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Guana Island

BVITIPA009

Country: **British Virgin Islands**
Administrative region: **Guana (Province)**
Central co-ordinates: **18.47600 N, -64.57042 E**
Area: **2.93km²**

Qualifying IPA criteria

A(i), B(ii)

IPA assessment rationale

The entirety of Guana Island has been identified as a TIPA for its botanical richness and presence of globally threatened and endemic species. Guana Island have two of BVI's nationally threatened habitats, Coastal shrubland and Mangroves, but it did not qualify under TIPAs sub-criterion C(iii), as the areas are small and not of national significance.

Site description

The entirety of Guana Island has been identified as a TIPA. Since 1935, the island has been privately owned and mostly uninhabited.

Botanical significance

The BVI endemic bromeliad Pitcairnia jareckii (EN), which only occurs on Guana Island, Great Camanoe and the Hawks Nest area on Tortola, is found on the northern hills of Sugar Loaf Peak in the east of Guana Island in the Seasonally deciduous forests and woodlands. The Puerto Rican Bank endemics Bastardiopsis eggersii (EN) and Malpighia woodburyana (VU), also grow here. On the southern hills of Sugar Loaf Peak towards Bigelow Beach, Monkey Point, Pinguin Ghut and Harris Ghut there is a large population of the Puerto Rican Bank endemic Agave missionum (VU). The Virgin Islands endemic Reynosia guama (NT) grows in this area along with the Puerto Rican Bank endemics Rondeletia pilosa (NT) and Psychilis macconnelliae (NT). In the White Bay area, the Puerto Rican Bank endemic Argythamnia stahlii (VU) has been observed growing in the understory. On the northernmost tip of the island between Land's End and Long Point, one can find a population of the rare Greater Antilles endemic Sabal causiarum (VU). In the BVI, this palm is only found here and in isolated areas on the islands of Anegada, Scrub and Tortola.

Habitat and geology

Guana Island have two of BVI's nationally threatened habitats, Coastal shrubland and Mangroves, but it did not qualify under TIPAs sub-criterion C(iii), as the areas are small and not of national significance. Most of Guana Island (>80%) is covered in Seasonally deciduous forests and woodlands.

Conservation issues

The main threats to this TIPA are urban development and grazing of the vegetation by feral animals. Guana Island's first settlement was in the 18th century for sugarcane farming. Since 1935, the island has been privately owned and apart from the resort area and access roads between White Bay and North Bay on the western side of the island, the rest of the island remained uninhabited and large development is unlikely at present. Goats were removed from the island in the early 1900s, but sheep remained and an eradication programme is under way.

Site assessor(s)

BVI TIPAs National Team, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew - National Parks Trust of the Virgin Islands - BVI Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration

IPA criterion A species

SPECIES	QUALIFYING SUB-CRITERION	≥ 1% OF GLOBAL POPULATION	≥ 5% OF NATIONAL POPULATION	1 OF 5 BEST SITES NATIONALLY	ENTIRE GLOBAL POPULATION	SOCIO-ECONOMICALLY IMPORTANT	ABUNDANCE AT SITE
Bastardiopsis eggersii (Baker f.) Fuertes & Fryxell	A(i)	–	–	✓	–	–	
Pitcairnia jareckii Proctor & Cedeño-Mald.	A(i)	✓	–	–	–	–	
Agave missionum Trel.	A(i)	–	–	–	–	–	
Argythamnia stahlii Urb.	A(i)	–	–	–	–	–	
Malpighia woodburyana Vivaldi	A(i)	–	–	–	–	–	
Sabal causiarum (O.F.Cook) Becc.	A(i)	–	–	–	–	–	

IPA criterion C qualifying habitats

HABITAT	QUALIFYING SUB-CRITERION	≥ 5% OF NATIONAL RESOURCE	≥ 10% OF NATIONAL RESOURCE	1 OF 5 BEST SITES NATIONALLY	AREAL COVERAGE AT SITE

General site habitats

GENERAL SITE HABITAT	PERCENT COVERAGE	IMPORTANCE

Land use types

LAND USE TYPE	PERCENT COVERAGE	IMPORTANCE

Threats

THREAT	SEVERITY	TIMING

Bibliography

The BVI TIPAs National Team 2019. **Identifying and Conserving Tropical Important Plant Areas in the British Virgin Islands** (2016-2019): Final Technical Report.