

# **TRINIDAD & TOBAGO**

## **FEBRUARY 19 – 28, 2006**

**LEADER:  
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TOUR REPORT  
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO  
February 19-28, 2006

By Bob Sundstrom

A ten-day tour of Trinidad and Tobago is an ideal introduction to tropical birding in the Americas. The first three days of the tour take place on Tobago, birding the best spots on the island. Some of the group often arrive a day early to relax and acclimate at Cuffie River Nature Retreat, a very private setting with wonderful food and rooms. After Tobago, we spend five full days on Trinidad, which has considerably greater bird diversity, with six nights lodging and meals at famed Asa Wright Nature Centre. A sampling of highlights from our February 2006 tour captures the magic of this trip:

February 20: Our first full day on Tobago, we walked the near grounds of Cuffie River Nature Retreat before breakfast. We had a nice view of a pair of Barred Antshrikes near the bridge, and a female Rufous-tailed Jacamar a little further out the entrance road. White-necked Jacobins swarmed the feeders and fed at brilliant orange immortelle trees. We scoped a Blue-crowned Motmot, compared Gray and Tropical kingbirds, and had good looks at Black-faced Grassquit, Orange-winged Parrot, and Chivi Vireo. After breakfast we departed for the rainforest trail known as Gilpin Trace. At the rest stop above the trail, we had good views of a pair of Great Black Hawks, as well as a diversity of birds in a fruiting tree. (Later, during lunch at this spot, the same tree would feature a pair of Collared Trogons, Red-legged Honeycreepers, and White-lined Tanagers, among others.) Near the start of the Gilpin Trace, we watched a beautiful Golden-olive Woodpecker and a pair of large Cocoa Woodcreepers. Shortly after, Stripe-breasted Spinetails and Rufous-breasted Wrens foraged close together. Sightings of rare White-tailed Sabrewings began with hovering birds, and later we scoped perched sabrewings and one on a nest. Blue-backed Manakins nearly stole the show, as we had scope views and close-ups of multiple males, brilliant blue with velvet-red caps.

February 22: On our final day on Tobago, we took a boat trip to Little Tobago. Elegant Red-billed Tropicbirds flew in profusion, as did Magnificent Frigatebirds. We scoped Red-footed Boobies of two color morphs, and walked very close to a Brown Booby on its nest. A downhill trail got us very close to multiple Red-billed Tropicbirds with nestlings, and two different nesting Audubon's Shearwaters in shallow cavities. The same evening we caught a brief 5:00 p.m. flight to Trinidad, and soon we were headed up to Asa Wright Nature Centre for dinner and our first night there.

February 23: Our first, brilliant morning on the famed Asa Wright veranda. As the sun rose, the bats dispersed, and the birds began to visit the feeders. First, a Cocoa Thrush and a pair of Blue-crowned Motmots attended the fruit trays, as agoutis scampered underneath. Before long, it was as busy as a beehive. Purple and Green honeycreepers jockeyed for space with Bananaquits. A male Red-legged Honeycreeper shone like a glittering gem. Crested Oropendolas clacked and trilled, bumping smaller fruit eaters

aside. Velvety Silver-beaked Tanagers, wing-flashing White-lined Tanagers, noisy Great Kiskadees, and a furtive Great Antshrike were on the scene, among others. Hummingbirds jostled at a series of feeders and systematically patrolled blossom-rich shrubs: flashy White-necked Jacobins, feisty White-chested Emeralds and Copper-rumped Hummingbirds, and richly iridescent Blue-chinned Sapphires. A tiny female—and then a dashing male—Tufted Coquette drew everyone's full attention. A Green Hermit visited, its long tassel tail hanging like a tufted brush. A Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl that had tooted all morning finally revealed itself, perched on a high branch, its tail marking time with each hoot. And then it was time for breakfast.

A walk after breakfast down the Discovery Trail brought us views of gem-like Bay-headed Tanagers, Violaceous Euphonias, and brilliant Blue Dacnis, among a flurry of birds visiting a fruiting tree. A Common Potoo sat on its day roost, and a male White-tailed Trogon—its breast a deep yellow—was a sensation. A male Golden-headed Manakin, with an all-black body and golden-yellow head, was acclaimed amid scope views.

The afternoon was just as pleasant and productive. Walking along the entrance road, we scoped one of the day's three Violaceous Trogons, and watched a trove of Turquoise Tanagers, Violaceous Euphonias, and Bay-headed Tanagers as they preened in a cecropia tree. Back on the veranda, toward the end of tea time, two Channel-billed Toucans flew in, a study in rich yellow and red. And, rum punch in hand, we saw a Short-tailed Nighthawk fly almost onto the veranda!

February 27: Our last full day of birding had arrived, and we would make the most of it. The final morning on the veranda was sensational, including a pair of Chestnut Woodpeckers at the feeders, exquisite in their rich brown and buff. After breakfast, we walked down to Dunstan Cave for superb views of Oilbirds, as dozens of adults perched on nests, some shrieking wildly.

The final afternoon event took us into the immense mangrove estuary known as Caroni Swamp. Aboard the boat, we stopped for Green-throated Mangoes, a Cook's tree boa outstretched on a horizontal limb, and a reddish-brown silky anteater rolled up in a ball on a branch. A Straight-billed Woodcreeper nearly landed in the boat. By 5:30 p.m. we were tied to the mangroves, rum punch in hand, watching Scarlet Ibises begin their flights across the estuary, streaming by in unbelievably crimson skeins. Large flocks of Tricolored Herons and Snowy Egrets flapped low over the bay. The Scarlet Ibis flocks grew in size as sunset came, some numbering in the hundreds, and a roost islet was soon heavily flecked with the reds, whites, and blues of the many wading birds—a splendid culmination to a memorable tour.

**TRINIDAD & TOBAGO**  
**February 19 - 28, 2006**  
**Leader: Bob Sundstrom**

**Local Guides: Adolphus James (Tobago), Jogie Ramlal and Mahase Ramlal (Trinidad)**  
*Tour sketch and bird list by Bob Sundstrom*

**TOUR SKETCH**

**Day 1, February 19:** Today was the official arrival day to start the tour on Tobago (at Cuffie River Nature Retreat), although some of the group had come in a day early to relax and acclimate. On a bird walk just before dinner with part of the group, we had a nice view of a pair of Barred Antshrikes near the bridge, and a female Rufous-tailed Jacamar a little further out the entrance road. White-necked Jacobins swarmed the feeders and fed at the immortelle tree by the bridge. After dark, a White-tailed Nightjar called and perched and hawked insects close to the lodge. First of three nights at Cuffie River Nature Retreat, and first of three excellent dinners there.

**Day 2, February 20:** There were enough birds on the immediate Cuffie grounds that on a walk before breakfast we never got as far as the bridge. We scoped a Blue-crowned Motmot, got good comparative views of Gray and Tropical kingbirds, and good looks at Black-faced Grassquit, Orange-winged Parrot, and Chivi Vireo. After breakfast we departed with Gladwyn for the rain forest and Gilpin Trace. Our route took us north from Runnemedede, past Little and Big Englishman Bays and Parlatuvier Bay, before turning inland on the Bloody Bay Road. An excellent day of birding unfolded. At the rest stop above the trail, we had good views of a pair of Great Black Hawks and a Broad-winged Hawk, as well as a diversity of birds in a fruiting tree. (Later, during lunch at this spot, the same tree would feature a pair of Collared Trogons, Red-legged Honeycreepers, and White-lined Tanagers, among others.) Near the start of the Gilpin Trace, we watched a beautiful Golden-olive Woodpecker and a pair of large Cocoa Woodcreepers. Shortly after, Stripe-breasted Spinetails and Rufous-breasted Wrens foraged close together. Sightings of rare White-tailed Sabrewings began with hovering birds, and later we scoped perched sabrewings and one on a nest. Blue-backed Manakins nearly stole the show, as we had scope views and close-ups of multiple males, and brief views of males displaying. Another highlight was the abundance of Yellow-legged Thrushes, many at fruiting trees, and a close view of a male singing in plain view – so confiding that we walked right under it as it continued singing.

**Day 3, February 21:** A second morning walk at Cuffie Retreat, and good views of Scrub Greenlets, new for the tour for most. Departing after breakfast, we wended our way to the Hilton Ponds, and then the Bon Accord Ponds and back roads. It was surprising to see Yellow-headed Caracaras at both spots. Stately Southern Lapwings were admired by all, and after an exaggerated flight, one pair displayed chest to chest. A large Spectacled Caiman basked below a bush in which a Purple Gallinule perched, as an Anhinga with a fish neatly speared swam by. Wattled Jacanas squawked and flashed their yellow wings. At Bon Accord, White-cheeked Pintails swam out into the open after a brief rain shower, escorting a total of twenty-six ducklings. At Grafton Estate, after picnicking alongside some intriguing Richard's Anoles, and as tanagers and other birds visited the feeders, we started down the trail on foot. Immediately we came upon Yellow-breasted Flycatchers right at the trail's edge, and soon after some very close Rufous-tailed Jacamars. A male White-flanked Antwren was very confiding, splendid in its vivid black and white markings. Barred Antshrikes also came in very close for fine views, as did a Fuscous Flycatcher. As it began to shower heavily, we departed for Cuffie River Nature Retreat.

**Day 4, February 22:** A boat trip to Little Tobago afforded today's birding highlights. Elegant Red-billed Tropicbirds flew in profusion, as did Magnificent Frigatebirds. We scoped Red-footed Boobies of two color morphs, and walked very close to a Brown Booby on its nest. A downhill trail got us very close to multiple Red-billed Tropicbirds with nestlings, and two different nesting Audubon's Shearwaters in shallow cavities. A Peregrine Falcon hung overhead for many minutes, and a Merlin glided by the overlook. From Frank's glass-bottomed boat, we also saw quite an array of corals and fishes. After a wonderful lunch at Frank's Birdwatchers Restaurant, we drove back to Crown Point for a brief 5:00 p.m. flight to Trinidad. Soon we were headed up to Asa Wright Nature Centre for dinner and our first night there.

**Day 5, February 23:** First, brilliant morning on the famed AWNC veranda. As the sun rose the bats dispersed, and the birds began to visit the feeders. First, a Cocoa Thrush and a pair of Blue-crowned Motmots attended the fruit trays, as agoutis scampered underneath. Before long, it was busy as a beehive: Purple and Green Honeycreepers jockeyed for space with Bananaquits. A male Red-legged Honeycreeper shone like a glittering gem. Crested Oropendolas clacked and trilled, bumping smaller fruit eaters aside. Velvety Silver-beaked Tanagers, wing-flashing White-lined Tanagers, noisy Great Kiskadees, and a furtive Great Antshrike were on the scene, among others. Hummingbirds jostled at a series of feeders and systematically patrolled blossom-rich shrubs: flashy White-necked Jacobins, feisty White-chested Emeralds and Copper-rumped Hummingbirds, richly iridescent Blue-chinned Sapphires. A tiny female – and then a dashing male – Tufted Coquette drew everyone's full attention. A Green Hermit visited, its long tassel tail hanging like a tufted brush. And a Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl that had tooted all morning finally revealed itself, perched on a high branch, its tail marking time with each hoot. And then it was time for breakfast.

A walk with Jogie down the Discovery Trail brought us views of gem-like Bay-headed Tanagers, Violaceous Euphonias, and brilliant Blue Dacnis, among a flurry of birds visiting a fruiting tree. A Common Potoo sat on its day roost, and a male White-tailed Trogon – its breast a deep yellow – was a sensation. A male Golden-headed Manakin, with all black body and golden-yellow head, was acclaimed amid scope views.

The afternoon was just as pleasant and productive. Walking the entrance road with Centre guide Molly, we scoped one of the day's three Violaceous Trogons, and watched a trove of Turquoise Tanagers, Violaceous Euphonias, and Bay-headed Tanagers as they preened in a cecropia tree, then fed on the tree's seeds. A Rufous-browed Peppershrike paused long enough for careful scoping, and both White-bearded and Golden-headed manakins perched for good views. Back on the veranda, toward the end of tea time, two Channel-billed Toucans flew in, a study in rich yellow and red. And, rum punch in hand, we saw a Short-tailed Nighthawk fly almost onto the veranda!

**Day 6, February 24:** Another bountiful birding day. New morning visitors seen from the veranda were Channel-billed Toucans and Chestnut Woodpeckers. Both came close. The large woodpeckers perched on the fruit trays, showing rich brown bodies, pointed crests, pale bills, and cream-colored leggings. Driving out from the lodge after breakfast with Jogie and Mahase, we first stopped at Aripo Agricultural Station. White-headed Marsh-Tyrants and Pied Water-Tyrants perched near the road. Male Red-breasted Blackbirds shone like crimson beacons, a handsome Savanna Hawk perched for great scoping, and the first of three Cocoi Herons of the day preened near a herd of water buffalo. Later, a Zone-tailed Hawk soared near our picnic site at Manzanilla Beach. Driving south along the east coastline of the island, Mahase spotted Greater Anis, and we scoped a nesting pair of Pearl Kites at close range. Nariva Marsh provided two highlights on opposite sides of the road: a skulking Pinnated Bittern and two lovely Azure Gallinules.

A 5:00 p.m. visit to Waller Field completed the day's birding. Gorgeous Red-bellied Macaws perched nearby in perfect afternoon light, feeding on moriche palm fruits. A pair of

Moriche Orioles sat for scope study, wholly black with tiny bits of orange, as Sulphury Flycatchers gave their raspy calls.

**Day 7, February 25:** We left earlier than standard, at 7:00 a.m., for the Blanchisseuse Rd. – specifically to look for Trinidad Piping Guan near a microwave station at higher elevation. (Just a minute out from the Centre we stopped for two Bearded Bellbirds in a fruiting tree, and found a Lineated Woodpecker at the same spot.) The guan never showed, but during the vigil we had had nice views of a cinnamon brown Squirrel Cuckoo, a pair of Collared Trogons, Golden-olive Woodpeckers, Plain-brown Woodcreepers, and more. Other highlights of the higher elevations today were nice views of Speckled Tanagers, group sessions calling in Gray-throated Leaf-tosser and Black-faced Antthrush, lots of Common Black Hawks, a Gray Hawk, two or three White Hawks, a distant soaring Ornate Hawk-Eagle, and a rare, open view of a Long-billed Gnatwren.

**Day 8, February 26:** To beat the warmer temperatures expected in the lowlands, we drove down early after an early breakfast to the Aripo savanna and Waller Field areas. A key morning highlight was a Striped Cuckoo. At first heard but unseen, Jogie finally spotted the cuckoo by scanning from a higher berm – from which we were then able to scope the Striped Cuckoo as it raised its rufous crest as it whistled. At the same stop, a pair of Pearl Kites sat on their nest, the downy white of chicks within just visible. A Rufous-browed Peppershrike worked through the trees, offering a good view for those who had earlier missed it. And a Turquoise Tanager glittered from its perch as it preened – a bird that rarely sits for such nice scope views. Near Waller Field we watched a handsome trio of Black-crested Antshrikes overhead in the trees, while a White-bellied Antbird strolled the leaf litter below as it sang. In Cumuto, a tree full of Yellow-rumped Cacique nests proved wonderfully entertaining.

After a three hour break back at Asa Wright, we would return to Waller Field for night birding. Part of the group met earlier, to walk downhill on the Discovery Trail, in hope of seeing a Bearded Bellbird. Just as we considered turning back, a male began calling. We rushed downhill, well past the usual bellbird display area, following the overgrown extension of the trail. The “bok”’s grew louder and louder, stunningly loud, and when we looked up, the Bearded Bellbird male was sitting on a branch not twenty feet straight up! It soon flew a short distance, where Gwen re-found it perched tightly under a layer of leaves – but open enough for nifty scope views. A well-earned success.

Evening at Waller Field: We had terrific views of Red-bellied Macaws again, as well as a Streaked Xenops which sat openly in view against a dense drape of vines. As dark and fireflies came upon us, we searched in vain for a calling Tropical Screech-Owl, but had great views of a Barn Owl, Pauraques, and many White-tailed Nightjars.

**Day 9, February 27:** The last full day of birding had arrived, and we would make the most of it. The final morning on the veranda was sensational: a male Tufted Coquette hovering over the lantana blossoms for minutes, a richly colored Channel-billed Toucan perching in the near trees, and the pair of Chestnut Woodpeckers at the feeders, exquisite in their rich brown and buff. The three scintillating honeycreeper species were on hand, and a male White-tailed Trogon perched for scope perusal from the veranda. After breakfast, we hiked with Molly down to the Oilbird cave. Views of the Oilbirds were superb, as dozens of adults perched on nests, some shrieking wildly, and several plump, downy nestlings could be seen. A secondary walk down part of the Discovery Trail turned up a good bit of bird activity, highlighted by a male Golden-headed Manakin at a lek site. He popped back and forth from branch to branch, calling, and then performed a backwards sliding walk on a slender horizontal branch, ending his performance with a rapid wing flick.

The afternoon outing was very memorable. A stop at the Trincity Ponds turned up a Large-billed Tern, Yellow-hooded Blackbirds, both black-and-white tyrants, Purple Gallinule,

Least Grebe, shorebirds and jacanas. But the big finish came at Caroni. Aboard our boat among the mangroves, we stopped for Green-throated Mangoes, a Cook's Tree Boa outstretched on a horizontal limb, and a reddish-brown Silky Anteater rolled up in a ball on a branch. A Straight-billed Woodcreeper nearly landed in the boat. By 5:30 p.m. we were tied to the mangroves, rum punch in hand, watching Scarlet Ibises begin their flights across the estuary, streaming by in unbelievably crimson skeins. Tricolored Herons and Snowy Egrets flapped low over the bay, sometimes in the hundreds. The Scarlet Ibis flocks grew in size as sunset came, some numbering in the hundreds, and a roost islet was soon heavily flecked the reds, whites and blues of the many wading birds. A splendid culmination.

**Day 10, February 28:** An early breakfast and then off to Piarco Airport for flights homeward.

## BIRD LIST

[Unusual/very scarce/very lucky to see sightings in **bold**. Very rare for the area sightings in *bold italics*.]

### KEY TO BIRD LIST LOCATIONS:

**TO** = Tobago

**LT** = Little Tobago

**TR** = Trinidad

**AWNC** = Asa Wright Nature Center

{ } = seen by one of the leaders/guides only

### TINAMOUS

Little Tinamou (*Crypturellus soui*) **TR**; its eerie notes heard daily, early and late

### GREBES

Least Grebe (*Tachybaptus dominicus*) **TO,TR**; adults and chicks on freshwater ponds

**Pied-billed Grebe** (*Podilymbus podiceps*) **TO**; an uncommon visitor to Tobago

### SHEARWATERS & PETRELS

Audubon's Shearwater (*Puffinus lherminieri*) **LT**. We saw two adults in shallow niches, where they were nesting, just a few feet from the trail down the slope of Little Tobago.

### TROPICBIRDS

Red-billed Tropicbird (*Phaethon aethurus*) **LT**. These lovely seabirds we saw flying at close range, and at arm's length where they nested, some with downy nestlings.

### PELICANS

Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) **TO,LT**

### GANNETS & BOOBIES

Red-footed Booby (*Sula sula*) **LT**; both white and brown morphs

Brown Booby (*Sula Leucogaster*) **LT**. At the bottom of one trail on Little Tobago a Brown Booby sat on a nest at very close range. Others seen nicely in flight.

### ANHINGAS

Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*) **TO**

### FRIGATEBIRDS

Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*) **TO,TR,LTO**; chasing tropicbirds on Little Tobago

### HERONS, EGRETS, & BITTERNES

Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) **TO**; uncommon here, we saw only one or two

Cocoi Heron [White-necked Heron] (*A. cocoi*) **TR**; also uncommon, we were very lucky to see three in one day between Aripo and Nariva.

Great Egret (*A. alba*) **TO,TR**

Tricolored Heron (*E. tricolor*) **TO,TR**; flying in flocks at sunset to the Caroni roost

Little Blue Heron (*E. caerulea*) **TO,TR**

Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*) TO,TR. Flights of up to one hundred flapped just above the surface of the estuary enroute to the roost island at sunset in Caroni Swamp.

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) TO,TR

Striated Heron (*B. striatus*) TR; seem to fully replace Green Herons on Trinidad

Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*) TO

Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) TR; flying over the Caroni after sunset

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*) TO

Pinnated Bittern (*Botaurus pinnatus*) TR; scoped at Nariva, head and neck above the marsh grass

#### **IBISES AND SPOONBILLS**

Scarlet Ibis (*Eudocimus ruber*) TR. The flights of hundreds of intensely red ibis coming to roost were a fitting finale to the entire tour.

#### **DUCKS, GEESE & SWANS**

Black-bellied Whistling-duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) TO

White-cheeked Pintail (*Anas bahamensis*) TO. Four adults and at least two dozen ducklings at Bon Accord – nice views of a very pretty duck!

Blue-winged Teal (*A. discors*) TO,TR

**Ring-necked Duck** (*Aythya collaris*) TO

Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*) TO

#### **NEW WORLD VULTURES**

Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*) TR; roosting in eerie ranks of dozens at Waller Field

Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*) TR

#### **OSPREY**

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) TO,TR

#### **HAWKS, EAGLES & KITES**

Gray-headed Kite (*Leptodon cayanensis*) TR; excellent views of soaring birds

Pearl Kite (*Gampsonyx swainsoni*) TR. A tour highlight was seeing this miniature raptors on a nest – at two different locations.

Double-toothed Kite (*Harpagus bidentatus*) TR

White Hawk (*Leucopternis albicollis*) TR; distinctively patterned soaring hawks; at least four seen

Common Black-Hawk (*Buteogallus anthracinus*) TR; a daily sight on the larger island

Great Black-Hawk (*B. urubitinga*) TO; two different pairs seen over the rain forest

Savanna Hawk (*Heterospizias meridionalis*) TR; a beautifully colored, long-legged hawk

Gray Hawk (*Asturina nitida*) TR

Broad-winged Hawk (*B. platypterus*) TO,TR

Short-tailed Hawk (*B. brachyururs*) TR

Zone-tailed Hawk (*Buteo albonotatus*) TR

**Ornate Hawk-Eagle** (*Spizaetus ornatus*) TR; soaring at a distance along Blanchisseuse Rd.

#### **CARACARAS & FALCONS**

Yellow-headed Caracara (*Milvago chimachima*) TO,TR; great views on both islands

Merlin (*Falco columbarius*) TO,TR

Peregrine Falcon (*F. peregrinus*) TO,TR

#### **GUANS, CHACHALACAS & ALLIES**

Rufous-vented Chachalaca (*Ortalis ruficauda*) TO; providing a built in alarm clock on Tobago

#### **RAILS, GALLINULES & COOTS**

Purple Gallinule (*Porphyryla martinica*) TO,TR

**Azure Gallinule** (*Porphyryla flavirostris*) TR. An infrequent sight on Trinidad, we were fortunate to see two at Nariva and scope them at length. New for Bob, on his 7<sup>th</sup> visit to Trinidad.

Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropous*) TO,TR

#### **JACANAS**

Wattled Jacana (*Jacana jacana*) TO,TR; memorable for their loud voices and yellow flight feathers

#### **PLOVERS & LAPWINGS**

Southern Lapwing (*Vanellus chilensis*) TO,TR; handsome, stately, huge plovers

Semipalmated Plover (*Pluvialis semipalmatus*) TR

## **SANDPIPERS & ALLIES**

Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*) TO; a wintering migrant that nest on the arctic tundra  
Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*) TO,TR; side by side with Lesser Yellowlegs  
Lesser Yellowlegs (*T. flavipes*) TO,TR  
Solitary Sandpiper (*T. solitaria*) TO,TR  
Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularis*) TO,TR  
Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) TO; very confiding at Blue Waters Inn  
Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*) TR

## **GULLS & TERNS**

Laughing Gull (*Larus atricilla*) TO  
Royal Tern (*Sterna maxima*) TO  
Large-billed/Yellow-billed Tern (*Sterna superciliaris*) TR; one at Trincity Ponds, showing off its dramatic dark and light wing pattern

## **PIGEONS & DOVES**

Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*) TR  
Scaled Pigeon (*C. speciosa*) TR  
Pale-vented Pigeon (*Columba cayennensis*) TO,TR  
Eared Dove (*Zenaida auricularis*) TO,TR  
Common Ground-Dove (*Columbina passerina*) TR  
Ruddy Ground-Dove (*Columbina talpacoti*) TO,TR  
White-tipped Dove (*Leptotila verreauxi*) TO; its cooing, sounding like someone blowing across the top of a bottle, was a familiar sound around Cuffie River Nature Retreat  
Gray-fronted Dove (*L. rufaxilla*) TR; daily visitors to the Asa Wright feeding stations

## **PARROTS, MACAWS & ALLIES**

Red-bellied Macaw (*Ara manilata*) TR. We were treated to extraordinary views of these big parrots, as they made their evening pilgrimage to the Waller Field moriche palms, and gnawed away at the huge palm fruits before disappearing for the night into the fronds.  
Green-rumped Parrotlet (*Forpus passerinus*) TO,TR; nice views on both islands of a little parrot that seemed to be green not just on its rump but throughout its plumage  
Blue-headed Parrot (*Pionus menstruus*) TR; flying over a number of times  
Orange-winged Parrot (*Amazona amazonica*) TO,TR; raucous, and especially prevalent on Tobago

## **CUCKOOS & ANIS**

Squirrel Cuckoo (*Piaya cayana*) TR; nice views of this large, cinnamon-toned bird  
**Greater Ani** (*Crotophaga major*) TR; scarce and secretive in their mangrove niche, we lucked out with scope views of a couple along the road to Nariva  
Smooth-billed Ani (*Crotophaga ani*) TO,TR  
Striped Cuckoo (*Tapera naevia*) TR. Jogie finally found the calling bird, and we then had superb scope views as the cuckoo called and raised its crest repeatedly.

## **BARN OWLS**

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) TR; haunting the remnant WWII structures of Waller Field

## **TYPICAL OWLS**

Tropical Screech-Owl (*Otus choliba*) TR; heard  
Spectacled Owl (*Pulsatrix perspicillata*) TR; juvenile calls were heard  
Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl (*Glaucidium brasilianum*) TR. A daily auditory fixture at Asa Wright, we scoped the Centre bird our first morning on the veranda; at least two more seen on day outings.

## **OILBIRD**

Oilbird (*Steatornis caripensis*) TR. At Dunstan Cave, we had wonderful views of adults and chicks in their nesting and roosting retreat, as some Oilbirds screeched in the background.

## **POTOOS**

Common Potoo (*Nyctibius griseus*) TR; scoped on a day roost along the Discovery Trail at AWNC

## **NIGHTHAWKS & NIGHTJARS**

Short-tailed Nighthawk (*Lurocalis semitorquatus*) TR; one flew almost onto the veranda at AWNC  
Pauraque (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) TR; great views in the spotlight at Waller Field

White-tailed Nightjar (*Caprimulgus cayennensis*) TO,TR; seen nicely at Cuffie River, perching and calling after dark just outside the lodge; also at Waller Field at close range

#### **SWIFTS**

{Chestnut-collared Swift} (*Streptoprocne rutila/Sypseloides rutilus*) - TR

Band-rumped Swift (*Chaetura spinicauda*) TR; with a narrow, light band across the rump

Gray-rumped Swift (*Chaetura cinereiventris*) TO,TR; pale gray along the whole rump and tail

Short-tailed Swift (*Chaetura brachyura*) TO; looking almost tail-less

Fork-tailed [Neotropical] Palm-Swift (*Tachornis squamata/Reinarda squamata*) TR; flying over the moriche palms, with very long and narrow tails

#### **HUMMINGBIRDS**

Rufous-breasted Hermit (*Glaucis hirsuta*) TO,TR; widespread but hard to see for long

Green Hermit (*Phaethornis guy*) TR; seen especially well feeding on *Heliconia* flowers at AWNC, its amazingly long tail seemingly tipped with white cotton

Little Hermit (*Phaethornis longuemareus*) TR; a regular at the *Impatiens* along the AWNC drive

**White-tailed Sabrewing** (*Campylopterus ensipennis*) TO. Rare and local, we had wonderful views of one sitting on a nest and others hovering above the stream along the Gilpin Trace

White-necked Jacobin (*Florisuga mellivora*) TO,TR; very flashy, especially the flared white tail

Green-throated Mango (*Anthracothorax viridugula*) TR; perched in the Caroni mangroves

Black-throated Mango (*Anthracothorax nigricollis*) TR. Its black breast rimmed in deep blue, this large hummer was much admired from the AWNC veranda.

Ruby-topaz Hummingbird (*Chrysolampis mosquitos*) TO,TR; brilliant, when the light was perfect

Tufted Coquette (*Lophornis ornata*) TR. One of the favorite birds of the tour, we had the good fortune of intricately ornamented males as well as females hovering near the veranda.

Blue-chinned Sapphire (*Chlorostilbon notatus/Chlorestes notatus*) TR; glinting in morning light

White-chested Emerald (*Agyrtria brevirostris/Amazilia chionopectus*) TR

Copper-rumped Hummingbird (*Saucerottia tobaci/Amazilia tobaci*) TO,TR

#### **TROGONS**

White-tailed Trogon (*Trogon viridis*) TR; seen repeatedly along the Discovery Trail

Violaceous Trogon (*T. violaceus*) TR; scoped at several spots

Collared Trogon (*T. collaris*) TO,TR; excellent studies on both islands

#### **KINGFISHERS**

Ringed Kingfisher (*Ceryle torquata*) TR; flying over the boat in the Caroni mangroves

Green Kingfisher (*Chloroceryle americana*) TO; perched streamside at several spots

#### **MOTMOTS**

Blue-crowned Motmot (*Motmotus momota*) TO,TR. This truly exotic-looking creature was seen nearly every day of the tour, often at close range.

#### **JACAMARS**

Rufous-tailed Jacamar (*Galbula ruficauda*) TO,TR; scoped in detail on Tobago

#### **TOUCANS**

Channel-billed Toucan (*Ramphastos vitellinus*) TR; terrific views near the veranda and on the Discovery Trail of this amazing looking bird

#### **WOODPECKERS**

Red-crowned Woodpecker (*Melanerpes rubricapillus*) TO

Red-rumped Woodpecker (*Veniliornis kirkii*) TO,TR; seen best along the Blanchisseuse Rd.

Golden-olive Woodpecker (*Piculus rubiginosus*) TO,TR

Chestnut Woodpecker (*Ceelus elegans*) TR. One of the stars of the tour, a pair made several visits to the fruit feeders over the course of the tour, always becoming the main focus of attention.

Lineated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus lineatus*) TR; along the AWNC driveway

#### **OVENBIRDS**

Stripe-breasted Spinetail (*Synallaxis cinnamomea*) TO,TR

Yellow-chinned Spinetail (*Certhiaxis cinnamomea*) TR

Streaked Xenops (*Xenops rutilans*) TR; scoped in the vines at Waller Field near sunset

Gray-throated Leaf-tosser (*Sclerurus albigularis*) TR; working the leaf litter at the forest edge

## **WOODCREEPERS**

Plain-brown Woodcreeper (*Dendrocincla fuliginosa*) TR; very close views at the guan vigil spot  
Olivaceous Woodcreeper (*Sittasomus griseicapillus*) TO; heard  
Straight-billed Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus picus*) TR; almost landed on the boat in the Caroni  
Cocoa (Buff-throated) Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus susurrans*) TO,TR; its descending whistled  
calls were a daily feature on both islands

## **TYPICAL ANTBIRDS**

Great Antshrike (*Taraba major*) TR; visiting the fruit trays and around the cabins  
Black-crested Antshrike (*Sakesphorus canadensis*) TR; very striking looking antshrikes!  
Barred Antshrike (*Thamnophilus doliatus*) TO,TR; a tour hit, pairs seen very well on Tobago  
Plain Antwren (*Dysithamnus mentalis*) TO  
White-flanked Antwren (*Myrmotherula axillaris*) TR  
White-fringed Antwren (*Formicivora grisea*) TO; at the trail's edge at the Grafton Estate  
White-bellied Antbird (*Myrmeciza longipes*) TR; walking back and forth along the ground

## **ANTTHRUSHES & ANTPITTAS**

Black-faced Antthrush (*Formicarius analis*) TR; strutting with its short tail cocked upward

## **COTINGAS**

Bearded Bellbird (*Procnias averano*) TR. It took some repeated effort because the males weren't  
displaying as much as typically, but we ultimately walked right underneath a calling male,  
whose notes were ear-rattling, then scoped it at close range.

## **MANAKINS**

White-bearded Manakin (*Manacus manacus*) TR; on loudly whirring wings  
Blue-backed Manakin (*Chiroxiphia lanceolata*) TO; sensational views of this lovely bird  
Golden-headed Manakin (*Pipra erythrocephala*) TR; males flitting about a display site

## **TYRANT FLYCATCHERS**

Southern Beardless-Tyrannulet (*Camptostoma obsoletum*) TR  
Yellow-bellied Elaenia (*Elaenia flavogaster*) TO,TR; widespread on both islands  
Ochre-bellied Flycatcher (*Mionectes oleagineus*) TO,TR  
Slaty-capped Flycatcher (*Leptopogon superciliaris*) TR  
Yellow-breasted Flycatcher (*Tolmomyias flaviventris*) TO,TR; a pair right over the trail at Grafton  
Fuscous Flycatcher (*Cnemotriccus fuscatus*) TO  
Euler's Flycatcher (*Lathotricus euleri*) TR  
Tropical Pewee (*C. cinereus*) TR  
Pied Water-Tyrant (*Fluvicola pica*) TR; conspicuous at marshy areas and wet pastures  
White-headed Marsh-Tyrant (*Arundinicola leucocephala*) TR; striking males with all white heads  
and all black bodies  
Bright-rumped Attila (*Attila spadiceus*) TR; heard  
Dusky-capped Flycatcher (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) TR; along the Discovery Trail late in the tour  
Brown-crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus tyrannulus*) TO,TR  
Great Kiskadee (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) TR; calling early at the veranda  
Boat-billed Flycatcher (*Megarynchus pitangua*) TR  
Streaked Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes maculatus*) TO,TR  
Piratic Flycatcher (*Legatus leucophaeus*) TR; along the Discovery Trail the last morning  
Sulphury Flycatcher (*Tyrannopsis sulphurea*) TR; making their raspy calls at Waller Field  
Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) TO,TR  
Gray Kingbird (*T. dominicensis*) TO  
Black-tailed Tityra (*Tityra cayana*) TR; a brief sighting

## **VIREOS & ALLIES**

Chivi Vireo (*Vireo chivi*) TO; daily around Cuffie River Nature Retreat  
Scrub Greenlet (*Hylophilus flavipes*) TO  
Golden-fronted Greenlet (*Hylophilus aurantiifrons*) TR  
Rufous-browed Peppershrike (*Cyclarhis gujanensis*) TR; a very striking looking vireo ally

## **SWALLOWS**

Caribbean Martin (*Progne caribbaeus*) TO; nesting in the villages all over Tobago

Gray-breasted Martin (*P. Chalybea*) TR

White-winged Swallow (*Tachycineta albiventer*) TO,TR; small and flashy

Southern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) TR

Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) TO,TR

## **WRENS**

Rufous-breasted Wren (*Thryothorus rutilus*) TO,TR; its song was the anthem of the forest

House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*) TO,TR

## **MOCKINGBIRDS & THRASHERS**

Tropical Mockingbird (*Mimus gilvus*) TO,TR

## **THRUSHES**

Yellow-legged Thrush (*Platycichla flavipes*) TO,TR; great views of what is often a scarce species

Cocoa Thrush (*Turdus fumigatus*) TR

Bare-eyed Thrush (*T. nudigenis*) TO,TR

White-necked Thrush (*T. albicollis*) TO,TR; surprisingly prevalent along trails on both islands

## **GNATCATCHERS**

Long-billed Gnatwren (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) TR; a little skulker seen very nicely, its bill like a hypodermic needle

## **NEW WORLD WARBLERS**

Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*) TO,TR

American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*) TO,TR

Northern Waterthrush (*Seiurus noveboracensis*) TO,TR

Golden-crowned Warbler (*Basileuterus culicivorus*) TR

## **BANAQUIT**

Bananaquit (*Coereba flaveola*) TO,TR; a truly ubiquitous bird on both islands

## **TANAGERS, HONEYCREEPERS & ALLIES**

Bicolored Conebill (*Conirostrum bicolor*) TR; a male right over the boat in the Caroni mangroves

White-shouldered Tanager (*T. luctuosus*) TR; seen by Virginia

White-lined Tanager (*T. rufus*) TO,TR; black males and brown females

Red-crowned Ant-Tanager (*Habia rubica*) TR

Silver-beaked Tanager (*Ramphocelus carbo*) TR; with velvety burgundy plumage

Blue-gray Tanager (*Thraupis episcopus*) TO,TR; common, always lovely

Palm Tanager (*T. palmarum*) TO,TR

Violaceous Euphonia (*Euphonia violacea*) TR

Turquoise Tanager (*Tangara mexicana*) TR; a flashy little tanager, seen very well

Speckled Tanager (*Tangara guttata*) TR; at the higher elevations of Blanchisseuse Rd.

Bay-headed Tanager (*Tangara gyrola*) TR; another tiny gem

Blue Dacnis (*Dacnis cayana*) TR

Green Honeycreeper (*Chlorophanes spiza*) TR; dazzling at the veranda feeders

Purple Honeycreeper (*Cyanerpes caeruleus*) TR; ditto

Red-legged Honeycreeper (*C. nitidens*) TO,TR; its crown like a blue neon patch

## **BUNTINGS, SPARROWS, SEEDEATERS & ALLIES**

Blue-black Grassquit (*Volatinia jacarina*) TO,TR

Black-faced Grassquit (*Tiaris bicolor*) TO

**Grassland Yellow-Finch** (*Sicalis luteola*) TR

Red-capped Cardinal (*Paroaria gularis*) TR; a pair at the Caroni boat launch

## **SALTATORS, CARDINALS & ALLIES**

Grayish Saltator (*Saltator coerulescens*) TR

## **BLACKBIRDS, ORIOLES & ALLIES**

Yellow-hooded Blackbird (*Agelaius icterocephalus*) TR; at Trincity ponds

Red-breasted Blackbird (*Sturnella militaris/Leistes militaris*) TR; a glowing red breast

Carib Grackle (*Quiscalus lugubris*) TO,TR

Shiny Cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*) TO,TR

Giant Cowbird (*Molothrus oryzivorus/Scaphidura oryzivora*) TO,TR; with the cows  
**Moriche Oriole** (*Icterus chrysiocephalus*) TR; scarce, a lucky find on two days at Waller Field  
Yellow Oriole (*Icterus nigrogularis*) TR  
Yellow-rumped Cacique (*Cacicus cela*) TR; at a nest colony tree in Cumuto  
Crested Oropendola (*Psarocolius decumanus*) TO,TR; splendid in song and appearance

### **Mammals**

Red-rumped Agouti (*Dasyprocta agouti*) TR  
Red-tailed Squirrel (*Sciurus granatensis*) TO  
Silky Anteater (*Cyclopes didactylus*) TR  
Trinidad Mouse Opossum (*Marmosa chapmani*) TR  
White-lined Sac-winged Bat TO,TR; the small day-time bat in the forest  
Nectar-eating bat sp. TR

### **Herps**

Spectacled Cayman (*Caiman crocodilus*) TO,TR  
House Gecko (*Hemidactylus frenatus*) TO,TR  
Golden Tegu (*Tupinambis teguixin*) TR  
Common Ground Lizard (*Ameiva ameiva*) TO,TR  
Tree Spiny Lizard (*Tropidurus plica*) TR  
Richard's Anole/Gumangola (*Anolis richardii*) TO  
Cook's Tree Boa (*Corallus hortulanus cookii*) TR  
Crapaud/Cane Toad (*Bufo marinus*) TO,TR  
Yellow-throated Frog (*Mannophryne trinitatis*) TR; a dendrobatid or "arrow poison" type frog

### **Invertebrates**

Tree Crab - TR  
Land Crab - TO,TR  
Caligo (Owl) Butterfly - TO,TR  
Blue Morpho (butterfly) TO,TR  
Cattle-heart Butterfly - TR  
Postman Butterfly - TO,TR  
Tiger-stripe Butterfly - TR  
Army Ants - TR  
Leafcutter Ants - TR  
Trinidad Chevroned Tarantula - TR  
Fireflies - TR