

# **TRINIDAD & TOBAGO**

**DECEMBER 9 – 18, 2005**

**LEADER:  
BOB SUNDSTROM**

**COMPILED BY:  
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TOUR REPORT  
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO  
December 9-18, 2005

By Bob Sundstrom

We had all just arrived for the start of our December 2005 Trinidad and Tobago tour, which began on the smaller island of Tobago. As we sat down to an excellent dinner at Cuffie River Nature Retreat, we watched—to our amazement—as a male White-tailed Nightjar perched repeatedly on a twig, perhaps 40 feet from our table. In the flashlight beam, the nightjar's plumage was visible in good detail—a wonderful way to begin our tour.

The first three days of our trip took place on Tobago, where we birded the best spots on the island from highland tropical old-growth forest to fresh water ponds, to the prolific seabird nesting area near the island of Little Tobago. Our walks in the forest were especially memorable. On our first full day on Tobago, we picnicked at the Grafton Estate, where the bird feeders were busy with Blue-gray, Palm, and White-lined tanagers, a Barred Antshrike, and Rufous-bellied Chachalacas. After lunch, we walked a forest trail. Red-crowned and Red-rumped woodpeckers appeared in the first few minutes and, shortly after, we were fortunate to see a pair of Stripe-breasted Spinetails near their huge stick nest above the trail. A slender, spike-billed Rufous-tailed Jacamar perched along the trail, Cocoa Woodcreepers came close (as did White-fringed Antwrens), and we had our first looks at Blue-backed Manakins.

On the next day, we hiked into old-growth tropical forest along the Gilpin Trace, and soon found a beautiful Golden-olive Woodpecker, several scintillating male Blue-backed Manakins (with iridescent blue backs and velvety red caps), a pair of Rufous-breasted Wrens, an Olivaceous Woodcreeper, and had exquisite views of two White-necked Thrushes. Our search for the rare and local White-tailed Sabrewing first led to some nice views of this large hummingbird as it hovered and flashed its white tail, looking for all the world like a white butterfly zipping through the forest. Later we saw two different female White-tailed Sabrewings sitting on nests! After a picnic overlooking Bloody Bay, we birded a bit along the road long enough to find a male Collared Trogon which perched for stunning scope views, showing off its red breast and finely patterned undertail.

After Tobago, we had five full days on Trinidad, which had considerably greater bird diversity—too much to describe in this brief space. We had six nights lodging and meals at Asa Wright, which will be fondly remembered. Our first morning there—and nearly every morning thereafter—we birded early from the famed Asa Wright veranda. The nectar feeders and fruit trays swarmed with Purple Honeycreepers and Green Honeycreepers, not to mention legions of Bananaquits. A Silver-beaked Tanager wowed the onlookers, its plumage like maroon velvet and its bill glinting like polished silver. Brilliant Turquoise Tanagers visited the nearby “tremor tree,” and Channel-billed

Toucans glowed from a treetop perch. Hummingbirds swarmed and challenged one another: flashy White-necked Jacobins, a miniature Tufted Coquette, glittering Blue-chinned Sapphires, White-bellied Emeralds, and Copper-rumped Hummingbirds. Massive Crested Oropendolas clattered in, and a pair of large Lineated Woodpeckers performed on a trunk opposite the veranda.

A walk down the Discovery Trail after breakfast brought many new sights: snapping White-bearded Manakins, a perched Common Potoo, a Violaceous Trogon overhead, and a tassel-tailed Green Hermit visiting ginger flowers. After a bit of searching and guided by its very loud “bok!” calls, we found a Bearded Bellbird male, for frame-filling scope views. Its long, rubbery wattles shook as it opened its mouth and shouted its many decibel call.

Each day on Trinidad opened new birding vistas. One day we birded our way north and at higher elevation along the Blanchisseuse Road. Along a side road, we found a wonderful flock of tanagers: Bay-headed and Speckled tanagers, mixed with vivid Blue Dacnis. Soon after, Dave (our local guide) hollered “Piping Guan!” We rushed back to where he was standing, and spent the next few minutes in astonishment, watching a huge, rare Trinidad Piping Guan—with blue face and silvery patches in the wings—the sole endemic bird species of Trinidad and Tobago. Later that day we watched a pair of Lilac-tailed Parrotlets, as they prospected an arboreal termite nest as a potential nest site of their own. Another day, we scoped Red-bellied Macaws, as they munched on enormous palm seeds held in their feet, like a monkey holding a piece of fruit.

On our final morning birding from the Asa Wright veranda, a male Tufted Coquette hovered among the vervain flowers, a Chestnut Woodpecker visited a fruit feeder, and an Ornate Hawk-Eagle perched in the trees just off the veranda. Our final day ended with a boat trip among the Caroni mangroves where, before sunset, the boat was tied opposite a mangrove-covered island. Near sunset, flock after flock of stunning, impossibly red Scarlet Ibises flew in and perched in the mangroves on the island, joined by hundreds of Snowy Egrets and Tricolored Herons. We raised our rum punches to the red glow of thousands of Scarlet Ibises, an ideal ending to our days of great birding on Trinidad and Tobago.

## TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

December 9 – 18, 2005

Leader: Bob Sundstrom

Local Guides: Adolphus James (Tobago), Roodal Ramlal and Dave Ramlal (Trinidad)

*Itinerary sketch and bird list by Bob Sundstrom*

### ITINERARY SKETCH

**Day 1, December 9:** Arrivals in Tobago. As we ate dinner at Cuffie River Nature Retreat, we watched a male White-tailed Nightjar perch repeatedly on a twig, perhaps forty feet from the table. In the flashlight beam, the nightjar's plumage was visible in good detail. First night at Cuffie River Nature Retreat.

**Day 2, December 10:** After some good birding near the lodge before breakfast, we left after breakfast in Adolphus James' bus to bird the west end of Tobago. A Merlin perched for scope views in a treetop in the town of Mariah, enroute. On the Hilton resort grounds, we walked a road among the trees and then a boardwalk through the mangroves. We had nice looks at a zebra-striped male Barred Antshrike, Yellow-breasted Flycatchers, Scrub Greenlets, and White-fringed Antwrens. At the ponds at the Hilton and Bon Accord, there were lots of fancy Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, flashy Anhingas, a rare Little Egret, lovely White-cheeked Pintails, and our first Red-crowned Woodpeckers. During a picnic lunch at the Grafton Estate, the feeding station was busy with Blue-gray, Palm, and White-lined tanagers. Among the birds we saw while walking Estate trails after lunch were a pair of Stripe-breasted Spinetails near a huge stick nest above the trail; a slender, spike-billed Rufous-tailed Jacamar perched along the trail, Cocoa Woodcreepers, and our first looks at Blue-backed Manakins. Late afternoon we returned to Cuffie River Nature Retreat, for a second excellent dinner and night there.

**Day 3, December 11:** After some early birding and breakfast, we departed around 7:30 a.m. with Adolphus toward the higher elevation forest in the northeast part of Tobago. Along the Roxborough-Bloody Bay Rd., we paused for several excellent studies of Blue-crowned Motmots at the roadside. Putting on rubber boots to hike in along the Gilpin Trace we soon found a beautiful Golden-olive Woodpecker, a scintillating male Blue-backed Manakin, a pair of Rufous-breasted Wrens, both Olivaceous and Cocoa woodcreepers, and had exquisite views of two White-necked Thrushes. Our search for the rare and local White-tailed Sabrewing first led to some nice views of this large hummingbird as it hovered and flashed its white tail, looking for all the world like a white butterfly zipping through the forest. Later we saw two different female White-tailed Sabrewings sitting on nests! Further along the trail we enjoyed close looks at a Plain Antvireo hopping from vine to vine, as well as our first Collared Trogon. After picnicking overlooking Bloody Bay, we birded a bit along the road long enough to find a male Collared Trogon which perched for stunning scope views, showing off its red breast and finely patterned undertail. Final night at Cuffie River Nature Retreat.

**Day 4, December 12:** After some early morning birding around the Cuffie, we headed east to Speyside for a trip aboard Frank's Glass-bottomed Boat to the island of Little Tobago. A formation of Brown Boobies winged across the boat's wake. Soon we docked and disembarked at Little Tobago. After walking up to a well positioned overlook, we watched as dozens of Red-tailed Tropicbirds flapped and soared, some very close at hand, trailing long white tail streamers. Both Red-footed and Brown Boobies perched and flew by below, and scores of Magnificent Frigatebirds hung in the air. Close by the overlook, a Red-billed Tropicbird sat on its nest on the ground, protecting a small chick. After returning to Speyside for a wonderful lunch at Frank's café, we continued on toward Crown Pt. Airport for a late afternoon flight back to Trinidad. We arrived at Piarco Airport on Trinidad, where we were met by Roodal Ramlal and his son Dave, who would be our local birding guides during our stay at Asa Wright Nature Center (AWNC). We shuttled up to AWNC in time for rum punch and dinner. First of six nights at AWNC.

**Day 5, December 13:** Our first morning opportunity to bird from the AWNC veranda, with the first birds appearing at the feeders about 6:00 a.m. Bats swarmed the fruit feeding trays until it became light. The nectar feeders and fruit trays swarmed with Purple Honeycreepers and Green Honeycreepers, not to mention legions of Bananaquits. A Silver-beaked Tanager wowed the onlookers, its plumage like maroon velvet and its bill glinting like polished silver. Brilliant Turquoise Tanagers visited the nearby “tremor tree”, and Channel-billed Toucans glowed from a tree top perch. Hummingbirds swarmed and challenged one another: flashy White-necked Jacobins, a miniature Tufted Coquette female, glittering Blue-chinned Sapphires, plus White-bellied Emeralds and Copper-rumped Hummingbirds. Massive Crested Oropendolas clattered in, and a pair of large Lineated Woodpeckers performed on a trunk opposite the veranda.

A walk down the Discovery Trail after breakfast brought many new sights, from snapping White-bearded Manakins, a perched Common Potoo, a Violaceous Trogon overhead, and a tassel-tailed Green Hermit visiting flowers. After a bit of searching and guided by its very loud “bok!” calls, we found a Bearded Bellbird male, for frame-filling scope views. Its long, rubbery wattles shook as it opened its mouth and shouted its many decibel call.

An afternoon walk along the Centre entrance road proved magical. A pair of Bat Falcons perched on an old, epiphyte-covered snag, surveying the forest. A few hawks circled, including a Short-tailed Hawk. A male Violaceous Trogon perched for lovely scope views of its yellow underparts and slow head movements; and a male Collared Trogon purred and twitched its tail rhythmically.

**Day 6, December 14:** Another early vigil on the veranda, then breakfast, before leaving AWNC with Roodal and Dave to bird our way north and at higher elevation along the Blanchisseuse Rd. Along a side road, we found a wonderful flock of tanagers: Bay-headed and Speckled Tanagers, mixed with Blue Dacnis. Soon after, Dave hollered “Piping Guan!” We rushed back to where he was standing, and spent the next few minutes in astonishment, as a huge, rare Trinidad Piping Guan – with blue face and silvery patches in the wings – flew back and forth across the road, landing in the higher limbs of trees. The guan is the sole endemic bird species of Trinidad and Tobago, and is usually restricted to a few remote high locations.

A later stop near the high point of the road produced a soaring pair of Ornate Hawk-Eagles. We worked another side road, getting views of Black-faced Antthrush and Gray Leaf-tosser, two very hard to see skulkers. Our lunch stop along the Blanchisseuse Rd. made for great birding too: a Black Hawk-Eagle soared overhead, and a mixed flock in the small trees included Turquoise, Silver-beaked, and Blue-gray tanagers in one field of view. Other highlights today included: male and female Yellow-legged Thrushes, among four thrush species for the day; nice views of a singing male Sooty Grassquit; Plain-brown Woodcreepers near two different ant swarms; a calling male White-tailed Trogon we scoped for ten minutes; a pair of hard to see Lilac-tailed Parrotlets scoped at close range near a termite nest (which they might excavate for a potential nest site); and scope views of a Scaled Pigeon’s red bill and scaly breast. At dinner, the group surprised Bob with a birthday cake.

**Day 7, December 15:** After another early morning birding the amazing veranda (including a visit to the fruit feeders by a male Great Antshrike), and then breakfast, we departed for the Aripo agricultural station in the lowlands. Here perched Red-breasted Blackbirds competed for scope time with a male Ruddy-breasted Grassquit, Grassland Yellow Finches, White-winged Swallows, White-headed Marsh-Tyrants, and handsome tawny and rufous Savanna Hawks. We scoped a Cocoli Heron in the distance, as Wattled Jacanas shared a few wet spots with Southern Lapwings and migrant shorebirds.

After a picnic lunch at Manzanilla Beach, we drove south along the eastern shore of Trinidad through many kilometers of coconut plantation and into the Nariva mangroves. We stopped to get scope views of Yellow-headed Caracara and a dainty Pearl Kite. Stops near the mangroves turned up an American Pygmy-Kingfisher and a pair of Silvered Antbirds. Driving

among the settlements on the Nariva marshes, we saw Yellow-hooded Blackbirds and a Yellow-headed Caracara carefully picking over (for parasites?) the head and face of a patient water buffalo. Before sunset, we arrived at Waller Field, under a double rainbow. Red-bellied Macaws in noisy, small flocks came to roost in the Moriche palms, as we drank our rum punch.

**Day 8, December 16:** A two-part birding day. After an early breakfast, we left the Centre at first light and birded the open lowlands of long-abandoned Waller Field and the adjacent Arena area. By now we had seen many of the more prevalent bird species, and were focused on some of the harder to find species. Luck was with us: it became a three cuckoo day! First a Striped Cuckoo sat on a branch calling and calling, as we scoped it from nearby. Then a Little Cuckoo, a very small rufous colored cuckoo, sat up for great views. Finally, at our picnic spot, a Squirrel Cuckoo jumped from limb to limb in the tree canopy, a large rufous cuckoo – our third species. Other excellent birds turned up too: a handsome pair of Black-crested Antshrikes, a Streaked Xenops, a mixed flock including a Long-billed Gnatwren and a rare Olive-striped Flycatcher – as well as our second views of White-bellied Antbirds in three days.

After lunch and a break at the lodge, we departed again late afternoon for some evening birding and a picnic dinner at Waller Field. We had even better views of Red-bellied Macaws than the day before, and the tree tops buzzed with Fork-tailed Palm Swifts. As we picnicked under a shelter and dusk drew near, fireflies began to spark in the background. As it became dark, we got wonderful views of Pauraques, a tiny Tropical Screech-Owl, and a Common Potoo.

**Day 9, December 17:** A final morning to enjoy birding from the veranda – and it turned out to be just about the best. A male Tufted Coquette put in an appearance in the nearby vervain flowers, a Chestnut Woodpecker came to one of the fruit feeders, and an Ornate Hawk-Eagle perched in the tall trees just off the veranda, offering amazing scope views.

After breakfast we worked our way down the Guacharo Trail for our only chance to see the Oilbirds which nest and roost Dunstan Cave on the AWNC grounds. Even from outside the cave, we had superb scope views of an Oilbird lying on a ledge inside the mouth of the cavity. Its sharply hooked bill, huge eyes, and the white spots along its brown plumage were clearly visible in the beam of a flashlight. Inside the cave, the scene was even more awe-inspiring, as we came quite close to several Oilbirds on narrow ledges overhead. After lunch at AWNC, we left with Roodal and Dave to briefly bird the Caroni area rice fields before taking a boat trip out among the mangroves of Caroni Swamp. Across the rice fields, a Pinnated Bittern held its head above the vegetation long enough for scope study. Just before we boarded the boat, we watched a much anticipated Red-capped Cardinal hopping around the boat launch area – the only one we were to see. During the outbound boat trip, we stopped for a Cook's Tree Boa, a tiny Silky Anteater, and a roosting Common Potoo. After many twists and turns through the mangrove waterway, the boat was tied opposite a small, mangrove covered island. Nearing sunset, flock after flock of stunning, impossibly red Scarlet Ibises flew in and perched in the mangroves on the island, joined by hundreds of Snowy Egrets and Tricolored Herons. We raised our rum punches to the hundreds and hundreds of Scarlet Ibises, an ideal ending to our days of great birding on Trinidad and Tobago.

**Day 10, December 18:** An early breakfast and then off to Piarco Airport for morning flights homeward.

### KEY TO BIRD LIST LOCATIONS:

**TO** = Tobago

**LT** = Little Tobago

**TR** = Trinidad

**AWNC** = Asa Wright Nature Center

**W** = widespread

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

## BIRD LIST

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

### TINAMOUS

Little Tinamou (*Crypturellus soui*) – TR; its eerie calls were heard daily on the AWNC grounds

### GREBES

Least Grebe (*Tachybaptus dominicus*) - TO

**Pied-billed Grebe** (*Podilymbus podiceps*) – TO; uncommon on either island; one at Hilton ponds

### TROPICBIRDS

Red-billed Tropicbird (*Phaethon aethurus*) Little Tobago – LT; superb views

### PELICANS

Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) - TO

### GANNETS & BOOBIES

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

Brown Booby (*Sula Leucogaster*) - LT

### ANHINGAS

Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*) – TO; numerous at the Hilton ponds

### FRIGATEBIRDS

Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*) - TO,LT,TR

### HERONS, EGRETS, & BITTERNS

Cocoi Heron [White-necked Heron] (*A. cocoi*) – TR; one at the Aripo agricultural station

Great Egret (*A. alba*) – TO,TR

Tricolored Heron (*E. tricolor*) – TO,TR

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

**Little Egret** (*Egretta garzetta*) – TO; one at the Hilton ponds; a regular rarity in the area

Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*) - TR

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) – TO,TR

Striated Heron (*B. striatus*) – TR

Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*) - TO

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

Pinnated Bittern (*Botaurus pinnatus*) – TR; one stood with its head and neck showing in the Caroni rice fields,

### IBISES AND SPOONBILLS

Scarlet Ibis (*Eudocimus ruber*) – TR; hundreds and hundreds of these brilliant ibises

### DUCKS, GEESE & SWANS

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

White-cheeked Pintail (*Anas bahamensis*) – TO; we were lucky to see a couple of these very striking ducks at Bon Accord

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

**Green-winged Teal** (*A. crecca*) – TO; at Bon Accord ponds, this duck is a rarity here

**Ring-necked Duck** (*Aythya collaris*) – TO; rare, but seen here the last few trips

### NEW WORLD VULTURES

Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*) - TR

Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*) - TR

### OSPREY

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) – TO,TR

### HAWKS, EAGLES & KITES

Pearl Kite (*Gampsonyx swainsoni*) – TR; good scope view of this tiny raptor as it perched in a large tree near the Nariva mangroves

White Hawk (*Leucopternis albicollis*) – TR; some had a close view from the veranda; more distant views from the road below AWNC

Common Black-Hawk (*Buteogallus anthracinus*) - TR

Savanna Hawk (*Heterospizias meridionalis*) – TR; a truly beautiful, cinnamon brown hawk  
Gray Hawk (*Asturina nitida*) - TR  
Broad-winged Hawk (*B. platypterus*) – TR; one perched for nice scope views  
Short-tailed Hawk (*B. brachyururs*) – TR; soaring over the entrance road  
Zone-tailed Hawk (*Buteo albonotatus*) - TR  
**Black Hawk-Eagle** (*Spizaetus tyrannus*) – TR; a lucky find, one soared over at one of the higher points along Blanchisseuse Rd.  
Ornate Hawk-Eagle (*Spizaetus ornatus*) – TR; a brilliant view one perched below the AWNC veranda; a distant view of a pair soaring at one of the higher points along Blanchisseuse Rd.

#### **CARACARAS & FALCONS**

Yellow-headed Caracara (*Milvago chimachima*) – TR; the best view was one we scoped at Waller Field, as it sat atop a tree just before sunset  
Merlin (*Falco columbarius*) – TO,TR  
**Bat Falcon** (*Falco Rufigularis*) – TR; This diminutive falcon is a scarce species on the islands; we scoped a pair along the AWNC entrance road  
Peregrine Falcon (*F. peregrinus*) - TR

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

Rufous-vented Chachalaca (*Ortalis ruficauda*) - TO; easy to see, and even easier to hear  
**Trinidad Piping-Guan** (*Pipile pipile*) – [endemic] – TR. The group was very lucky to have a chance to see this endemic bird (the only endemic in TT!), near the cell tower station off the Blanchisseuse Rd. It was a lifer for Bob, too, who had been to Trinidad six times.

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

Purple Gallinule (*Porphyryla martinica*) – TO,TR  
Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropous*) - TP

#### **JACANAS**

Wattled Jacana (*Jacana jacana*) – TO,TR

#### **PLOVERS & LAPWINGS**

Southern Lapwing (*Vanellus chilensis*) – TO,TR; we saw lots of these very large and stately plovers  
**American Golden-Plover** (*Pluvialis dominica*) – TO; a regular migrant here, but one which rarely over-winters, so it was unusual to see on in December

**Black-bellied Plover** (*Pluvialis squatarola*) - TO

#### **SANDPIPERS & ALLIES**

Short-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus griseus*) - TR  
Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*) - TO  
Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*) - TO  
Lesser Yellowlegs (*T. flavipes*) - TO  
Solitary Sandpiper (*T. solitaria*) - TO  
Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularis*) – TO,TR  
Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) - TO  
Semipalmated Sandpiper (*Calidris pusilla*) - TR  
Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*) - TR

#### **GULLS & TERNS**

**Large-billed/Yellow-billed Tern** (*Sterna superciliaris*) – TR; one flying back and forth over the Trincity ponds; an unexpected species so far inland

#### **PIGEONS & DOVES**

Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*) - TR  
Scaled Pigeon (*C. speciosa*) - TR  
Pale-vented Pigeon (*Columba cayennensis*) - TR  
Eared Dove (*Zenaida auricularis*) – TO,TR  
Ruddy Ground-Dove (*Columbina talpacoti*) – TO,TR  
White-tipped Dove (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – TO; casually walking the drive at Cuffie Retreat  
Gray-fronted Dove (*L. rufaxilla*) – TR; seen best near the AWNC fruit feeders in the morning

## **PARROTS, MACAWS & ALLIES**

Red-bellied Macaw (*Ara manilata*) – TR; terrific scope views of macaws eating Moriche palm fruits, just before they disappeared to roost for the night in the palms

Green-rumped Parrotlet (*Forpus passerinus*) – TR; scoped near the Nariva mangroves

Lilac-rumped Parrotlet (*Touit batavica*) – TR; a pair scoped near an arboreal termite nest, in which they might well have been excavating a nest burrow; lucky to see so well

Blue-headed Parrot (*Pionus menstruus*) – TR; Eugenia and Guillaume had great scope views of a pair that perched near the veranda during a rain shower; also seen flying in the distance along Blanchisseuse Rd.

Orange-winged Parrot (*A. amazonica*) – TO,TR; the common large parrots of the tour, which made quite a racket in the morning and evening on Tobago

## **CUCKOOS & ANIS**

Squirrel Cuckoo (*Piaya cayana*) – TR; good views of one in the trees at our Arena picnic stop

Little Cuckoo (*Piaya minuta*) – TR; perched close by almost at eye level!

Smooth-billed Ani (*Crotophaga ani*) – TO,TR

Striped Cuckoo (*Tapera naevia*) – TR; scoped at length as it called from a tree branch

## **TYPICAL OWLS**

Tropical Screech-Owl (*Otus choliba*) – TR; seen at night at Waller Field

Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl (*Glaucidium brasilianum*) – TR; heard daily

## **OILBIRD**

Oilbird (*Steatornis caripensis*) – TR; wonderful views at AWNC's Dunstan Cave

## **POTOOS**

Common Potoo (*Nyctibius griseus*) – TR; This large nocturnal bird was scoped by day on the AWNC grounds where it mimicked a branch; and at night at Waller Field.

## **NIGHTHAWKS & NIGHTJARS**

Pauraque (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) – TR; excellent looks at Waller Field at night

White-tailed Nightjar (*Caprimulgus cayennensis*) – TO,TR; an amazing view the first night on Tobago, as one perched on a twig about forty feet from the dinner table

## **SWIFTS**

Band-rumped Swift (*Chaetura spinicauda*) - TR

Gray-rumped Swift (*Chaetura cinereiventris*) - TR

Short-tailed Swift (*Chaetura brachyura*) - TO

Fork-tailed [Neotropical] Palm-Swift (*Tachornis squamata/Reinarda squamata*) – TR. Zipping around with its long tail feathers held together in fine point, palm-swifts were seen mostly around the Moriche Palms at Waller Field; a few at Aripo agricultural station.

## **HUMMINGBIRDS**

Rufous-breasted Hermit (*Glaucis hirsuta*) – TO,TR; not holding still for very long

Green Hermit (*Phaethornis guy*) – TR; wonderful views of these large, long-tailed hermits hovering as the fed from flowering gingers at AWNC

Little Hermit (*Phaethornis longuemareus*) - TR

**White-tailed Sabrewing** (*Campylopterus ensipennis*) – TO; the Holy Grail bird of Gilpin Trace

White-necked Jacobin (*Florisuga mellivora*) – TO,TR; beautiful males up close at AWNC

Green-throated Mango (*Anthracothorax viridugula*) – TR; a brief view in the Caroni mangroves

Black-throated Mango (*Anthracothorax nigricollis*) – TR; a female at AWNC briefly

Tufted Coquette (*Lophornis ornata*) – TR; with patience, most at last saw the fancy male coquette!

Blue-chinned Sapphire (*Chlorostilbon notatus/Chlorestes notatus*) – TR; jewel-like, at the veranda

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

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

## **TROGONS**

White-tailed Trogon (*Trogon viridis*) – TR; scoped nicely along Blanchisseuse Rd.

Violaceous Trogon (*T. violaceus*) – TR; several very good views of this small trogon

Collared Trogon (*T. collaris*) – TO,TR; the best view was a male right along the road on Tobago

## **KINGFISHERS**

Green Kingfisher (*Chloroceryle americana*) – TO; at a tiny pond along the Gilpin Trace, right near a White-tailed Sabrewing

American Pygmy Kingfisher (*Chloroceryle aenea*) – TR; in the Nariva mangroves

## **MOTMOTS**

Blue-crowned Motmot (*Motmotus momota*) – TO,TR; many great views on both islands of this incredibly exotic looking species

## **JACAMARS**

Rufous-tailed Jacamar (*Galbula ruficauda*) – TO,TR; seen best on Tobago, where we had terrific scope views at several places

## **TOUCANS**

Channel-billed Toucan (*Ramphastos vitellinus*) – TR; seen from the veranda and along Blanchisseuse Rd.

## **WOODPECKERS**

Red-crowned Woodpecker (*Melanerpes rubricapillus*) - TO

Red-rumped Woodpecker (*Veniliornis kirkii*) - TO

Golden-olive Woodpecker (*Piculus rubiginosus*) – TO,TR; a beautiful woodpecker, seen wonderfully at the start of the Gilpin Trace on Tobago

Chestnut Woodpecker (*Celeus elegans*) – TR; a lovely bird, seen by most of the group when it visited the fruit trays by the AWC veranda

Lineated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus lineatus*) - TR; first seen from the veranda

Crimson-crested Woodpecker (*Campephilus melanoleucos*) – TR; heard

## **OVENBIRDS**

Stripe-breasted Spinetail (*Synallaxis cinnamomea*) – TO,TR; a pair came in to their enormous stick nest above the Grafton Estate trail on Tobago

Yellow-chinned Spinetail (*Certhiaxis cinnamomea*) - TR

Streaked Xenops (*Xenops rutilans*) – TR; good views of this often hard to see furnariid

Gray-throated Leaf-tosser (*Sclerurus albigularis*) – TR; Dave called one in for an amazing view

## **WOODCREEPERS**

Plain-brown Woodcreeper (*Dendrocincla fuliginosa*) – TR; seen twice near ant swarms

Olivaceous Woodcreeper (*Sittasomus griseicapillus*) – TO; nice views of this Tobago-only species

Cocoa (Buff-throated) Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus susurrans*) – TO,TR; seen well several times

## **TYPICAL ANTBIRDS**

Great Antshrike (*Taraba major*) – TR; this big antshrike was an occasional visitor to the fruit trays

Black-crested Antshrike (*Sakesphorus canadensis*) – TR; terrific looks near Waller Field at this very strikingly marked antshrike

Barred Antshrike (*Thamnophilus doliatus*) – TO,TR; many nice views of zebra-striped males

Plain Antwren (*Dysithamnus mentalis*) – TO; in the vines right next to Gilpin Trace

White-flanked Antwren (*Myrmotherula axillaris*) - TR

White-fringed Antwren (*Formicivora grisea*) - TO

Silvered Antbird (*Sclateria naevia*) – TR; a pair in the Nariva mangroves

White-bellied Antbird (*Myrmeciza longipes*) – TR; nice views of this secretive antbird

## **ANTTHRUSHES & ANTPITTAS**

Black-faced Antthrush (*Formicarius analis*) – TR; strutting slowly along the shady forest floor

## **COTINGAS**

Bearded Bellbird (*Procnias averano*) – TR; one of the most memorable birds of the tour!

## **MANAKINS**

White-bearded Manakin (*Manacus manacus*) – TR; seen quite a few times around AWC

Blue-backed Manakin (*Chiroxiphia lanceolata*) – TO; a gorgeous manakin with iridescent blue back and velvety red cap, we were lucky to see several extremely well along the Gilpin Trace

Golden-headed Manakin (*Pipra erythrocephala*) – TR

## TYRANT FLYCATCHERS

- Southern Beardless-Tyrannulet (*Camptostoma obsoletum*) - TR  
Forest Elaenia (*Myiopagis gaimardii*) - TR  
Yellow-bellied Elaenia (*Elaenia flavogaster*) – TO,TR  
Ochre-bellied Flycatcher (*Mionectes oleagineus*) – TR  
**Olive-striped Flycatcher** (*Mionectes olivaceus*) – TR; a very infrequently encountered species  
Slaty-capped Flycatcher (*Leptopogon superciliaris*) – TR  
Yellow-olive Flycatcher (*Tolmomyias sulphurescens*) – TR; uncommon around AWNC  
Yellow-breasted Flycatcher (*Tolmomyias flaviventris*) – TO,TR  
Fuscous Flycatcher (*Cnemotriccus fuscatus*) - TO  
Euler's Flycatcher (*Lathotricus euleri*) - TR  
Tropical Pewee (*C. cinereus*) - TR  
Pied Water-Tyrant (*Fluvicola pica*) – TR; a nifty black and white flycatcher, easy to see  
White-headed Marsh-Tyrant (*Arundinicola leucocephala*) – TR; ditto  
Bright-rumped Attila (*Attila spadiceus*) – TR; heard  
Brown-crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus tyrannulus*) - TO  
Great Kiskadee (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) – TR; their loud calls rang out near the veranda, and they were early visitors to the fruit feeders  
Boat-billed Flycatcher (*Megarynchus pitangua*) – TR; like a large billed kiskadee  
Streaked Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes maculatus*) - TR  
Sulphury Flycatcher (*Tyrannopsis sulphurea*) – TR; in the Waller Field Moriche palms  
Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – TO,TR  
Gray Kingbird (*T. dominicensis*) – TO  
Black-tailed Tityra (*Tityra cayana*) – TR; a pair perched up for a good view

## VIREOS & ALLIES

- Scrub Greenlet (*Hylophilus flavipes*) - TO  
Golden-fronted Greenlet (*Hylophilus aurantiifrons*) - TR  
Rufous-browed Peppershrike (*Cyclarhis gujanensis*) – TR; frequently heard, infrequently seen, we got some nice views of this tree top singer

## SWALLOWS

- Gray-breasted Martin (*P. Chalybea*) - TR  
White-winged Swallow (*Tachycineta albiventer*) – TR; very flashy little swallows at Aripo  
Southern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) - TR

## WRENS

- Rufous-breasted Wren (*Thryothorus rutilus*) – TO,TR; seen well along the Gilpin Trace; its beautiful song was a daily pleasure, although the wrens were generally unseen  
House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*) – TO,TR

## MOCKINGBIRDS & THRASHERS

- Tropical Mockingbird (*Mimus gilvus*) – TO,TR

## THRUSHES

- Yellow-legged Thrush (*Platycichla flavipes*) – TR; a tough bird to find, we saw a male and female feeding high in the canopy  
Cocoa Thrush (*Turdus fumigatus*) - TR  
Bare-eyed Thrush (*T. nudigenis*) – TO,TR; its bold tawny eye-ring gave it a very distinctive look  
White-necked Thrush (*T. albicollis*) – TO,TR; incredible views along the Gilpin Trace

## GNATCATCHERS

- Long-billed Gnatwren (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) – TR; often heard, we finally saw one very nicely in a mixed flock near Arena Forest

## **NEW WORLD WARBLERS**

Tropical Parula (*Parula pitiayumi*) – TR; Carl and Roodal saw one  
Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*) – TO,TR  
American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – TR; a female along the Blanchisseuse Rd.  
Prothonotary Warbler (*Protonotaria citrea*) - TO  
Masked Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis aequinoctialis*) – TR; seen well, along the road to Sangre Grande  
Northern Waterthrush (*Seiurus noveboracensis*) – TO,TR  
Golden-crowned Warbler (*Basileuterus culicivorus*) – TR; seen by Eugenia and Guillaume

## **BANAQUIT**

Bananaquit (*Coereba flaveola*) - TO,TR

## **TANAGERS, HONEYCREEPERS & ALLIES**

Bicolored Conebill (*Conirostrum bicolor*) – TR; at close range in the mangroves  
White-lined Tanager (*T. rufus*) – TO,TR; black males and rufous females  
Red-crowned Ant-Tanager (*Habia rubica*) - TR  
Silver-beaked Tanager (*Ramphocelus carbo*) – TR; velvety plumage and a glistening bill  
Blue-gray Tanager (*Thraupis episcopus*) – TO,TR; beautiful shades of pale blue  
Palm Tanager (*T. palmarum*) – TO,TR  
Trinidad Euphonia (*Euphonia trinitatis*) - TR  
Violaceous Euphonia (*Euphonia violacea*) - TR  
Turquoise Tanager (*Tangara mexicana*) – TR; one of the spiffiest birds of the entire tour  
Speckled Tanager (*Tangara guttata*) – TR; in the higher elevations  
Bay-headed Tanager (*Tangara gyrola*) – TR; a tiny gem of a tanager  
Blue Dacnis (*Dacnis cayana*) – TR; dazzling  
Green Honeycreeper (*Chlorophanes spiza*) – TR; brilliant, iridescent males; lime colored females  
Purple Honeycreeper (*Cyanerpes caeruleus*) – TR; the yellow legs and grape colored body seemed almost too bright to be real

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

Blue-black Grassquit (*Volatinia jacarina*) - TR  
Ruddy-breasted Seedeater (*Sporophila minuta*) – TR; a lucky sighting of a scarce bird  
Black-faced Grassquit (*Tiaris bicolor*) - TO  
Sooty Grassquit (*Tiaris fuliginosa*) – TR; perched, singing, a nice view of a very local species  
**Grassland Yellow-Finch** (*Sicalis luteola*) – TR; great looks at a recent arrival on Trinidad  
Red-capped Cardinal (*Paroaria gularis*) – TR; a wonderful surprise, this pretty bird was actually where it was supposed to be for one

## **SALTATORS, CARDINALS & ALLIES**

Grayish Saltator (*Saltator coerulescens*) - TR

## **BLACKBIRDS, ORIOLES & ALLIES**

Yellow-hooded Blackbird (*Agelaius icterocephalus*) – TR; in the Nariva marsh  
Red-breasted Blackbird (*Sturnella militaris/Leistes militaris*) – TR; brilliant, crimson breasts  
Carib Grackle (*Quiscalus lugubris*) – TO,TR  
Shiny Cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*) - TR  
Yellow Oriole (*Icterus nigrogularis*) – TR; a bright flash of yellow, seen several places  
Yellow-rumped Cacique (*Cacicus cela*) - TR  
Crested Oropendola (*Psarocolius decumanus*) – TO,TR; magnificent visitors to the fruit trays

### **Mammals**

Red-rumped Agouti (*Dasyprocta agouti*) – TR; early morning visitors near the veranda  
Red-tailed Squirrel (*Sciurus granatensis*) – TO,TR  
Silky Anteater (*Cyclopes didactylus*) – TR; curled up on its day roost in the mangroves  
White-lined Sac-winged Bat – TO,TR; the small day-time bat in the forest  
Fruit-eating bat sp. – TR; at the Asa Wright fruit trays each morning

### **Herps**

Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) – TO; a brief sighting from the Little Tobago overlook  
House Gecko (*Hemidactylus frenatus*) – TO,TR  
Golden Tegu (*Tupinambis teguixin*) – TR; the big, golden lizards on the Asa Wright grounds  
Common Ground Lizard (*Ameiva ameiva*) – TO,TR; common on Tobago  
Richard's Anole/Gumangola (*Anolis richardii*) – TO; a big, arboreal anole on Tobago  
Cook's Tree Boa (*Corallus hortulanus cookii*) – TR; overhanging the passage through the mangroves, curled around a branch  
Horsewhip/Vine Snake (*Oxybelis aeneus*) – TO; seen from the Hilton mangrove boardwalk  
Couess Grass Snake/Grass Machete (*Mastigodryas boddarti*) – TO,TR; the small, brown snakes  
Crapaud/Cane Toad (*Bufo marinus*) - TO  
Yellow-throated Frog (*Mannophryne trinitatis*) - TR; a tiny Dendrobatid or “arrow poison” type frog, seen in the wet crossings along the Guacharo Trail

### **Invertebrates**

Tree Crab  
Land Crab  
Caligo Butterfly  
Blue Morpho (butterfly) – enormous, neon blue, fluttery erratically by  
Cattle-heart Butterfly  
Postman Butterfly  
Tiger-stripe Butterfly  
Army Ants  
Leafcutter Ants