



A three-day-old Cahow chick

NONSUCH to the World

By Andrea Milam

Photography by David
Littschwager with
J-P Rouja for The
Nonsuch Island Expeditions

Everything that makes Bermuda beautiful thrives on Nonsuch Island, a nature reserve whose closure to the public is largely to thank for its flourishing flora and fauna, in particular Bermuda's national bird, the Cahow, which was brought back from the brink of extinction.

The recorded history of the island, located at the eastern end of Castle Harbor, is a varied and unique one.

It first served as a yellow fever quarantine hospital in 1865; a small cemetery remains from this era. In 1930, Nonsuch was a base for William Beebe and Otis Barton's landmark bathysphere dives. The island's restoration with wooded wildlife and a small freshwater marsh was started by conservationist David B. Wingate beginning in 1962, and continued by his successor Chief Terrestrial Conservation Officer Jeremy Madeiros, who took over and started the Cahow translocation project in 2000. The restoration, whose goal is to reconstruct this island to what Bermuda's natural environment would have looked like before it was discovered by humans, has made Nonsuch Bermuda's single most important nature reserve.

Though Nonsuch is not open to tours, its beautiful biodiverse environment doesn't have to remain a mystery to the public. Since 2000, the LookBermuda team led by photographer and filmmaker Jean-Pierre Rouja has conducted The Nonsuch Expeditions to document the historical and continuing research, exploration, and conservation efforts taking place there. The island's unique "living museum" atmosphere has led to a collaboration with National Geographic award-winning photographer David Liittschwager, who is working with J-P and the LookBermuda team to produce a series of unique images showcasing Bermuda's extraordinary biodiversity through the plants and wildlife found on Nonsuch and in its surrounding waters.

"These breathtaking images are the cornerstone of a STEAM-based educational outreach and public awareness campaign created with an eye toward generating local and international exposure for Bermuda's biodiversity," says Jean-Pierre.

Since 2012, Nonsuch has been literally broadcasted to the world with live streaming video from the underground Cahow nesting burrows on the award-winning CahowCam. Audiences were captivated by the recent live streaming hatching of a Cahow chick, seen by thousands of viewers around the world. Not only is the Cahow, a gadfly petrel, special because of its former near-extinction, it also is the second rarest seabird on the planet. Nonsuch Island and its surrounding rocks are the only place on the planet where it comes to breed.

Though you won't step foot on Nonsuch Island during your time in Bermuda, you'll be able to get up close and personal with the island's incredible biodiversity the moment your plane lands. LookBermuda's AirportArt program features its series of images, known as The Nonsuch Island Expeditions, at the L.F. Wade International Airport. To learn about The Nonsuch Island Expeditions, see more captivating images of the island's wildlife, sign up for their newsletter, or learn about alternate tour options, visit www.nonsuchisland.com.



Juvenile blue tang in its yellow phase



Longsnout seahorse