



Caligo Ventures Guides in Trinidad and Tobago

EXPERT LOCAL BIRDING AND PHOTOGRAPHY GUIDES

Caligo Ventures' tours and Independent Birding Ventures feature time with some of the very best birding and photography guides in Trinidad and Tobago. Experienced, multi-talented, and engaging, we know you will enjoy spending time with them and sharing their expertise! Our guide services in Trinidad are coordinated by Lester Nanan and on Tobago by Jason Radix.

Top-notch by any world standards, these highly experienced and trained professional birding guides, naturalists, and capable drivers will guide you on field trips to Caroni Marsh, Nariva Swamp, Aripo Savannah, Blanchisseuse Road/Northern Range, and Grande Riviere in Trinidad. In Grand Riviere, our experienced guide helps you find Trinidad Piping-guan and more. In Tobago, guides interpret at Gilpin Trace/Forest Reserve, Little Tobago Island, and on trails at Cuffie River Nature Resort and other sites around the island.

We are so proud to associate with this great group of talented individuals, who deliver expertise and enthusiasm for Trinidad and Tobago birding with every visit.



Faraaz Abdool – Photography and Birding Guide

Faraaz Abdool is an internationally-recognized wildlife photographer and author specializing in birds. He has a keen commitment to conservation and the issues wildlife and birds face worldwide. He is a member of the T&T Birds Status and Distribution Committee (formerly the T&T Rare Birds Committee), and has been leading birding trips on both islands since 2013. Faraaz also co-manages Learn-the-Birds, a community-based website promoting education and the development of birding and bird conservation around the world. In 2020 he authored the book *Casual Birding in Trinidad and Tobago*. Faraaz coordinates photography tours for Caligo Ventures group and independent clients and has been integral in our scouting efforts for programs in 2022.



Allister (Lester) Nanan – Program Coordinator and Guide, Trinidad

For many years Lester has led all Caligo's Caroni Bird Sanctuary tours on spectacular boat rides to witness the spectacle of Scarlet Ibises that roost each night. He has a tradition of excellence. He has recently expanded his role with us to coordinate the various activities of our new Trinidad tours. He is the CEO of Nanan's Caroni Bird Sanctuary Tours, his family business, and chair of the Nanan family's Scientific Trust. Lester's respected connections with other businesses and professionals have opened up new opportunities for future Caligo Ventures visitors.

Lester comes from a family of conservationists which started their movement in 1930 when his grandfather, Oudit Nanan, petitioned the government to save the Scarlet Ibis when they were being hunted in the Caroni Swamp for their feathers and flesh. The area became a protected National Park in 1948 and is named for his father, Winston Nanan. Lester carries on this important legacy and is highly regarded for his work to develop sustainable ecotourism in Trinidad. In 2018, he worked together with the EMA (Environmental Management Authority) drafting policies for the Scarlet Ibis to become an environmental sensitive species which was successful. He continues to work hard making sure the Caroni Bird Sanctuary becomes an environmentally sensitive area so that every species that visits the swamp will be protected.



Jason Radix – Program Coordinator and Guide, Tobago

Jason Radix is an experienced, professional, and knowledgeable certified guide with 30 years in the eco-tourism industry. He currently serves as Caligo Venture's coordinator of all activities on Tobago, where he and his family reside. A former senior guide with the renowned Asa Wright Nature Centre, he has also managed hotel programs and taught courses in ecotourism and guiding for many years to aspiring island residents. He is passionate about the natural environment and is an excellent communicator, able to effectively feature the island's many wildlife attractions, especially its native bird life. He is committed to providing a favorable all-round tour experience during every outing, with all of the Caligo Ventures guides



Charan Ramdass – Nature, Culture and Birding Guide, Trinidad

Charan Ramdass is a knowledgeable and patient guide, keen to share the intricate wonders of Trinidad's nature, history and culture. He guided tours for many years for the Asa Wright Nature Centre as part of the guide team there. He is involved with the community of Arima and his extended family. Charan is interested in both the natural and cultural heritage of Trinidad. He keeps the birds well-fed at his Verdant Vale (Temple Village) home on the road to Blanchisseuse and has an impressive list including many of the island's hummingbirds. On owner Peg Abbott's first visit to the Trinidad after taking on the task of managing Caligo Ventures, Charan greeted her and showed off a Spectacled Owl close to his home in Verdant Vale.



Mukesh Ramdass – Nature and Birding Guide, Plant Expertise

Mukesh has worked as a guide for more than 25 years, training with some of the best bird guides in Trinidad and Tobago. In addition to his great knowledge of birds, butterflies and other wildlife, Mukesh has developed a deep knowledge about native plants and those that attract birds, and previously managed all landscaping around the Asa Wright Nature Centre wildlife trust. He works as a freelancer, designing and implementing plantings for birds for a variety of properties. Certified as a guide from the THTI and an Honorary Game Warden, he leads birding and photography trips on both islands. Mukesh has interned at the Aullwood Audubon Center and Farm (Ohio) and with the Delaware Nature Society, and has also birded in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.



David Ramlal – Senior Birding Guide, Trinidad

David grew up close to nature in Trinidad's northern range. He continues to live in Verdant Vale, also known as Temple Village, just down the road from the Asa Wright Nature Centre. From the time he was six years old, David assisted his father, Roodal, with conservation science - taking birds out of mist nets and banding at the William Beebe Tropical Research Station. David assisted with making numerous sound recordings for the birds of Trinidad, and has surveyed bat and Oilbird caves across

the island. When not guiding, he enjoys long walks afield in search of new bird data or sightings. He has traveled to the USA to represent the Centre at USA-based birding festivals. Mentored by Richard French, author of the *Guide to Birds of Trinidad and Tobago*, he has continued to develop and refine his birding identification skills and can help you do the same.



Mahese Ramlal – Senior Birding Guide, Trinidad

Mahese started an intense natural history and birding career from his youth. He has a passion for birds and education, and a talent for finding and sharing birds with guests. He is an excellent all-around naturalist as well as keen birder, and has connections with local landowners, being a farmer on the side himself. He has worked with research teams, field biologists, film crews, and visitors from around the world. He has worked as a local guide for all the major birding companies of Canada (where he has family), the UK, and USA. Quick with his camera and knowledgeable in the art of digiscoping, Mahese captures and shares his images from the field and his yard in Verdant Vale where he tends active bird feeders, colorful plantings and a nature trail.

LODGE AND ACTIVITY GUIDES:

Nicholas Alexander – Grand Riviere

Nicholas is the lead birding guide for Caligo Ventures in the Grande Riviere area and is an expert in finding Trinidad Piping Guan (Pawi), at the Pawi Nature Reserve in Grande Riviere. In addition, as the public relations officer for the Grande Riviere Nature Tour Guides Association, Nicholas shares details of sea turtle nesting season and the work of the Turtle Village Trust, which operates a small turtle rearing facility called Turtle Head Start, adjacent to the Mt. Plaisir Estate Hotel.



Zeloni “Z” Frank – Little Tobago Island and Tobago Birding

Running Frank’s Glass Bottom Boat Tours from Blue Waters Inn to Little Tobago, Z provides access and commentary on the large breeding colonies of Brown and Red-footed Booby, Red-tailed Tropicbird and other seabirds found on the offshore islands. Z’s father Wordsworth started the business, continues to share his expertise, and also runs the popular Bird Watcher’s Restaurant in Speyside. Zee is out birding a lot, he knows his “patch” at outer tip of the island so well, even finding Stiped Owl on several occasions.



Desmond Wright – Cuffie River Nature Retreat

Truly expert resident naturalist Desmond has an amazing ear and repertoire of bird calls. Specializing on the birds in the lands on and adjacent to Cuffie River Nature Retreat, he also takes our guests to special locations across Tobago. He is a patient instructor with a very keen eye. When he isn’t guiding for Regina Dumas at Cuffie River Nature Retreat, he is running his farm operations. Desmond is also a Foreman for the Tobago House of Assembly.





Rachel Lee – Photography Guide Trinidad and Tobago

Originally from the UK, photographer and designer Rachel Lee Young has lived in Trinidad and Tobago for more than 20 years where she has been developing her passion for nature and photography, in particular, hummingbirds. She has been leading photography workshops for more than 10 years and working closely with leading nature photographers. She loves to share her knowledge and love for the beauty that

surrounds us here in T&T. Over the last years, Rachel has been developing her own suburban garden as a pollinator garden and wildlife haven and has already recorded 9 different hummingbird species there along with many other birds, butterflies and reptiles. Rachel has been recently developing a brand “The Land of the Hummingbird” which celebrates hummingbirds through the use of surface designs created using her hummingbird photography for fashions, art, homewares and gifts.