

Britten-Norman BN-2 Islander "Dutch Antilles" (ABC islands)

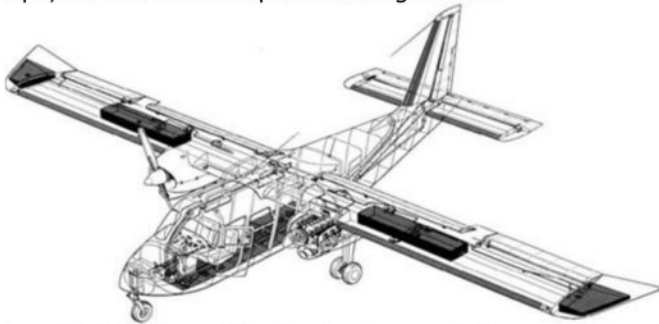
Divi Divi Air, EZ Air

The Britten Norman Islander BN-2 was designed as a light utility transport for 9 passengers and a pilot. It was capable to fly from tiny airfields. It got piston engines and first flight was June 1965. The Defender is the militarised version and has four under wing hard points for pylons for light armament like rocket pods or fuel tanks for extra range.

A turbine engined version was also developed with Lycoming LTP-101 in revised nacelles and a big air scoop on top of nacelle-wing fairing. First flight in 1977. The -T version got Allison 250 engines and later B17F engines. Some planes have a revised longer pointy nose profile.

Initial the BN-2 aircraft were manufactured at Britten-Norman's factory in Bembridge, Isle of Wight, UK. Later Islanders and Trislander aircraft were built in Romania, then shipped to Avions Fairey in Belgium for fitting before being flown to the UK for flight certification. Since end 2023 low rate production has returned to the U.K at the BN facility at the Isle of Wight. The Islander has been in production for over 55 years with over 1,250 planes built.

Different wings were produced over the years. The first wing had a 49 ft span (14,95 m) and "triangular" wing tips and used such as on BN-2A-1 and BN-2A-2. For extra fuel capacity, the 49 ft wing was extended 4 ft to 53 ft (16,15 m) with "triangular" wing tips, such as on BN-2A-3, BN-2A-7, BN-2B-21 and BN-2B-27. Later the 49 ft wing got modified "rectangular" curved wing tips for extra area such as on the BN-2B-20 and BN-2B-26 with also inboard leading edge droop between engine nacelle and fuselage. The BN2T had the 49 ft wing without droop and with 2 wing fences. The BN2T-4S the 53 ft wing with "rectangular" wing tips, no inboard droop but 2 wing fences.



Length 10,86 m with standard nose. Later versions length of 12,20 m with extended radar nose.

KITS

In 1/72 scale there is the good old **Airfix** kit of 1972 with a few newer releases. It has old style nacelles, 2-bladed propellers, larger 53 ft wing span and "triangular" wing tips. Modify for 49 ft wing if needed.

DECALS SYSTEM

The laser printed decal sheet has ONE continuous print film, so EACH decal needs cutting out with fine scissors. No other prior decal preparation is needed.

Note that a decal that contains a white section is often split in two sections. To apply the full decal marking, first set the white decal section at correct position and on top of that the coloured section. On the decals sheet you will often see an "arrow" to indicate this way of application (on white surfaces, the white section is optional).

Each cut out decal can be applied as usual after soaking it a short while in water. Decals are EXTREMELY THIN, so slide off from the wet backing sheet on the model surface. Do not use tweezers! They will fold doubled!

Some tiny white borders may appear at a particular decal. Cut these off with fine scissors or over paint.

After all decals have been applied, finish the model with your preferred final gloss or semi-matt varnish coats. This will also protect the decals.

REFERENCES:

Books and magazines:
Air international Vol 49/no.1, Vol 64/no.1
Flight international no. 4054, 4247

Internet websites:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Britten-Norman_BN-2_Islander

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Britten-Norman_Defender

Through an internet search... easy to find photos. Search islander + PJ... registration.

See for a few Airfix Islander models website:

<https://aircraftinplastic.com/models/islander-defender/islander-1.html>

Dutch Antilles

Six islands in the Caribbean are part of the Kingdom of The Netherlands since first Dutch settlers arrived from The Netherlands/ Holland and a Colony was established in the 17th Century. The Dutch West Indies Trading Company was set up.

The islands are Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao in the Leeward Antilles off the coast of Venezuela and Saba, St.Eustatius ("Statia") and St.Maarten in the Windward Antilles. On the Windward Antilles the official languages are Dutch and English and on the lower Leeward islands Dutch and Papiamentu.

The islands after the Second World War were referred to as The Netherlands Antilles. In 1986 Aruba got bigger independence as "country" within the Kingdom and in 2010 Curaçao and St.Maarten also became "countries" as well and Bonaire, Saba and St.Eustatius became special Dutch Municipalities.

Aviation in the Dutch Antilles started already in the 1930s with a large role of Dutch **KLM** Airlines that started local flight services on routes between the islands and neighbouring regions. The main airport was Hato at Curaçao.

The Dutch Antilles were important during the Second World War as oil refineries on Aruba and Curaçao provided refined oil products and particularly aircraft fuel for the Allies. These were shipped with tankers that were under constant threat of German U-boats.

Particularly after the Second World War KLM expanded services through their West Indies Division (KLM-WIB*). But several airlines were also started by local Antillean business men and island Governments.

* KLM-WIB decals are also available, check website



Divi Divi Air was founded July, 2000 at Curaçao and commenced operations in 2001 with a fleet of Britten-Norman BN-2 Islanders. First route was between Curaçao and Bonaire and later Aruba and other regional routes are sometimes flown. The fleet had De Havilland Twin Otters and now some 3 Britten-Norman Islander aircraft.

EZ Air is a small regional airline and was founded in May 2000 on Bonaire. It operates between the islands Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao and regional charters. It has technical servicing facilities at Hato, Curaçao international airport. It started with a few Islanders but has grown to fly larger aircraft like Beech 1900D, Saab 340 and bigger aircraft are planned. It was renamed **Z Air** in 2023.



Divi Divi Air

Islander BN-2A-26 c/n 2217 with registration PJ-AIR was flown around 2010 by Divi Divi Air.

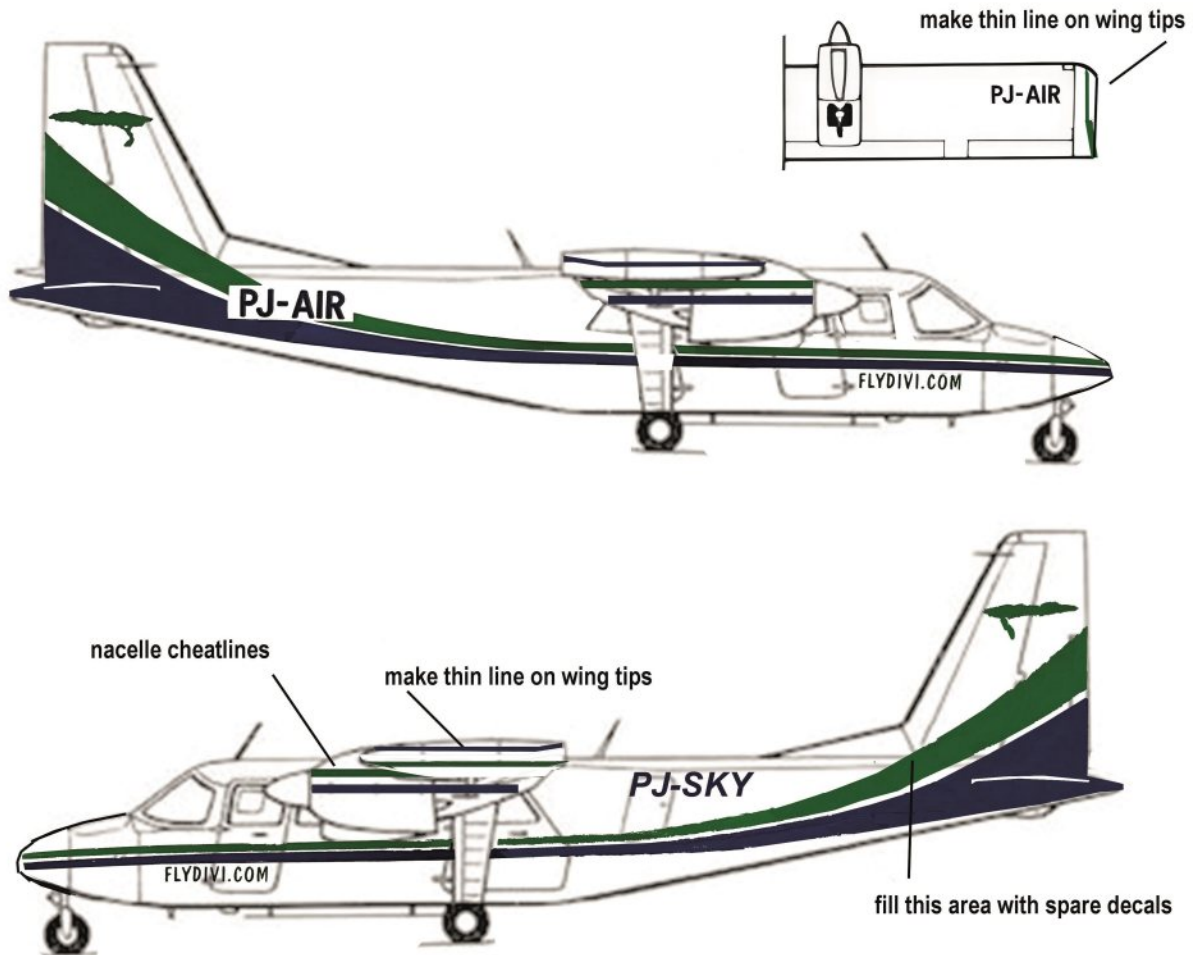
It has the wing with 49 ft span and modified rectangular "curved" wing tips. On the lower wing tip is a blue stripe and on the upper wing tip a green stripe.

It has a pointy fuselage nose.

The overall colour is gloss white with cheatlines. (it first flew without the cheatlines for quite a while).

The 2-bladed propellers have chrome spinners, black blades with white-black-white tips.

It has no long wire antennas.



Islander BN-2B-26 c/n 885 with registration PJ-SKY was flown by Divi Divi Air around 2012.

It has the wing with 49 ft span and modified rectangular "curved" wing tips. On the lower wing tip is a blue stripe and on the upper wing tip a green stripe.

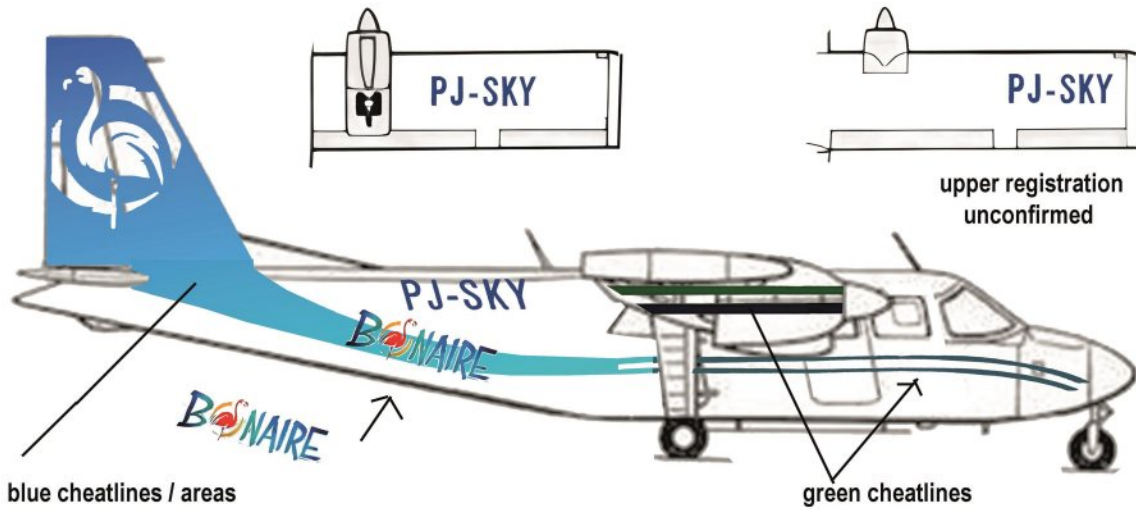
Fuselage nose tip is standard.

The overall colour is gloss white with cheatlines.

The 2-bladed propellers have white spinners, very light grey blades with red tips.

It has no long wire antennas.

Note different registration style.



Again the BN-2B-26 with registration PJ-SKY but in special Bonaire scheme seen around 2024.

On the tail the flamingo bird is outlined of which a large colony is on the island Bonaire.

It has the wing with 49 ft span with modified "rectangular" curved wing tips.

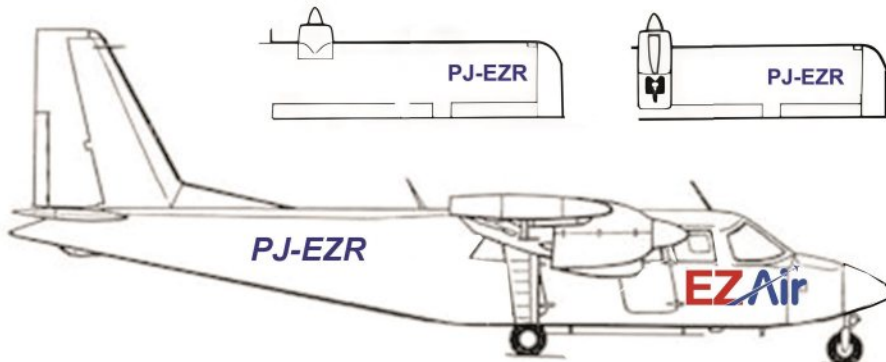
Fuselage nose tip is standard.

The fuselage cheatline decals need a bit trimming at the rear and fill the area near stabilizer with the spare decals.

On the nacelles the old green blue cheatlines were retained as seen in the other schemes.

Islander BN-2A-26 c/n 592 with registration PJ-EZR of EZ Air has the wing with span of 49 ft with "rectangular" curved wing tips. It has a pointy fuselage nose.

Simple scheme in overall gloss white. The 2-bladed propellers have gloss white spinners, medium grey blades with white-grey-white tips. (no long wire antennas were fitted).



Islander BN-2A-26 c/n 2038 with registration PJ-AIW was flown around 2009. It has the wing with span of 49 ft with "rectangular" curved wing tips. The fuselage nose tip is standard.

This complex paint scheme is symmetrical port and starboard. Suggested paint sequence:

The attractive paint scheme is gloss white and dark blue; the blue is about FS35056. At the fuselage-tail bend is a small medium blue area (decal provided).

1. paint first gloss white
2. mask wing tips and paint red
3. mask fuselage and tail and paint blue
4. brush paint lime yellow

The top of the tail is light lime yellow (about FS33798). The wing tips are red and show a thin white stripe.

The 2-bladed propellers have gloss white spinners, medium grey blades with white-grey-white tips. (no long wire antennas were fitted).

