

DOMINICA

INTRODUCTION

No information was received on the current situation in Dominica. The following account is based on James (1979), IUCN (1982) and Putney (1982).

Dominica, the most northerly of the Windward Islands, is a mountainous volcanic island 751 km² in extent, with peaks rising to 1,447m. The annual rainfall ranges from under 1,200 mm on the west coast to over 7,600 mm in the highlands. Much of the island remains forested, with dry woodland in the western lowlands and rain and cloud forest in the interior. Dominica became fully independent in 1979; it has a population of about 80,000 and an economy based on agriculture, particularly the cultivation of bananas and coconuts. The island was devastated by Hurricane David in 1979 and the tourist industry is only now beginning to recover.

Dominica possesses few wetlands; there are no salt ponds and only four small stands of mangroves. However, there are several large patches of *Pterocarpus officinalis* swamp forest with associated freshwater marshes, and many smaller stands of *P. officinalis*, in the northern third of the island. Most of the swamp forest is privately owned and under threat from agricultural expansion. (This type of forest is an endangered ecosystem almost throughout the Caribbean).

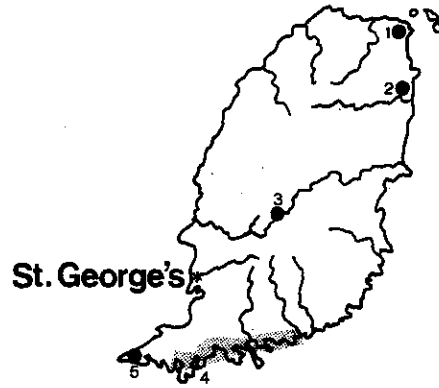
The government department responsible for conservation is the Forestry Division in Roseau. The National Parks and Protected Areas Act of 1975 provides the legal basis for a park system. One national park has been established to date, the Morne Trois Pitons National Park (6,840 ha) established in 1975. This contains many interesting volcanic features including the world's second largest boiling lake and a small freshwater lake. There is also a Forest Reserve of 22,000 ha in the north central part of the island. Potential units in Dominica's National Park System include three proposed reserves incorporating significant tracts of swamp forest; the Cabrits National Park and Indian River Natural Monument in the northwest, and the Hampstead National Seashore on the north coast.

DOMINICA



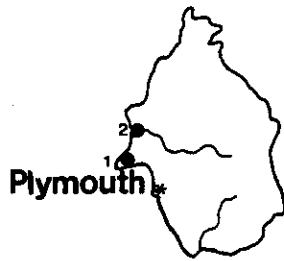
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GRENADA



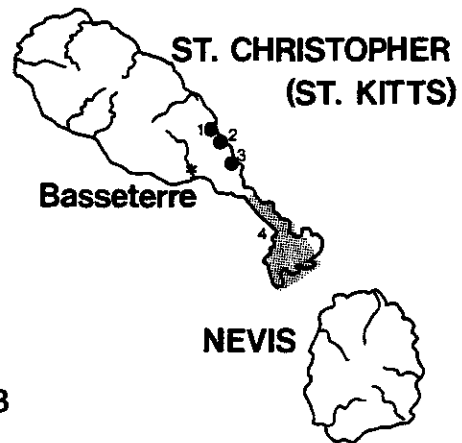
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WETLANDS

No recent information is available on the wetlands of Dominica. The following site descriptions are based on James (1979), Putney (1982) and Putney *et al* (1983).

Cabrits Swamp (1)

Location: 15°35'N, 61°28'W; at the base of the Cabrits Peninsula, on the northwest coast.

Area: 45 ha.

Altitude: 0m.

Province and type: 8.41.13; 07, 08, 09, 13 & 18.

Site description: A complex of fresh to brackish marshes, waterlogged grassland and swamp forest with some mangroves. The swamp is fed by three streams entering along its eastern boundary, and drained by one channel at its southeastern edge; sea water flows into the marsh via this channel during high tides.

Principal vegetation: Marshes with *Acrostichum* spp and *Eleocharis mutata*, and wet grassland and swamp forest with *Annona glabra*, *Pterocarpus officinalis*, *Haematoxylum campechianum* and *Laguncularia racemosa*; dry scrub and woodland in surrounding areas.

Land tenure: State owned.

Protection: None.

Land use: Some grazing and cultivation nearby.

Waterfowl: A nesting area for Ardeidae (*Bubulcus ibis*, *Butorides virescens* and *Egretta caerulea*), and a feeding area for migratory Anatidae and other waterfowl.

Other fauna: The tree lizard *Anolis bimaculatus ocellatus* is common; there is a rich fish fauna including freshwater species and the juveniles of marine species; and the crabs *Cardisoma guanhumi* and *Uca* spp are abundant. The sea turtles *Chelonia mydas* and *Eretmochelys imbricata* nest on nearby beaches.

Threats: None known.

Research and conservation: The Cabrits Peninsula has been identified by Putney as an area with multiple resource values, and has been incorporated in a proposed national park.

References: James (1979); Putney (1982); Putney *et al* (1983).

Source: See references.

Criteria for inclusion: 3a.

Indian River Flats and Lagon (2)

Location: 15°34'N, 61°28'W; near Glanvillia and Portsmouth, on the northwest coast.

Area: c.45 ha.

Altitude: 0m.

Province and type: 8.41.13; 09, 13, 16 & 18.

Site description: Freshwater marshes, seasonally flooded grassland and swamp forest on the floodplain of the lower Indian River and at Lagon, to the northwest.

Principal vegetation: Swamp forest dominated by *Pterocarpus officinalis*, with *Annona glabra*, *Pandanus* sp, *Chimarrhis cymosa* and *Pavonia scabra*; marshes with *Acrostichum* spp and *Eleocharis mutata*.

Land tenure: Privately owned.

Protection: None.

Land use: Boat rides up the Indian River into the *Pterocarpus* swamp provide a popular tourist attraction. The towns of Glanvillia and Portsmouth are close to the wetlands, and there is cultivation in surrounding areas.

Waterfowl: Similar to Cabrits Swamp (site 1).

Other fauna: Similar to Cabrits Swamp (site 1).

Threats: Clearing of swamp forest for the cultivation of coconuts and bananas.

Research and conservation: The marsh and swamp forest formations of the Indian River have been incorporated in a proposed protected area, the Indian River Natural Monument.

References: James (1979); Putney (1982).
Source: See references.
Criteria for inclusion: 3a.

North Coast Swamps (3)

Location: 15°35'N, 61°22'W; on the north coast between Thibaud and Wesley.
Area: Unknown.
Altitude: Near sea level.
Province and type: 8.41.13; 08, 09, 13 & 18.
Site description: *Pterocarpus* swamp forest and freshwater marshes extending inland for 3-4 km along the lower stretches of several rivers and streams (particularly the Torite, Anse de Mai, Salee and Woodford Hill Rivers), and small patches of mangroves at Hampstead Bay and near the mouth of the Anse de Mai River. Most of the *Pterocarpus* forest and the two mangrove swamps are found on a ten kilometre stretch of coastal lowlands between the Torite and Woodford Hill Rivers.
Principal vegetation: Mangrove swamps with *Laguncularia racemosa*, swamp forest with *Pterocarpus officinalis* and some *Annona glabra*, and freshwater marshes with *Acrostichum* spp and *Eleocharis mutata*.
Land tenure: Privately owned.
Protection: None.
Land use: Cultivation and some tourism in surrounding areas.
Waterfowl: Similar to Cabrits Swamp (site 1).
Other fauna: Similar to Cabrits Swamp (site 1).
Threats: Clearing of swamp forest for the cultivation of coconuts and bananas.
Research and conservation: The northeast coast of Dominica has been identified by Putney as an area with multiple resource values. Some of the swamp forest and the two mangrove swamps have been incorporated in a proposed protected area, the Hampstead National Seashore, extending from Sandwich Bay at Thibaud to Wesley.
References: James (1979); Putney (1982).
Source: See references.
Criteria for inclusion: 3a.

Lakes in Morne Trois Pitons National Park (4)

Location: 15°21'N, 61°19'W; in the south-central highlands northeast of Roseau.
Area: A few ha.
Altitude: c.850m.
Province and type: 8.41.13; 12.
Site description: A volcanic lake at boiling temperature and a small freshwater lake, on the slopes of Morne Trois Pitons (1,387m).
Principal vegetation: Humid cloud forest in surrounding areas.
Land tenure: Public land (state owned).
Protection: Protected within the Morne Trois Pitons National Park (6,840 ha) established in 1975.
Land use: Tourism in the National Park.
Waterfowl: No information.
Other fauna: No information.
Threats: None known.
Research and conservation: The boiling lake is the second largest of its type in the world. The National Park contains the largest tract of unaltered cloud forest in the Lesser Antilles.
References: IUCN (1982); Putney (1982).
Source: See references.
Criteria for inclusion: 3b.