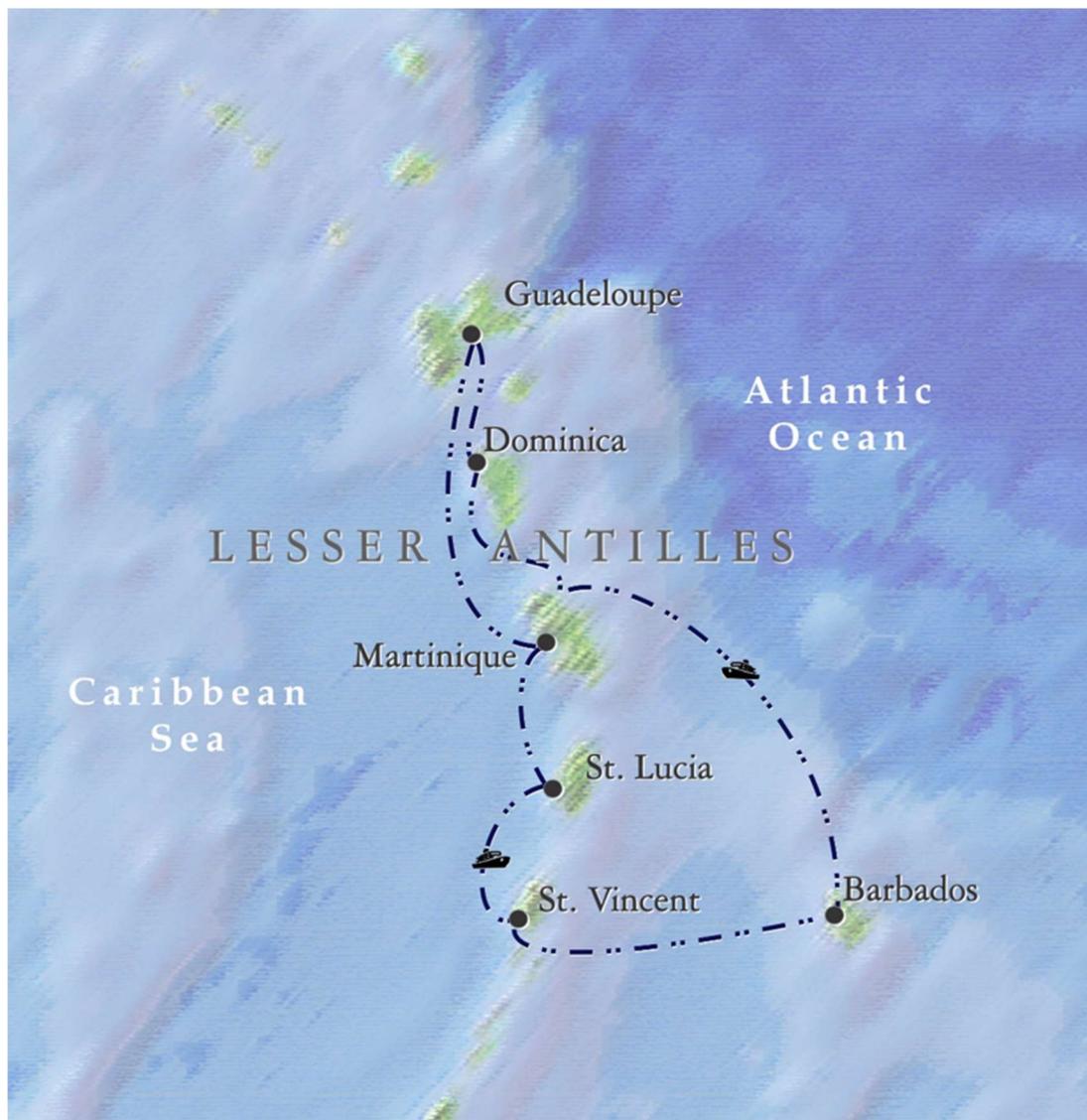
20 February 2023. Guadeloupe. Parc National de la Guadeloupe (Guadeloupe National Park) and Les Jardins de Valombreuse (Gardens of Valombreuse).

21 February 2023. Martinique. *Réserve naturelle nationale de la presqu'île de la Caravelle* (Caravelle Peninsula natural reserve).

22 February 2023. St. Lucia. Bouton community road.

23 February 2023. St. Vincent. Vermont Forest trail and St. Vincent Botanical Gardens.

24 February 2023. Barbados. Disembarkation. Departure for international flights.



BIRDS

Ducks / Anatidae

Blue-winged Teal. *Spatula discors*. Walkers reserve.

Lesser Scaup. *Aythya affinis*. Walkers reserve.

Grebes / Podicipedidae

Pied-billed Grebe. *Podilymbus podiceps*. Walkers reserve.

Pigeons and Doves / Columbidae

Rock Pigeon. *Columba livia*. Introduced. Common in urban areas in most 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. *Streptopelia decaocto*. Introduced. Observed in Barbados, Guadeloupe, Martinique and St. Lucia.

Common Ground-Dove. *Columbina passerina*. Seen in Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent.

Ruddy Quail-Dove. *Geotrygon montana*. Observed in flight in St. Lucia. Also flushed in St. Vincent.

Bridled Quail-Dove. *Geotrygon mystacea*. When it comes to quail-doves, this one wins the beauty contest. We were rewarded with superb views in Guadeloupe.

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

Eared Dove. *Zenaida auriculata*. It was observed in Barbados and in St. Vincent.

Cuckoos / Cuculidae

Smooth-billed Ani. *Crotophaga ani*. Dominica.

Mangrove Cuckoo. *Coccyzus minor*. Seen in Guadeloupe and later in St. Lucia.

Swifts / Apodidae

The swifts are probably the least known family of birds in the Americas. That is because of their habits to travel long distance and roost in hard-to-find locations.

Lesser Antillean Swift. *Chaetura martinica*. A common species found in most of the Lesser Antilles. Interesting resemblance with Vaux's Swift from the Americas.

Hummingbirds / Trochilidae

Purple-throated Carib. *Eulampis jugularis*. This exquisite hummingbird was enjoyed by everyone in 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 reported in Barbados, Dominica, Guadeloupe, Martinique and St. Lucia.

Blue-headed Hummingbird (E). *Cyanophaia bicolor*. Seen well after much effort! Nailed outside the Syndicate trail in Dominica.

Antillean Crested Hummingbird. *Orthorhyncus cristatus*. Another little gem of the Lesser Antilles. We noticed the crest color difference among the northern and southern Lesser Antilles. It was seen in most islands.

Rails, Gallinules and Coots / Rallidae

Common Gallinule. *Gallinula galeata*. A wetland species observed in Barbados.

American Coot. *Fulica americana*. Walkers reserve, Barbados.

Sandpipers and Allies / Scolopacidae

Spotted Sandpiper. *Actitis macularius*. Barbados and St. Vincent.

Gulls, Terns and Skimmers / Laridae

Laughing Gull. *Leucophaeus atricilla*. Seen in Soufriere, St. Lucia. 420 individuals reported!

Royal Tern. *Thalasseus maximus*. Few pairs at sea and Guadeloupe.

Phaethontidae / Tropicbirds

White-tailed Tropicbird. *Phaethon lepturus*. About 4 individuals were seen in the Atlantic Ocean between Barbados to Dominica. We noticed its distinctive wing patches.

Red-billed Tropicbird. *Phaethon aethereus*. Observed twice in the Caribbean Sea.

Frigatebirds / Fregatidae

Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens*. Daily views.

Boobies and Gannets / Sulidae

Masked Booby. *Sula dactylatra*. Seen first on our way to Dominica. Also between Guadeloupe and Martinique and along the route back to Barbados. Few individuals reported.

Brown Booby. *Sula leucogaster*. The commonest of the three boobies. Various individuals were seen in the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean.

Red-footed Booby. *Sula sula*. The second most numerous of the boobies. Common in the Atlantic Ocean. Two morphs were observed.

Pelicans / Pelecanidae

Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis*. Particularly common around Guadeloupe.

Hérons, Egrets and Bitterns / Ardeidae

Great Egret. *Ardea alba*. Seen in Barbados and St. Lucia.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*. Soufriere, St. Lucia.

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

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*. A common species in the Lesser Antilles. Apparently, arrived at these islands during the second wave of migration (first documented in Suriname, in the late 1800).

Green Heron *Butorides virescens*. Seen in Guadeloupe and Barbados.

Ospreys / Pandionidae

Osprey. *Pandion haliaetus*. Observed in Barbados and St. Vincent.

Hawks, Eagles and Kites / Accipitridae

Common Black-Hawk. *Buteogallus anthracinus*. St Vincent. This subspecies found in that island (*canrivorus*) is sometimes regarded as a separate species.

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

Kingfishers / Alcedinidae

Belted Kingfisher. *Megaceryle alcyon*. Seen in St. Lucia.

Woodpeckers / Picidae

Guadeloupe Woodpecker. *Melanerpes herminieri*. Endemic to Guadeloupe. A pair was observed in the picnic area of the Guadeloupe national park. It was later reported in the Velambrouse gardens as well. The epithet *herminieri* was given after Felix Louis l'Herminiere, a French naturalist in Guadeloupe. An endemic to Guadeloupe!

Falcons / Falconidae

American Kestrel. *Falco sparverius*. St. Lucia.

Peregrine Falcon. *Falco peregrinus*. Dominica.

Parrots / Psittacidae

Rose-ringed Parakeet. *Psittacula krameri*. Barbados.

Red-necked Parrot (E). *Amazona arausiaca*. Endemic to Dominica. The commonest and probably the easiest-to-see parrot in the Lesser Antilles. Seen by everyone.

St. Lucia Parrot (E). *Amazona versicolor*. S Endemic to Saint Lucia. Everyone enjoyed great views of this parrot along the Bouton community road.

Imperial Parrot (E). *Amazona imperialis*. A good number of participants were at the right location in the right time to get to see two individuals of this parrot species in flight. Other participants (unfortunately) were only able to listen pairs in flight inside the forest. But it was rewarding just to know they are still there, despite all the threats. This is probably the most endangered *Amazona* parrot of all.

St. Vincent Parrot (E). *Amazona guildingii*. Endemic to St Vincent. To find this species we tried two locations in the same protected area. Those that were ready to walk a steep trail to the lookout area joined Peter and myself. Barry and Victor lead the group to see the parrot from the forest edge. Everyone enjoyed views of it!

Tyrant Flycatchers / Tyrannidae

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

Caribbean Elaenia. *Elaenia martinica*. A common species in the Lesser Antilles. It was seen in most of the islands.

Lesser Antillean Pewee. *Contopus latirostris*. This little tyrant-flycatcher is fond to forest edge. It was seen only in St. Lucia. Some taxonomist has suggested that the St. Lucia population might be a separate species, and called St. Lucia Pewee, *Contopus oberi*.

Grenada Flycatcher. *Myiarchus nugator*. A target species in St. Vincent. It was seen in the St. Vincent Botanic Gardens. We noticed its incredible resemblance with Great-crested and Brown-crested flycatchers.

Lesser Antillean Flycatcher. *Myiarchus oberi*. A pair was observed in Dominica. Later in Martinique and St. Lucia.

Gray Kingbird. *Tyrannus dominicensis*. This species was seen in all islands. Some Lesser Antilles populations of this species do migrate to northern South America. We noticed its enormous bill size compared with populations in other locations of the Americas.

Vireos / Vireonidae

Black-whiskered Vireo. *Vireo altiloquus*. Scattered individuals were observed in Dominica, Guadeloupe, Martinique, St. Lucia and St. Vincent. The migratory route of this species isn't completely understood.

Martins & swallows / Hirundinidae

Caribbean Martin. *Progne dominicensis*. Seen first in Barbados. Later seen in Guadeloupe and scoped in St. Lucia.

Wrens / Troglodytidae

House Wren. *Troglodytes aedon*. This is a complex species in the Lesser Antilles with various candidates to be elevated to species rank. Below a summary:

Troglodytes aedon rufescens. The most rufous of all of the House Wren. It is a forest species. Seen in Syndicate Estate, Dominica.

Troglodytes aedon mesoleucus. St. Lucia. This one prefers desert scrub and open areas. Seen along the road to Bouton school.

Troglodytes aedon musicus. The palest of all of the House Wren in the Lesser Antilles. Observed in the Botanical Gardens of St. Vincent.

Mockingbirds and Thrashers / Mimidae

White-breasted Thrasher (E). *Ramphocinclus brachyurus*. Endemic to Martinique and St. Lucia. All participants enjoyed astonishing views of a family group. This species is endangered due to habitat loss.

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

Pearly-eyed Thrasher. *Margarops fuscatus*. A common species in Dominica and Guadeloupe. Also observed in St. Lucia.

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

Thrushes and Allies / Turdidae

Spectacled (Bare-eyed) Thrush. *Turdus nudigenis*. Seen at the Botanical Gardens of St. Vincent.

Forest Thrush. *Turdus lherminieri*. Everyone got astonishing views of this *almost impossible to see* bird. In Guadeloupe!

Finches, Euphonias and Allies / Fringillidae

Antillean Euphonia. *Euphonia musica*. What a view we enjoyed of this beautiful euphonia in St. Lucia!

Troupials and Allies / Icteridae

St. Lucia Oriole (E). *Icterus laudabilis*. Endemic to St. Lucia. After much search, and thanks to our local guides, it was observed beyond the Bouton road. Nice studies of about five individuals.

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

Carib Grackle. *Quiscalus lugubris*. Our first sighting of this species was in Barbados, which host an interesting and distinctive population since they are not sexually dimorphic (meaning males and females look alike). Furthermore, the populations observed in Guadeloupe, Martinique and St. Lucia are vocally distinct from the ones inland South America. Here you got a good example of two cryptic taxa, and both will probably be ranked as full species status in the future.

New World Warblers / Parulidae

Whistling Warbler (E). *Catharopeza bishopi*. Endemic to Saint Vincent. For those of you that did the steep walk in the forest, I can't express in words how lucky you were to have seen this species. It is always a challenge even to know about the presence of one individual. Some of you got to see a pair and a juvenile.

Plumbeous Warbler (E). *Setophaga plumbea*. This was an easy-to-see warbler. Observed in Dominica.

American Redstart. *Setophaga ruticilla*. Valombreuse botanical garden. Guadeloupe.

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

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

Tanagers and Allies / Thraupidae

Lesser Antilles Tanager. *Stilpnia cucullata*. Observed by one group near the entrance of the Vermont trail in St. Vincent.

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

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

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

St. Lucia Black Finch (E). *Melanospiza richardsoni*. Endemic to St Lucia. What a view we enjoyed! Males and females were seen in the afternoon field trips.

Black-faced Grassquit. *Melanospiza bicolor*. A common species found in open areas in all of the Lesser Antilles except for Guadeloupe and St. Lucia.

Lesser Antillean Saltator. *Saltator albicollis*. Observed in Guadeloupe, Martinique and St. Lucia.

OTHER SPECIES

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

Humpback Whale. *Megaptera novaeangliae*. At sea to Dominica.
Clymene Dolphin. *Stenella clymene*. Observed twice. Caribbean Sea.
Dominican Ground Lizard. *Ameiva fuscata*. Dominica.
Barbados Anole. *Anolis extremus*. Barbados.
Dominican Anole. *Anolis oculatus*. Dominica.
Guadeloupe Anole. *Anolis marmoratus*. Guadeloupe.
Martinique Anole. *Anolis roquet*. Martinique.
St. Lucia Anole. *Anolis luciae*. St. Lucia.
St. Vincent Bush Anole. *Anolis trinitatis*. St. Vincent.
Arboreal Termite.

(See next page for plant list)

**A few of the prominent or interesting plants seen in the Lesser
Antilles aboard the *Sea Cloud* — February 16–24, 2023**
Victor Emanuel Nature Tours
Compiled by Peter Zika

Barbados 16–17 February 2023

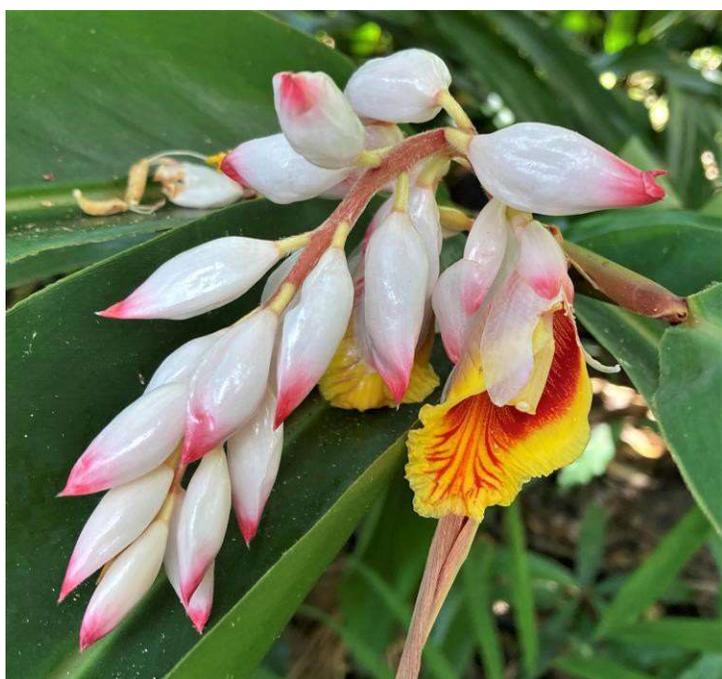
Aloe vera (aloe) Onionweed Family (Asphodelaceae) succulent, hummingbird pollinated, lotion
Alpinia zerumbet (shell ginger) Ginger Family (Zingiberaceae) shiny buds like sea shells
Antigonon leptopus (coral vine) Buckwheat Family (Polygonaceae) pink-flowered vine
Bauhinia × blakeana (orchid tree) Bean Family (Fabaceae) 2-lobed leaves, showy large pink flowers
Bixa orellana (lipstick plant) Lipstick Plant Family (Bixaceae) source of natural red dye, food coloring

Casuarina equisetifolia (ironwood, Australian pine) Ironwood Family (Casuarinaceae) coastal trees
Caesalpinia pulcherrima (Pride of Barbados) Bean Family (Fabaceae) Flowers yellow, orange, or red
Cenchrus setaceus (fountaingrass) Grass Family (Poaceae) Fluffy spikes on roadsides
Coccoloba uvifera (sea grapes) Buckwheat Family (Polygonaceae) Common coastal shrub
Ficus citrifolia (Barbados, wild fig) Mulberry Family (Moraceae) the many drop roots beard-like

Pseudobombax ellipticum (shaving brush tree) Mallow Family (Malvaceae) pink flowers
Pteris vittata (ladder brake) Maidenhair Fern Family (Pteridaceae) limestone rocks and stone walls
Saccharum officinale (sugar cane) Grass Family (Poaceae) source of sugar, molasses, and rum
Spathodea campanulata (African tulip tree) Catalpa Family (Bignoniaceae) attracts hummingbirds
Swietenia mahagoni (West Indian mahogany) Mahogany Family (Meliaceae) once common, valuable timber
Terminalia catappa (Indian almond) Combretum Family (Combretaceae) leaves turn red, coastal

Shell ginger (*Alpinia zerumbet*)

Pride of Barbados (*Caesalpinia pulcherrima*)



Dominica 19 February 2023

Aechmea lingulata (bromeliad) Pineapple Family (Bromeliaceae) short broad leaves, epiphyte in rain forest

Anthurium acaule (anthurium) Arum Family (Araceae) rain forest

Asplundia insignis (asplundia) Cyrtanth Family (Cyrtanthaceae) rain forest, leaves forked

Begonia humilis (low begonia) Begonia Family (Begoniaceae) small white flowers, low plants

Begonia obliqua (oblique begonia) Begonia Family (Begoniaceae) large white or pink flowers

Cecropia schreberiana (cecropia) Nettle Family (Urticaceae)

Cyathea arborea (West Indian tree fern) Forked-Sori Tree Fern Family (Cyatheaceae) common in rain forest

Dacryodes excelsa (gommier, elemi) Torchwood Family (Burseraceae) massive trunks made into dugout canoes

Euterpe broadwayi (Broadway's palm) Palm Family Arecaceae

Heliconia caribaea (heliconia) Heliconia Family (Heliconiaceae) bright red bracts attract purple-throated caribs

Ilex macfadyenii (tropical holly) Holly Family (Aquifoliaceae) rain forest tree

Justicia carnea (Brazilian plume) Acanth Family (Acanthaceae) attracts hummingbirds

Lantana camara (lantana) Vervain Family (Verbenaceae) orange flowers, Caribbean native now a pest worldwide

Magnolia dodecapetala (magnolia) Magnolia Family (Magnoliaceae) Seeds eaten by red-necked parrots

Ornithidium coccineum (flame orchid) Orchid Family (Orchidaceae) orange flowers

Myristica fragrans (nutmeg) Nutmeg Family (Myristicaceae) red aril is mace, seed is nutmeg

Palicourea crocea (red cappel) Coffee Family (Rubiaceae) red infl, yellow flowers, attracts hummingbirds

Psychotria urbaniana (balsamo) Coffee Family (Rubiaceae) blue flowers, white berries bird-dispersed

Piper dilatatum (piper) Black Pepper Family (Piperaceae) rain forest

Selaginella flabellata (spikemoss, agouti parasol) Spikemoss Family (Selaginellaceae) rain forest

Sloanea caribaea (chatannye ti-fey, maiden's blush) Marbletree Family (Elaeocarpaceae) seeds eaten by parrots

Sloanea dentata (bullwood) Marbletree Family (Elaeocarpaceae) seeds eaten by parrots

Spathoglottis plicata (David's flower) Orchid Family (Orchidaceae) roadsides, pink flowers, from Asia

Swartzia caribaea (zowanje blan) Bean Family (Fabaceae) seeds eaten by parrots

Flame orchid (*Ornithidium coccineum*)

Oblique begonia (*Begonia obliqua*)



Guadeloupe 20 February 2023

Alpinia purpurata (red ginger) Ginger Family (Zingaberaceae) attracts hummingbirds
Bismarckia nobilis (silver or Bismarck palm) Palm Family (Arecaceae) Fan palm, silvery foliage
Canna indica (Indian shot) Canna Family (Cannaceae) orange flowers
Couroupita guianensis (cannonball tree) Brazilnut Family (Lecythidaceae) fruits like cannon balls
Crescentia cujete (calabash) Catalpa Family (Bignoniaceae) green bowling ball fruits, horse-dispersed

Etilingera elatior (torch ginger) Ginger Family (Zingaberaceae) attracts hummingbirds
Heliconia wagneriana (lobster claw heliconia) Heliconia Family (Heliconiaceae) attracts hummingbirds
Heliconia vellerigera (fuzzy heliconia) Heliconia Family (Heliconiaceae) furry inflorescence
Holmskioldia sanguinea (Chinese hat plant) Mint Family (Lamiaceae) attracts hummingbirds
Jatropha multifida (jatropha) Spurge Family (Euphorbiaceae) orange inflorescence, botanical garden
Mussaenda erythrophylla (Buddha's lamp) Coffee Family (Rubiaceae) Bright red bracts attract hummingbirds
Nephrolepis rivularis (streamside sword fern, Boston fern) Swordfern Family (Lomariopsidaceae) walls
Pilea microphylla (artillery plant) Nettle Family (Urticaceae) sidewalks
Ravenala madagascariensis (traveller's palm) Bird of Paradise Family (Strelitziaceae) fan-like, lemur pollinated
Salvinia molesta (water spangles) Water Spangles Family Salviniaceae floating fern in garden

Utricularia sp. (bladderwort) Bladderwort Family (Lentibulariaceae) carnivorous aquatic, insect-pollinated
Xanthosoma sagittifolium (elephant's ear) Arum Family Araceae



Water spangles (*Salvinia molesta*)



Torch ginger (*Etilingera elatior*)

Martinique 21 February 2023

Bursera simarouba (gumbo limbo) Frankincense Family (Burseraceae) red peeling bark, fruits eaten by avians
Capparis flexuosa (red-fruited caper) Caper Family (Capparidaceae) bean-like fruit red inside, seed pulp eaten by tropical mockingbirds

Cassytha filiformis (love vine) Avocado Family (Lauraceae) orange stems, white berries, leafless parasitic vine

Coccoloba pubescens (sea grapes) Buckwheat Family (Polygonaceae)

Coccoloba swartzii (bois rouge) Buckwheat Family (Polygonaceae)

Crotolaria retusa (rattlepod) Bean Family (Fabaceae) yellow flowers, pods rattle

Haematoxylon campechianum (logwood, campeche) Bean Family (Fabaceae) yellow flowers, thorny, timber tree

Hippomane mancinella (mancineel) Spurge Family (Euphorbiaceae) poisonous fruits and sap, do not touch

Ipomoea obscura (obscure morning glory) Morning Glory Family (Convolvulaceae) white flowers, dark eye

Ipomoea setifera (pig vine) Morning Glory Family (Convolvulaceae) pink flowers, trailing vine

Piscidia carthagenensis (fishkill plant) Bean Family (Fabaceae) winged frt

Pithecellobium unguis-cati (bread and cheese) Bean Family (Fabaceae) paired leaflets, red aril on seeds

Tabebuia heterophylla (pink trumpet tree) Catalpa Family (Bignoniaceae) pink flrs

Tamarindus indicus (tamarind) Bean Family (Fabaceae) edible pulp around seeds, lumpy pod

Pig vine (*Ipomoea setifera*)



Achyranthes aspera (devil's horsewhip) Amaranth Family (Amaranthaceae) dry roadsides
Ananas comosus (pineapple) Pineapple Family (Bromeliaceae) cultivated
Clidemia hirta (soapbush) Coffee Family (Rubiaceae) wh fl, purple fr
Clusia major (rose apple, awali) Rose Apple Family (Clusiaceae) purple fruits split open, seeds bird-dispersed
Commelina diffusa (dayflower) Dayflower Family (Commelinaceae) blue flowers

Cyathea arborea (Antilles tree fern) Tree Fern Family (Cyatheaceae) common
Cyperus luzulae (flat sedge) Sedge Family (Cyperaceae) white flower clusters
Emilia fosbergii (rosy emelia) Sunflower Family (Asteraceae) pink flowers
Epidendrum rigidum (green orchid) Orchid Family (Orchidaceae) epiphytic, yellow-green flowers
Flemingia strobilifera (wild hops) Bean Family (Fabaceae) shrub with inflated pods

Gonzalagunia hirsuta (mata de mariposa) Coffee Family (Rubiaceae) infl nods, white flowers, blue berries
Hedychium coronarium (white ginger-lily) Ginger Family (Zingiberaceae) white flowers
Heliconia caribaea (heliconia) Heliconia Family (Heliconiaceae) showy bracts attract hummingbirds to flowers
Inga edulis (ice cream bean) Bean Family (Fabaceae) ant glands on leaves
Lobelia cirsiifolia (green lobelia) Bluebell Family (Campanulaceae) Carib-pollinated green flowers

Microgramma lycopodioides (clubmoss snake fern) Polypody Family (Polypodiaceae) epiphytic
Morinda citrifolia (noni) Coffee Family (Rubiaceae) small trees, white smelly fruits
Palicourea croceoides (wild coffee) Coffee Family (Rubiaceae) shrubs, yellow flowers on red stems
Pleopeltis polypodioides (resurrection fern) Polypody Family (Polypodiaceae) epiphytic
Scleria latifolia (nut-rush) Sedge Family (Cyperaceae) Black seeds like pebbles

Spathoglottis plicata (David's flower) Orchid Family (Orchidaceae) pink flowers
Stachytarpheta urticifolia (devil's coachwhip) Vervain Family (Verbenaceae) purple flowers, herb
Tillandsia polystachia (airplant) Pineapple Family (Bromeliaceae) epiphyte on power lines
Trimezia martinicensis (Martinique walking iris) Iris Family (Iridaceae) yellow flowers

Wild coffee (*Palicourea croceoides*)

Green lobelia (*Lobelia cirsiifolia*)



Aiphanes minima (ruffle palm) Palm Family (Arecaceae) spiny trunk and leaves, rain forest
Anthurium acaule (green anthurium) Arum Family (Araceae) climbing in rain forest
Begonia vincentina (St. Vincent begonia) Begonia Family (Begoniaceae) pink flowers, rain forest
Costus scaber (rough spiral-ginger) Spiral-Ginger Family (Costaceae) red flowers with anoles
Couroupita guianensis (cannonball tree) Brazilnut Family (Lecythidaceae) pink flowers attract large bees
Garcinia mangostana (mangosteen) Rose Apple Family (Clusiaceae) botanical garden
Heliconia caribaea (heliconia) Heliconia Family (Heliconiaceae) bright red bracts attract purple-throated caribs
Hibiscus elatus (blue mahoe) Mallow Family (Malvaceae) Cuban timber tree, yellow flowers turn orange
Hypoxis decumbens (coqui) Yellow Star-grass Family (Hypoxidaceae) lawns, trailsides, yellow flowers
Marcgravia umbellata (shingleplant) Shingleplant Family (Marcgraviaceae) vine in rain forest
Monstera adansonii (Swiss cheese plant) Arum Family (Araceae) large leaves with holes
Nautilocalyx melittifolius (nautilocalyx) African Violet Family (Gesneriaceae) purple flowers, herb, rain forest
Pimenta dioica (allspice) Eucalyptus Family (Myrtaceae) pale bark, botanical garden
Pinus caribaea (Caribbean pine) Pine Family (Pinaceae) reforestation plantings along trail
Selaginella flabellata (spikemoss, agouti parasol) Spikemoss Family (Selaginellaceae)
Swietenia mahagoni (West Indian mahogany) Mahogany Family (Meliaceae) once common, valuable timber
Syzygium jambos (water apple) Eucalyptus Family (Myrtaceae) red fruits attract orioles, bananaquits, thrushes

Heliconia (Heliconia caribaea)



Swiss cheese plant
(Monstera adansonii)



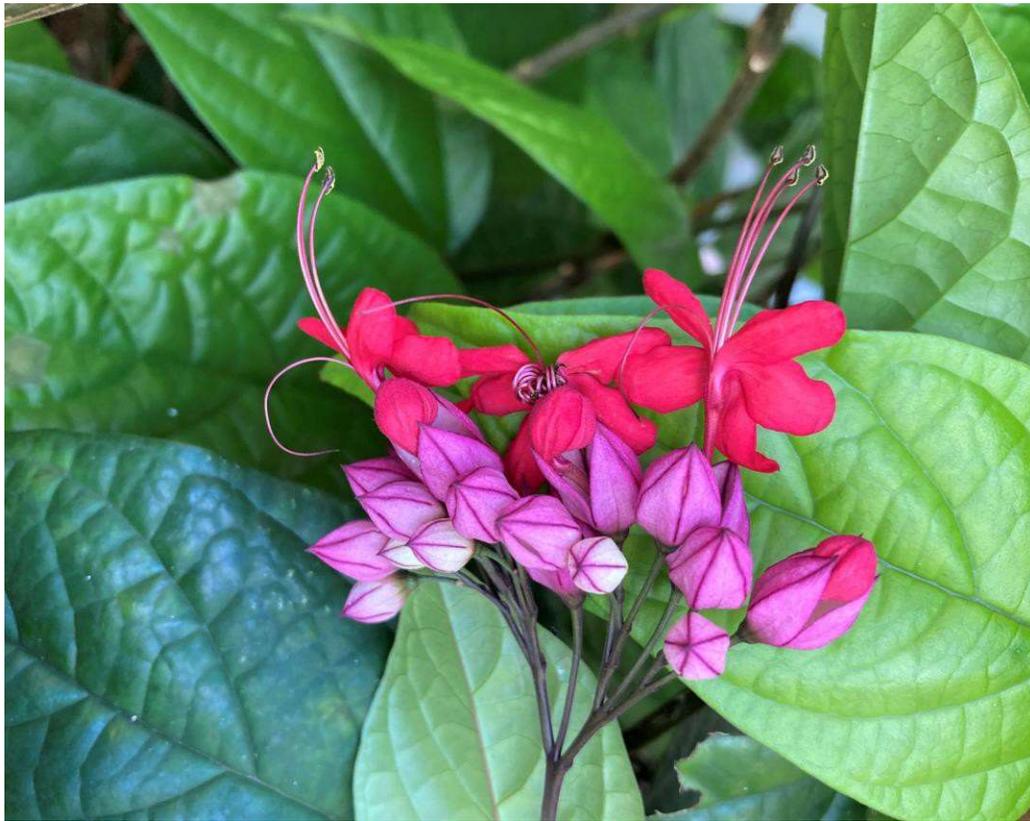
Barbados 24 February 2023

Acalypha hispida (chenille plant) Spurge Family (Euphorbiaceae) red droopy spikes
Bougainvillea × buttiana (bougainvillea) Four O’Clock Family (Nyctaginaceae) purple, pink, or orange
Clerodendrum thomsoniae (bleeding glory-bower) Mint Family (Lamiaceae) bright red flowers
Cocos nucifera (coconut) Palm Family (Arecaceae) common
Cordyline fruticosa (ti) Asparagus Family (Asparagaceae) colorful leaves

Crinum asiaticum (poisonbulb) Amaryllis Family (Amaryllidaceae) White flowers, large strap-like leaves
Ixora coccinea (scarlet jungleflame) Coffee Family (Rubiaceae) red-orange flowers
Jacquemontia pentanthos (skyblue clustervine) (Convolvulaceae) pale blue flowers
Jatropha podagrica (gout stalk) Spurge Family (Euphorbiaceae) orange flowers, palmate leaves
Phyla nodiflora (turkey tangle frogfruit) (Verbenaceae) whiteish flowers, prostrate

Plumbago auriculata (Cape leadwort, blue plumbago) Leadwort Family (Plumbaginaceae) lilac flowers
Roystonea elata (royal palm) Palm Family (Arecaceae) smooth gray trunks
Sacoglottis amazonica (blister pod, bubblenut) Bubblenut Family (Humiriaceae) wrack line seed from S. Am.
Tecomaria capensis (Cape honeysuckle) Catalpa Family (Bignoniaceae) orange flowers, pinnate leaves
Turnera ulmifolia (dash along) Passionfruit Family (Passifloraceae) bright yellow flowers

Bleeding glory-bower (*Clerodendrum thomsoniae*)



Blister pod, or bubblenut (*Sacoglottis amazonica*)

