

The Blue and John Crow Mountains World Heritage Site

The Blue and John Crow Mountains (BJCM) became a World Heritage Site on July 3, 2015. The BJCM World Heritage Site spreads across the parishes of St. Andrew, Portland and St. Thomas. At its highest point, the BJCM is 7,402 feet (2,256 metres) above sea level and is the highest mountain range in Jamaica.

A World Heritage Site can be a natural or man-made site, area or structure. However, it can only be inscribed on the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) World Heritage List as a World Heritage Site after it has been nominated and proven to the World Heritage Committee to be a unique site with outstanding world significance. The African Caribbean Institute of Jamaica/Jamaica Memory Bank (ACIJ/JMB) played a significant role in having the BJCM recognised as a World Heritage Site.

Currently, Jamaica has one site among the 1,031 properties on the UNESCO World Heritage List of Sites. Of the 1,031 sites, 802 are cultural, 197 are natural and 32 are mixed properties. The BJCM is listed as a mixed site as it has both cultural and natural significance.



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The Cultural Significance of the BJCM

The cultural significance of the BJCM relates to the history and heritage of the Windward Maroons. The Windward Maroons comprised runaway, enslaved Africans under Spanish rule and later those under the British. Under the leadership of Nanny (now a National Heroine), they successfully coexisted with nature in the BJCM and warded off the English soldiers to protect their existence. Today, the descendants of these original Maroons still live in close proximity to the site and retain much of the lifestyle of their foreparents.

On November 7, 2003, UNESCO proclaimed the Maroon Heritage of the Moore Town Maroons in Portland, a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.



Maroon Leader Nanny

The Natural Significance of the BJCM

The natural significance of the BJCM speaks to the plants and animals located in the area. Some of these are found nowhere else in the world! These endemic plant species in the BJCM region include lichens, mosses and some flowering plants. Animals, including the coney, the Giant Swallowtail Butterfly, (the largest butterfly in the Western Hemisphere), the Jamaican Boa or Yellow Snake, and several species of birds, dwell in these mountains.



The coney



The Cup & Saucer or Jamaican Rose
exists in the BJCM.

