



## ANGUILLA NATIONAL TRUST

# P R E S S   R E L E A S E

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### **One of North America's Most Endangered Bird Species Spotted at Cove Pond**

Since October 2005, the Anguilla National Trust has been involved in a bird-monitoring programme. Over three days at the end of each month, birds observed on Anguilla's 25 natural and artificial salt ponds are counted and recorded.

During the March count, 32 different species of birds were observed and a total of 1990 birds were counted. Road Pond held the most number and different types of birds: 759 birds and 20 species were recorded at this pond. While the number of different types of birds on the island has increased from the 26 species that were observed in March 2005, the total number of birds recorded is slightly lower than the 2192 counted one year ago.

Earlier in March, a single piping plover was seen on the eastern end of Cove Pond. This sighting is of particular importance because the piping plover is one of North America's most endangered species. In 2005, BirdLife International estimated a total global population of just over 6 400.

The piping plover is a small bird with adults being only five to six inches long. It can be found on dunes, beaches, and other sandy areas, including salt pond shorelines. It has a sand-coloured head and back which helps it to blend into its surroundings and to hide from predators. It also has a white rump, partially black tail, a black band above its white forehead, a white breast, and single black belt or band around its neck. Its bright orange legs match its orange-black-tipped bill.

Piping plovers are known to be site specific. This means that they tend to return to the same breeding, nesting, or feeding site year after year. If this plover is actually stopping intentionally in Anguilla, rather than being forced to land on the island because of storms, strong winds, or fatigue, then Anguilla could potentially be one of the wintering areas for this bird.

Individuals who are interested in learning more about the piping plover, the bird counts, or who would like to volunteer with the bird monitoring programme are asked to contact the Trust at 497 5297 or [antpam@anguillanet.com](mailto:antpam@anguillanet.com).