

BUDDIES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2012 – St. Lucia (J6)

Everett W6ABM



2012 Buddies of the Caribbean St. Lucia (J6)





www.mapsoftworld.com

An aerial night photograph of St. Lucia, showing the illuminated peaks of the Pitons and the town of Castries below. The sky is dark with some clouds, and the ocean is visible to the right.

J6 St Lucia



Buddipole DXpedition 2012

SEA  PAC

2012 Buddies of the Caribbean St. Lucia (J6)

OUR PLAN

- New group of Buddipole users
- St Lucia is beautiful
- Chateaux Deveaux location is outstanding
- Antennae 300 ft above the Atlantic Ocean
- Portable equipment for HF: Buddipole antennas; lightweight radios/batteries

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OUR PLAN

- Each operator carries up to 100 pounds of gear in 2 suitcases at 50 lbs each
- Commercial airlines to and from St. Lucia
- Light clothing – not a lot of it

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PERSONAL PROCESS

- July 2011: Conversation with Joe N7BF about joining the Buddies of the Caribbean in December, 2011.
- August 2011: Guy N7UN Coffee, August 25, 2011. Coffee and planning underway.
- Decision to go for St. Lucia in December 2012 (2011 too quick for Arrangements/Funding)

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FUNDING

- Cost for the DXpedition about \$145 a night
- Overnight in Miami (\$100 in shared room)
- Airfares (\$850 – 1,000 RT AA) from PDX
- Total About \$2,300.00

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BUDDIES TEAM

- Guy Hamblen N7UN, New Jersey, Leader
- Budd Drummond W3FF, California, Antenna Guru
 - Everett Curry W6ABM Oregon
 - Bryan Shumaker WB8ISG Michigan
 - Hugh Morgan W4VAB Tennessee
 - Scott McDonald KA9P Illinois
 - Robert Fanfant N7QT Washington
 - Jerry Long W5TDY Georgia

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GOALS

- DX experience in a “5-star” environment
- Logistics: meals, antennae, comfortable accommodations provided
- Flexible operating styles & modes
- Portable operations: beaches or mountains
- Share experiences and knowledge with you
- BLOG for non-hams

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MEETING J6 HAMS

- **Wednesday St. Lucian Ham Meeting**
- **St Vincent & Grenadines Guest**
- **Saturday evening at Chateau Devaux**
- **Visits in local ham shacks**
- **Continuing relationships**

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The J6 Licensing Process

- Application online, sent direct
- Local “expediter” to assist process
- Fix application error (W6ABM)
- General Class or higher
- Bands same as USA

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Propagation and Band Selection

- 20m and 17m were good into Eu early in the morning from 6am to 10am. 20m generally died midday but 17m was good most of the day either to Eu or the US. Late afternoon, 20m was hot to Eu then transitioned to good in the US.

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Propagation and Band Selection

- 30m was good late afternoon to Eu and later to the US. 30m died around 8 to 9pm local.
- Likewise with 40m. (1am 'Pileup')
- Sometimes around 6 to 7pm local, 30m was good into Japan. Lots of interest by JA's in any Caribbean operation.

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Propagation and Band Selection

- 80m was good after 8pm local and some nights into Eu until 3 or 4 am, US until 2am.
- Local thunderstorm QRN in the Caribbean dictates the utility of 80m and 160m.
- Both 80m & 160m are generally CW operations – but we did SSB, too.

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Propagation and Band Selection

- We had a 10m Buddipole Yagi setup with the intention of operating in the ARRL 10m Contest, December 8th (2nd weekend), No Joy
- Unplanned 12m operation using vertical
- 17m held up very well to the west coast

2012 Buddies of the Caribbean

St. Lucia (J6)

WEATHER

- Temperatures are between 85° F days to 70° F nights. A mountainous island, 14 miles east-west, 27 miles north-south, afternoon rain is typical. Almost always a light breeze. Direct sun is HOT!
- We experienced one stormy day and night with high wind and rain.

2012 Buddies of the Caribbean St. Lucia (J6)

PERSONAL LEARNINGS

- I CAN run a pile-up very successfully (confidence-builder)
- QSO numbers DO COUNT. There is satisfaction in hitting a goal I SET
- Meeting hams at an int'l level is a value in itself
- Running a DXpedition can be done on a club basis
- GIVING a country is as much fun as GETTING a country
- 78/24 (Countries) and 50/37 (States) are great to celebrate
- 12 meters is a new love!
- w6abm.blogspot.com

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WOULD I DO IT AGAIN?

In a heart beat.

SHOULD YOU DO IT?

Personal Process, my recommendation is GO.

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