

# Nonsuch Island Living Museum

Nonsuch Island has been restocked with native and endemic species since 1962. It has become renowned internationally as one of the most successful examples of environmental restoration and recovery.

**Landing by permit only.**



Nonsuch has been the site of a translocation project to establish a nesting colony of the endangered Cahow, or Bermuda petrel. The first chicks from this colony fledged in 2009 and 2010.



The buildings on Nonsuch Island were built in the 1860s as part of a quarantine station.

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Department of Conservation Services

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## Summary

**Nonsuch Island** is one of Bermuda's most isolated offshore islands, and is part of the **Castle Harbour Islands Nature Reserve**. At 16.5 acres, the island is elevated and topographically diverse enough to support a range of habitats and plant communities.

The island has an unusual history, being used variously as a quarantine hospital, a scientific research station, and a prison. It was the rediscovery of the supposedly extinct **Cahow** on nearby smaller islets in the 1950s that resulted in the Government declaring all of the offshore Castle Islands, including Nonsuch, as a Nature Reserve.

Since about 1960, the island has been the site of an ongoing environmental restoration project started by Dr. David Wingate. Over 10,000 native and endemic plants have been planted over the island to create a number of vegetative communities and habitats. One of the primary habitats, covering much of the interior of the island, is endemic upland forest consisting of species such as **Bermuda Cedar**, **Olivewood Bark** and **Bermuda Palmetto**.

Today, Nonsuch Island hosts many native and endemic plants and animals, including over 160 pairs of nesting **White-tailed Tropicbirds** or **Longtails**, The critically endangered **Bermuda Skink**, and the large intertidal **West Indian Top Shell**. More recently, Bermuda's National Bird, the Cahow, has been re-established as a nesting species on Nonsuch, using the translocation of chicks to the island. Up to 60 school and other groups are given guided tours of the island every year.

## Project Objectives

- \* To restore a representative sample of Bermuda's pre-colonial habitats and floral/faunal communities
- \* To provide a self-sustaining refuge for endangered native & endemic species
- \* To help educate school-age groups and members of the public about Bermuda's natural heritage.
- \* To provide a venue for research

Photos by: Jeremy Madeiros



Replanted endemic forest cover on Nonsuch Island.



Species found on Nonsuch include the endangered Skink and the Longtail or White-tailed Tropicbird.

The Nonsuch Natural History Camp is held in June for senior school students from across Bermuda.



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA

Ministry of Public Works

Department of Conservation Services