

Caribbean Seabird Tracking Pilot Study Gives Encouraging Results

Title

Dog Island IBA is an uninhabited offshore islet lying northwest of the Caribbean UK Overseas Territory (UKOT) of **Anguilla**, and is considered to be the second most important individual island for seabirds in the eastern Caribbean, despite being only about 200 ha in size. It forms part of **Anguilla's Important Bird Area (IBA)** network, and has globally important populations of **Brown Booby** *Sula leucogaster* and regionally important colonies of **Laughing Gull** *Larus atricilla*, **Magnificent Frigatebird** *Fregata magnificens*, **Sooty Tern** *Sterna fuscata* and **Masked Booby** *Sula dactylatra*.

In April 2012, the **Royal Society for the Protection of Birds** (BirdLife in the United Kingdom), in collaboration with the **University of Liverpool** and the Anguilla National Trust, conducted a Brown Booby tracking project, with the aims of determining the preferred feeding locations and foraging behaviour of this important population. Nineteen birds were successfully tracked over a period of 5-7 days using GPS data loggers. Maps of foraging flights could then be downloaded and revealed average foraging trip durations of just over 5 hours with an average distance travelled of 110km but some individuals travelling up to 300km on a round trip!



Brown Booby in nest in Dog Island,
Anguilla. Photo: James Millet, RSPB

Data from the work fed into BirdLife's global inventory of marine IBAs. It is hoped that this pilot study will form the basis of further tracking work on the Caribbean UK Overseas

Territories, which hold globally and regionally important numbers of seabirds, with the UKOTs recently being classified by BirdLife International as the second most important sites in the world for seabirds.

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