

**UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies Project
Training and Research Programme**

Research Project Report

**A Preliminary Ecosystem Assessment
of Little Scrub Island, Anguilla**

January 2011

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PROJECT REPORTING FORM

CONTACT



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If you have suggestions for improvement of this form, your feedback would be appreciated:

COUNTRY: Anguilla

PROJECT TITLE: A Preliminary Ecosystem Assessment of Little Scrub

REPORTER: Name, Organization, Contact Details.

(✓ tick if same as APPLICANT)

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION: How did the project go? What were the HIGHLIGHTS and OVER-ACHIEVEMENTS of objectives? What CHALLENGES did you encounter? How were these RESOLVED?

HIGHLIGHTS and OVER-DELIVERY

The preliminary ecosystems assessment project on Little was indeed a great success. The research team was quite happy to have conducted the biodiversity surveys and identified the various types of flora and fauna on this small Anguillian satellite island. Although the team encountered some delays due to weather related conditions, the researchers worked diligently on the assigned tasks, and have been able to successfully complete all of the proposed objectives as set out in the project plan. One of the main achievements of the project was the assessment of the endemic black lizard on the island. This was successfully as the population of these reptiles remains just about stable when compared to a previous study on the said island. The vegetation mapping, the invertebrate surveys and the assessment of rodents also turned out to be very successful undertakings as this was the first time such a comprehensive research was conducted on Little Scrub to investigate the presence of the said organisms. Although no signs of rodents were found on Little Scrub, the diversity of the plants and invertebrates highlighted in the surveys signifies that the island holds some significant aspects of Anguilla's biodiversity. Therefore, based on the results of the study, the researchers consider Little Scrub to be a biological hotspot, as the habitat supports a small, but diverse group of species, including that of the renown *Ameiva corax*, the cay's only endemic plant.

PROBLEMS and RESOLUTION

One of the major problems that we encountered with this project involved gaining access to Little Scrub. The island does not have a beach or docking facility for a vessel to dock. Therefore, the research team had to negotiate the best time to jump off on the peak of a rock in order to land on the island. This factor was further compounded by some rough seas, as the team could only visit the island on a day when the sea was calm. As a result these elements caused a delay in completing the project. As a solution to the stated problems, the research team decided to spread out the project over a longer period of time, and therefore monitor the sea conditions for possible days to visit and land safely on Little Scrub. Additionally, the team also seeks the advice of the captain of the boat and other fishermen who frequent the island as to what would be the best days to conduct the research.

OUTPUTS: With reference to the FUNDS APPLICATION form, did your MAIN OUTPUTS achieve their EXPECTED OUTCOMES?

ACTIVITY	ACTUAL OUTCOME	COMMENTS
1	Bird surveys All species of birds were fully surveyed and recorded, and the results showed that there were ten species of birds recorded on the island, and that the Brown noodys were the most abundant avian species;	
2	Reptile Surveys: The endemic lizards on Little Scrub were surveyed, and population estimated to be near 500, which is still considered to be a healthy population knowing the size of the cay.	
3	Invertebrate Surveys: Invertebrate studies indicated that at least 51 species exist on the island, with beetles, ants and flies being the most diverse group;	
4	Vegetation Surveys: The plant study indicated that there are about 28 species of plants on Little Scrub, and the predominant species was the Morning Glory (<i>Ipomea violaceae</i>).	
5	Rodent Surveys: The research conducted for the presence / absence of rodents revealed that there are no signs of mice or rats on the island of Little Scrub.	

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INFORMATION: This final section is, in some ways, the most important part of this form. Provision of this information will enable us to pursue further funding and support for conservation projects in the Overseas Territories.

I ATTACH the following, by way of INFORMATION:

(Please v tick appropriate boxes, and attached necessary information as necessary)

- Brief QUOTATIONS from the Project Manager / individuals involved with this project, which may be used freely by JNCC to promote and publicized the conservation achievements of this project through suitable media:**

***** This was truly a wonderful project in the sense that it allowed the researchers the opportunity to practically conduct a full scientific ecological assessment on their own terms without being influence by an international scientist. In essence, the activity actually demonstrated true capacity building as it provided the researchers with the opportunity to exert all of the skills and techniques that they have learnt in university and from working in the field on their own and with professional scientists.**

- PHOTOGRAPHS or VIDEO CLIPS and full details of associated photo-credits, which may be used freely by JNCC and other OTs, to promote and publicized the conservation achievements of this project through suitable media.**

- A scanned copy and / or web-address of any NEWS ITEMS, PUBLISHED ARTICLES arising from this project.**

- A copy of any **EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS**, books, brochures, pamphlets or posters, arising from this project.

- Details of any **WEBSITE** or **WEBLINKS** arising from this project.

- Details of any **COLLABORATION** or **PARTNERSHIP**, local or international, which contributed to the success of this project.

- Details of any other unexpected benefits arising from this project, such as **CONSERVATION AWARDS**, **PUBLIC SUPPORT**, **VOLUNTEER PARTICIPATION** or **SPONSORSHIP**.