

# Trinidad & Tobago: Incredible Birds & Wildlife | Species List February 23 – March 3, 2024 | with Naturalist Journeys



**Compiled by tour host Stephen Grace with local guides Dave Ramlal, Lester Nanan and Mukesh Ramdass on Trinidad; Jason Radix and Desmond Wright on Tobago and Zolani Frank on Little Tobago Island. Our nine wonderful guests were David, Jan, Anthony, Susan, Chris, Jeanne, Nora, Diane and Roger.**

Based at three world-class ecolodges—Hacienda Jacana, Asa Wright and Cuffie River Nature Retreat—this tour featured some of the planet’s most spectacular birdlife. Scarlet Ibis flying in by the thousands to roost at Caroni Swamp, streaking like flames across the sky at dusk, created an unforgettable memory. Hearing the call of the Bearded Bellbird, like a hammer striking an anvil, reverberating through the rainforest at Asa Wright, and viewing the mysterious Oilbirds illuminated by a red light in Dunstan Cave, will stay with travelers for a lifetime. We saw 15 endemic and critically endangered Trinidad Piping-Guan. Hummingbirds were another highlight. The Ruby-topaz was an absolute stunner, and watching the gemlike Blue-chinned Sapphire, the handsome White-necked Jacobin and the busy little Tufted Coquette that seemed more like a bumblebee than a bird, provided endless delight. Tanagers seemed to come in every color scheme conceivable. Learning about the diversity of other families like flycatchers, ovenbirds and antbirds was fascinating for our group. Trogons, manakins, toucans: it’s hard to imagine a better introduction to the avian wonders of the neotropics than this tour. And guests who had already done some neotropical birding added many life birds to their lists. Combine the rich natural history of this tiny region (smaller than the state of Delaware) with the kindness and warmth of the people of Trinidad and Tobago, the expertise of talented local guides and one delicious meal after another, and you have the perfect birding tour.

**(I) = Introduced (E) = Endemic**

**BIRDS 208 species were recorded, of which two were endemic, and two were introduced species.**

**Family or Species, Common Name, Scientific Name**

## **TINAMOUS: Tinamidae (1)**

**Little Tinamou** *Crypturellus soui*— This elusive bird was clearly heard by our group but never seen.

## **DUCKS, GEESE, AND SWANS: Anatidae (5)**

**Black-bellied Whistling-Duck** *Dendrocygna autumnalis*—A few dozen of these handsome ducks were observed at Bon Accord Sewage Treatment Ponds and Centre Street Ponds (also called Canaan Ponds).

**Blue-winged Teal** *Spatula discors*— Several observed at Bon Accord.

**White-cheeked Pintail** *Anas bahamensis*— Also observed at Bon Accord.

**Ring-necked Duck** *Aythya collaris* —Three females observed at Centre Street Ponds. Identified by Tobago guide Jason Radix at Centre Street Ponds. Categorized by eBird as rare for this date and region.

**Lesser Scaup** *Aythya affinis*— Identified by Tobago guide Jason Radix at Centre Street Ponds. Categorized by eBird as rare for this date and region.

## **GUANS AND CHACHALACAS: Cracidae (2)**

**Rufous-vented Chachalaca** *Ortalis ruficauda*—One of Trinidad and Tobago’s national birds, along with the Scarlet Ibis. Our first sighting was a fleeting glimpse at Bon Accord Sewage Treatment Ponds, but at Cuffie River Nature Retreat, these birds served as our alarm clock and seemed to be everywhere. Their *cocrico* call (local people call this bird Cocrico) woke us up each morning, and we had good looks at their rufous vents as these loud, social, turkey-sized birds moved between branches in the trees.

**Trinidad Piping-Guan** *Pipile pipile* (E)—Our phenomenally talented local guide, Dave Ramlal, found Trinidad Piping-Guan for our group at Grand Riviere. Spotting just one of these endemic and critically endangered birds would have been remarkable--we saw 14 Trinidad Piping-Guans at Grand Riviere, not far from where leatherback sea turtles lay their eggs on the beach. We also saw a Trinidad Piping-Guan on Blanchisseuse Road while looking for trogons.

### **FLAMINGOS: Phoenicopteridae (1)**

**American Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus ruber*—A hundred or more seen during our Caroni Swamp boat tour. This species is a relatively recent arrival at Caroni, but they seem to be sticking around. Jan spotted pink birds on our flight into Trinidad just before we landed at Port of Spain to begin our tour. From talking with local guides, we realized the birds were American Flamingos, not Scarlet Ibis, as we had suspected. Flamingos are commonly seen from airplanes landing at Port of Spain. I saw them from the air when I flew from Tobago back to Trinidad.

### **GREBES: Podicipedidae (1)**

**Least Grebe** *Tachybaptus dominicus*— The smallest grebe species, with mesmerizing yellow eyes. Observed at Bon Accord Sewage Treatment Ponds and Centre Street Ponds.

### **PIGEONS AND DOVES: Columbidae (7)**

**Rock Pigeon** *Columba livia* (I)—Seen several times in developed areas of Trinidad.

**Pale-vented Pigeon** *Patagioenas cayennensis*—Seen often in Tobago, and its call became familiar to our group.

**Scaled Pigeon** *Patagioenas speciosa*— Seen briefly in flight on two days.

**Ruddy Ground-Dove** *Columbina talpacoti*— Common, observed multiple times in several locations.

**White-tipped Dove** *Leptotila verreauxi*— Also fairly common and seen a couple of times.

**Gray-fronted Dove** *Leptotila rufaxilla*—Observed at Nariva.

**Eared Dove** *Zenaida auriculata*— Observed in Tobago.

### **CUCKOOS: Cuculidae (2)**

**Smooth-billed Ani** *Crotophaga ani*— Common and observed many times. We had fun watching groups of this big, black gregarious cuckoo.

**Striped Cuckoo** *Tapera naevia*— Heard clearly for several minutes at Nariva but we didn’t get a look at the bird.

### **NIGHTJARS: Caprimulgidae (2)**

**Common Pauraque** *Nyctidromus albicollis*— Several seen well on a night walk on the old tarmac at the decommissioned US Waller Air Force Base on Trinidad.

**White-tailed Nightjar** *Hydropsalis cayennensis*— A few also observed on the night walk at Waller.

### **POTOOS: Nyctibiidae (1)**

**Common Potoo** *Nyctibius griseus*— Observed during our Caroni Swamp boat tour in daylight and in the dark with a spotlight. Local guide Lester Nanan used his remarkable skills to identify what looked like extensions of trees as these cryptic birds roosted on stumps and branches.

### **OILBIRDS: Steatornithidae (1)**

**Oilbird** *Steatornis caripensis*— A highlight of the tour. These nocturnal frugivores that use echolocation to navigate in the night were seen well in Dunston Cave at Asa Wright with the expert guidance of Mukesh. Their vocalizations echoing in the cave were eerie.

### **SWIFTS: Apodidae (3)**

**Band-rumped Swift** *Chaetura spinicaudus*—Seen chasing Common Black Hawks from a viewpoint along Blanchisseuse Road.

**Short-tailed Swift** *Chaetura brachyura*— The distinctive silhouette of this bird with its short tail and pinched wings was seen just after dawn while looking for Trinidad Piping-Guan at Grand Riviere.

**Fork-tailed Palm Swift** *Tachornis squamata*—Observed while birding near the Gulf of Paria.

### **HUMMINGBIRDS: Trochilidae (14)**

**White-necked Jacobin** *Florisuga mellivora*— Conspicuous and gorgeous, seen most days.

**Rufous-breasted Hermit** *Glaucis hirsutus*— Seen several times in Trinidad and Tobago. Nests with eggs observed at Tobago's Gilpin Trace train in the Main Ridge Forest.

**Green Hermit** *Phaethornis guy*— This big hummer was seen several times. Significantly larger than the other two hermits, but with a similar decurved bill that fits nicely in the curved corollas of heliconia.

**Little Hermit** *Phaethornis longuemareus*— Observed a few times, seen well with its little masked face at Asa Wright feeders on the veranda.

**Brown Violetear** *Colibri delphinae*— Seen well at Asa Wright feeders on the veranda. Body is a dull brown but the purple "ears" pop with color.

**Ruby-topaz Hummingbird** *Chrysolampis mosquitus*— A fan favorite. One of the most eye-catching hummers in the neotropics. Seen very well in morning light at Hacienda Jacana. Also, stunning views at Asa Wright and Cuffie River. Several gorgeous photos of this species were taken by guests throughout the tour.

**Black-throated Mango** *Anthracothorax nigricollis*—Nest found by our group at Cuffie River Nature Retreat. Males and females seen several times throughout the tour.

**Green-throated Mango** *Anthracothorax viridigula*— Much less common than Black-throated Mango. Observed at the feeders at Yerette.

**Tufted Coquette** *Lophornis ornatus*— A real cutie. Never visits feeders because it's too small and gets bullied by bigger hummers. Seen many times nectaring on purple vervain flowers. Tricky to see well and to photograph because it moves so quickly from flower to flower—more like a bumblebee than a bird.

**Long-billed Starthroat** *Heliomaster longirostris*— Seen well several times. Its gorget is gorgeous when it catches the sun just right.

**White-tailed Sabrewing** *Campylopterus curvipennis*—Lives only on Tobago, seen well in afternoons at the feeders at Cuffie River.

**Copper-rumped Hummingbird** *Saucerottia tobaci*—They are everywhere and always fun to watch with their gorgeous green bodies and their cute white "stockings" that make them easy to separate from other species.

**White-chested Emerald** *Chrysuronia brevirostris*— Seen many times, small and pretty.

**Blue-chinned Sapphire** *Chlorestes notata*—This jaw-droppingly attractive bird shone like a polished gem in the light at Asa Wright when it perched near the feeders. Seen well several times and posed for stunning photos.

### **RAILS, CRAKES, AND ALLIES: Rallidae (4)**

**Gray-cowled Wood-Rail** *Aramides cajaneus*—Seen well at night, illuminated by a light, roosting on a branch on our Caroni Swamp boat tour. Easy to hear but hard to see during the day.

**Sora** *Porzana carolina*—Out in the open for nice views at Bon Accord Sewage Treatment Pond on Tobago.

**Common Gallinule** *Gallinula galeata*—Seen many times on many days.

**Purple Gallinule** *Porphyrio martinica*—Seen many times on many days. One memorable view came when this dark purple bird was wading among lavender-colored flowers.

#### **LIMPKIN: Aramidae (1)**

**Limpkin** *Aramus guarauna*—Observed once—the bird was eating a snail at Nariva.

#### **STILTS AND AVOCETS: Recurvirostridae (1)**

**Black-necked Stilt** *Himantopus mexicanus*— Many dozens observed at Trincity Sewage Treatment Ponds. Also seen on Tobago at Bon Accord Sewage Treatment Ponds.

#### **PLOVERS AND LAPWINGS: Charadriidae (1)**

**Southern Lapwing** *Vanellus chilensis*—Observed many times. These birds caused quite a ruckus when our group unwittingly strayed close to them one evening. These large plovers have spurs on their wings and should not be trifled with, despite their unassuming appearance. Pretty colors on this bird when seen in good light.

#### **JACANAS: Jacanidae (1)**

**Wattled Jacana** *Jacana jacana*—Seemed to be everywhere there was water. The reverse sexual dimorphism of this species is a fascinating evolutionary story, and our group enjoyed watching them “walk on water” with their absolutely enormous feet, which keep them afloat on lily pads and other emergent aquatic vegetation.

#### **SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES: Scolopacidae (9)**

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*—Many seen on mudflats at the Gulf of Paria—with their long, decurved bills, easy to separate from the Willets mixed among them.

**Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*—Seen scurrying like mechanical toys on the beautiful beach at Pigeon Point.

**Semipalmated Sandpiper** *Calidris pusilla*—Observed in a wetland near Caroni.

**Spotted Sandpiper** *Actitis macularius*—Dozens seen in Caroni on logs bobbing their tails and flying ahead of our boat. Also seen in Tobago.

**Solitary Sandpiper** *Tringa solitaria*—Seen well in a ditch at Nariva—our group had a chance to closely study the field marks that distinguish this species from the similar-looking Spotted Sandpiper.

**Stilt Sandpiper** *Calidris himantopus*—Observed by four group members at Trincity Sewage Treatment Pond before the rest of the group arrived.

**Greater Yellowlegs** *Tringa melanoleuca*—Seen well several times.

**Willet** *Tringa semipalmata*—Observed many of these birds mixed among the Whimbrels at the mudflats on the Gulf of Paria.

**Lesser Yellowlegs** *Tringa flavipes*—Seen among Greater Yellowlegs at Bon Accord and Centre Street Ponds on Tobago.

#### **GULLS AND TERNS: Laridae (6)**

**Laughing Gull** *Leucophaeus atricilla*—Common along the coasts of Trinidad and Tobago that we visited.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus*—One immature bird observed perched on a boat’s gunwale among Laughing Gulls at Pigeon Point.

**Large-billed Tern** *Phaetusa simplex*—Seen at Gulf of Paria mudflats. As advertised, it had a very large and conspicuous bill.

**Royal Tern** *Thalasseus maximus*—Seen at Pigeon Point and Fort James.

**Sandwich Tern** *Thalasseus sandvicensis*—Also seen at Pigeon Point.

**Black Skimmer** *Rynchops niger*—Great views of them skimming the surface of the sea at Gulf of Paria.

#### **PETRALS, SHEARWATERS AND FULMARS: Procellariidae (1)**

**Audubon's Shearwater** *Puffinus lherminieri*—These crepuscular birds that hide in burrows by day are hard to see, but our expert Little Tobago guide, Zee, pointed out one nesting in a hollow stump.

#### **TROPICBIRDS: Phaethontidae (1)**

**Red-billed Tropicbird** *Phaethon aethereus*—Absolutely stunning views from the summit of Little Tobago Island of these birds soaring with their white trails streaming behind them. Local guide Zee directed us to a viewpoint where we could observe a nesting parent with a fuzzy chick.

#### **FRIGATEBIRDS: Fregatidae (1)**

**Magnificent Frigatebird** *Fregata magnificens*—These magnificent aerialists were observed chasing Red-billed Tropicbirds and bobbies from the summit of Little Tobago Island. These pirates who make a living stealing fish from other birds were seen several other times through the tour soaring over the sea.

#### **BOOBIES AND GANNETS: Sulidae (2)**

**Brown Booby** *Sula leucogaster*—From the summit of Little Tobago, a few were observed among their many Red-footed cousins.

**Red-footed Booby** *Sula sula*—Countless numbers of these tree-nesting seabirds filled the skies and trees on Little Tobago. A wonderful spectacle. All three morphs were seen.

#### **ANHINGAS: Anhingidae (1)**

**Anhinga** *Anhinga anhinga*—Seen in glorious poses with outstretched wings at Bon Accord Sewage Treatment Ponds and spotted a few other times throughout the tour.

#### **CORMORANTS: Phalacrocoracidae (1)**

**Neotropic Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax brasilianum*—Observed at Nariva and Caroni Swamps.

#### **PELICANS: Pelecanidae (1)**

**Brown Pelican** *Pelecanus occidentalis*—A familiar friend from home seen on coasts of Trinidad and Tobago.

#### **HERONS AND EGRETS: Ardeidae (10)**

**Great Blue Heron** *Ardea herodias*—A familiar friend from home heard screeching and seen flapping like a pterodactyl at Caroni.

**Great Egret** *Ardea alba*—Seen many times, its elegant white plumage visible from great distances.

**Snowy Egret** *Egretta thula*—Seen at Nariva and Caroni.

**Little Blue Heron** *Egretta caerulea*—Seen at Caroni and on Tobago at Bon Accord.

**Tricolored Heron** *Egretta tricolor*—Also seen at Caroni and on Tobago at Bon Accord.

**Western Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis*—Common and seen often.

**Green Heron** *Butorides virescens*—Many seen well out in the open at Bon Accord, including one in a nest in a tree.

**Striated Heron** *Butorides striata*—Subtly different in appearance from its Green Heron cousin, this stealthy hunter was observed stalking the waters at Nariva and Caroni.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax*—Observed at Caroni, and several seen well at Centre Street Ponds on Tobago, including one leucistic bird.

**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** *Nyctanassa violacea*—Observed on Caroni Swamp boat tour.

#### **IBIS AND SPOONBILLS: Threskiornithidae (1)**

**Scarlet Ibis** *Eudocimus ruber*—One of nature's great spectacles occurs when these birds fly in at sunset and dusk in the dozens, hundreds, thousands, to roost in treed islands of Caroni Swamp. We had a front-row seat in a boat and a delicious dinner with rum punch while watching the show.

#### **NEW WORLD VULTURES: Cathartidae (2)**

**Black Vulture** *Coragyps atratus*—Seen every day on Trinidad, sometimes in kettles as hundreds of the birds rode rising thermals. Vultures are strangely absent from Tobago.

**Turkey Vulture** *Cathartes aura*—Commonly seen on Trinidad but absent from the skies over Tobago.

#### **OSPREY: Pandionidae (1)**

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*—One bird observed perched on a tree limb eating a fish at Nariva. Seen hunting at Caroni.

#### **HAWKS, KITES, AND EAGLES: Accipitridae (11)**

**Gray-headed Kite** *Leptodon cayanensis*—Seen flying overhead at Grand Riviere.

**Plumbeous Kite** *Ictinia plumbea*—Seen well on two mornings at Hacienda Jacana.

**Long-winged Harrier** *Circus buffoni*—Some members of our group saw one hunting the fields at the airport when they arrived. One put on a great show at Nariva chasing Western Cattle Egrets.

**Common Black Hawk** *Buteogallus anthracinus*—Seen many times soaring in skies over Trinidad. Aerial acrobatics of three birds were observed from a viewpoint on Blanchisseuse Road.

**Savanna Hawk** *Buteogallus meridionalis*—Excellent views of this species at Nariva Swamp, including one strikingly handsome bird perched close to the road at the apex of a tent, posing for photos against a sky whitened by Sahara dust blowing across the Atlantic.

**Great Black Hawk** *Buteogallus urubitinga*—On Tobago, more common than the Common Black Hawk. Seen perched at Cuffie River and near Blue Waters Inn.

**White Hawk** *Pseudastur albicollis*—Stunning views of this ethereal raptor at Asa Wright glowing in the morning sunlight.

**Gray-lined Hawk** *Buteo nitidus*—Seen soaring while we enjoyed lunch at El Suzanne Rainforest Lodge.

**Broad-winged Hawk** *Buteo platypterus*—Seen from Blanchisseuse soaring overhead.

**Short-tailed Hawk** *Buteo brachyurus*—Seen while birding near Caroni doing its signature hover before it drops like a rock.

**Zone-tailed Hawk** *Buteo albonotatus*—Fun to watch among the Turkey Vultures that it has evolved to look like so that its prey is deceived into thinking it is not a threat. White tail bands gave it away at Nariva and Caroni.

#### **OWLS: Strigidae (4)**

**Tropical Screech-Owl** *Megascops choliba*—Two seen roosting in daylight when we began our Caroni Swamp boat tour.



**Spectacled Owl** *Pulsatrix perspicillata*—We went on night walks three consecutive evenings at Asa Wright to try to see this bird. We heard it call, which was a thrill, but didn't see it.

**Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl** *Glaucidium brasilianum*—One was harried by a mob of birds at Grand Riviere. One perched at Asa Wright was seen well in a scope. The tooting call of this species was heard many times on the tour.

**Mottled Owl** *Strix virgata*—Heard but not seen on a night walk at Waller Air Base.

### **TROGONS: Trogonidae (3)**

**Green-backed Trogon** *Trogon viridis*—Seen from a veranda of a cabin at Hacienda Jacana by four members of the group and by me on day one, just before the rest of the group arrived.

**Guianan Trogon** *Trogon violaceus*—Seen a couple of times on the tour, including an absolutely stunning view of a male perched in the open in sunlight while we ate lunch at Brasso Seco.

**Collared Trogon** *Trogon collaris*—Seen high in a tree on Blanchisseuse Road, and two birds observed at Gilpin Trace Trail in Tobago's Main Ridge Forest. Also heard but not seen in the forest at Asa Wright.

### **MOTMOTS: Momotidae (1)**

**Trinidad Motmot** *Momotus bahamensis* (E)—Despite its name, this species is more commonly observed on Tobago. A crepuscular bird, our group saw Trinidad Motmots four consecutive days in Tobago. Excellent close looks and photos of the bird's striking red eyes, beautiful blue color and distinctive racquet tail feathers came at Adventure Farm and Nature Reserve.

### **KINGFISHERS: Alcedinidae (2)**

**Ringed Kingfisher** *Megaceryle torquata*—Nice view of this large kingfisher perched on a limb near a caiman at Orange Grove near Caroni Swamp. Also seen on the grounds of Hacienda Jacana.

**American Pygmy Kingfisher** *Chloroceryle aenea*—Dave Ramlal worked his magic to bring this gorgeous little bird with a metallic green sheen into view in a red mangrove swamp at Nariva.

### **JACAMARS: Galbulidae (1)**

**Rufous-tailed Jacamar** *Galbula ruficauda*—A few glimpses in Trinidad, and this attractive bird was seen well on Tobago several times.

### **TOUCANS: Ramphastidae (1)**

**Channel-billed Toucan** *Ramphastos vitellinus*—This charismatic species was heard and seen on five days. Seen well from the verandah at Asa Wright posing for photos in nearby trees.

### **WOODPECKERS: Picidae (5)**

**Red-crowned Woodpecker** *Melanerpes rubricapillus*—Only lives on Tobago—seen twice there. Male and female observed closely at Adventure Farm and Nature Reserve.

**Red-rumped Woodpecker** *Dryobates kirkii*—Observed from Blanchisseuse Road.

**Crimson-crested Woodpecker** *Campephilus melanoleucos*—Observed two days in Trinidad. Excellent views from Brasso Seco of a male and female excavating a nest cavity.

**Lineated Woodpecker** *Dryocopus lineatus*—Observed while looking for Trinidad Piping-Guan at Grand Riviere.

**Golden-olive Woodpecker** *Colaptes rubiginosus*—This attractive woodpecker was observed on three different days in Trinidad and Tobago.

### **FALCONS AND CARACARAS: Falconidae (2)**

**Yellow-headed Caracara** *Daptrius chimachima*—Excellent views of this species at Nariva Swamp, including both immature and adult birds.

**Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus*—A few of these speedsters were seen streaking across the sky at Caroni Swamp in pursuit of prey.

### **PARROTS: Psittacidae (5)**

**Blue-headed Parrot** *Pionus menstruus*—Observed flying at Brasso Seco. Much quieter than their raucous Orange-winged cousins.

**Orange-winged Parrot** *Amazona amazonica*—Became a familiar friend with a raucous voice. Heard and seen most days. The only parrot on Tobago. Easy to see, challenging to photograph.

**Green-rumped Parrotlet** *Forpus passerinus*—Several of these gorgeous green birds were seen well at Nariva perched in trees.

**Red-bellied Macaw** *Orthopsittaca manilatus*—Seen by a couple of members of the group while walking the grounds at Hacienda Jacana.

**Blue-and-yellow Macaw** *Ara ararauna*—Also known as the Blue-and-gold Macaw, this species that was extirpated from TT and then reintroduced is making a comeback. A pair of these large and striking birds was observed nesting in a tree at Nariva.

### **ANTBIRDS: Thamnophilidae (7)**

**Great Antshrike** *Taraba major*—Seen well with its staring red eye near Brasso Seco.

**Black-crested Antshrike** *Sakesphorus canadensis*—A male and female, very sexually dimorphic, were observed at Nariva.

**Barred Antshrike** *Thamnophilus doliatus*—Males and females, very sexually dimorphic, were observed on several occasions. Locals call the male “jailbird” for his black and white barring.

**White-flanked Antwren** *Myrmotherula axillaris*—Fleeting glimpses of this secretive bird skulking in the shadows along Blanchisseuse Road.

**Northern White-fringed Antwren** *Formicivora grisea*—A secretive bird seen by our group because of Desmond Wright’s expertise while leading us on a walk at Cuffie River.

**Silvered Antbird** *Sclateria naevia*—Conjured by Dave from a mangrove swamp for a brief but good look at Nariva.

**White-bellied Antbird** *Myrmeciza longipes*—Heard but not seen near Blanchisseuse Road.

### **ANTTHRUSHES: Formicariidae (1)**

**Black-faced Antthrush** *Formicarius analis*—A few glimpses among forest floor shadows of this skulker by Blanchisseuse Road.

### **OVENBIRDS AND WOODCREEPERS: Furnariidae (8)**

**Gray-throated Leaf-tosser** *Sclerurus albigularis*—Seen by a few members of our group living up to its name, tossing leaves in search of food on the forest floor next to Blanchisseuse Road.

**Plain-brown Woodcreeper** *Dendrocincla fuliginosa*—Seen well while looking for Trinidad Piping-Guan at Grand Riviere.

**Cocoa Woodcreeper** *Xiphorhynchus susurrans*—Heard clearly but not seen.

**Straight-billed Woodcreeper** *Dendroplex picus*—Observed at Caroni Swamp.

**Streak-headed Woodcreeper** *Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*—Observed at Caroni.

**Streaked Xenops** *Xenops rutilans*—Seen near Blanchisseuse Road.



**Yellow-chinned Spinetail** *Certhiaxis cinnamomeus*—Seen well by everyone in a ditch at Nariva.

**Stripe-breasted Spinetail** *Synallaxis cinnamomea*—Observed while walking Gilpin Trace Trail in Tobago's Main Ridge Forest.

### **MANAKINS: Pipridae (3)**

**Blue-backed Manakin** *Chiroxiphia pareola*—Several males seen at a lek while walking Gilpin Trace Trail in Tobago's Main Ridge Forest.

**White-bearded Manakin** *Manacus manacus*—Excellent close looks at males and females at a lek at Asa Wright while walking with Mukesh. One bird was observed and photographed eating big, bright-red berries.

**Golden-headed Manakin** *Ceratopipra erythrocephala*—Also seen at Asa Wright.

### **COTINGAS: Cotingidae (1)**

**Bearded Bellbird** *Procnias averano*—Easy to hear the voice of this bird that carries for more than a mile, but Mukesh had to work very hard to find one of these bizarre creatures for our group to observe. When the bird vocalized with explosive force, steam puffed out of its beak and its wattles flung back and forth. Absolutely mesmerizing.

### **TITYRAS AND BECARDS: Tityridae (1)**

**Black-tailed Tityra** *Tityra cayana*—One bird observed in the forest at Grand Riviere.

### **TYRANT FLYCATCHERS: Tyrannidae (15)**

**Ochre-bellied Flycatcher** *Mionectes oleagineus*—Observed while walking Gilpin Trace Trail in Tobago's Main Ridge Forest.

**Yellow-olive Flatbill** *Tolmomyias sulphurescens*—Observed along Blanchisseuse Road.

**Forest Elaenia** *Myiopagis gaimardii*—Observed along Blanchisseuse Road.

**Yellow-bellied Elaenia** *Elaenia flavogaster*—Seen several times by our group in both Trinidad and Tobago.

**Bran-colored Flycatcher** *Myiophobus fasciatus*—Seen fleetingly in a bush on a roadside on the way to Caroni. Indeed, blandly colored brown like bran.

**Northern Tropical Pewee** *Contopus bogotensis*—Seen well along Blanchisseuse Road.

**Fuscous Flycatcher** *Cnemotriccus fuscatus*—Came into the open for superb views at Cuffie River, spotted by the talented Desmond Wright.

**White-headed Marsh-Tyrant** *Arundinicola leucocephala*—Seen close and in the open along a road while driving to Nariva.

**Pied Water-Tyrant** *Fluvicola pica*—Several of these eye-catching birds were spotted by our group at Nariva.

**Venezuelan Flycatcher** *Myiarchus venezuelensis*—Seen well at the Visitor Center at Tobago's Main Ridge Forest Reserve.

**Brown-crested Flycatcher** *Myiarchus tyrannulus*—Observed several times on Tobago.

**Great Kiskadee** *Pitangus sulphuratus*—A familiar friend on both islands. Great example of an onomatopoeic name—this bird calls *kis-ka-DEE*, as if shouting its name.

**Streaked Flycatcher** *Myiodynastes maculatus*—Seen on a few occasions on both islands with its namesake streaks making it identifiable by our group.

**Tropical Kingbird** *Tyrannus melancholicus*—A familiar friend, seemed to be just about everywhere we went.

**Gray Kingbird** *Tyrannus dominicensis*—Seen very well at Nariva, out in the open at close range for a long time. Also observed at Cuffie River.

#### **VIREOS: Vireonidae (4)**

**Rufous-browed Peppershrike** *Cyclarhis gujanensis*—Heard often and seen very well with its namesake rufous brow along a road on the way to Nariva.

**Scrub Greenlet** *Hylophilus flavipes*—Observed at Bon Accord Sewage Treatment Ponds with the expert help of Jason Radix.

**Golden-fronted Greenlet** *Pachysylvia aurantiifrons*—Observed at Nariva, Grand Riviere and Blanchisseuse Road.

**Chivi Vireo** *Vireo chivi*—Heard calling its *chivi* name and seen at Gilpin Trace Trail in Tobago's Main Ridge Forest.

#### **SWALLOWS AND MARTINS: Hirundinidae (6)**

**Southern Rough-winged Swallow** *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*—Observed many times in many places. Seemed identical to its northern counterpart.

**Caribbean Martin** *Progne dominicensis*—Seen in Tobago in flight, similar to Purple Martin.

**Gray-breasted Martin** *Progne chalybea*—Seen flying and perched in Trinidad, similar to Purple Martin. Dozens of birds were perched on a powerline near Brasso Seco and observed at close range.

**White-winged Swallow** *Tachycineta albiventer*—Seen many times. Beautiful colors in the sunlight.

**Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*—Observed flying and perched at Centre Street Ponds on Tobago.

**Cliff Swallow** *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*—One member of this species was seen perched on a wire at Centre Street Ponds, its pale forehead separating it from nearby Barn Swallows.

#### **WRENS: Troglodytidae (2)**

**House Wren** *Troglodytes aedon*—Familiar friend from home, but subtly different in appearance and song. Heard and seen several times. A busy pair seemed to be nesting behind a pipe at Cuffie River Nature Retreat.

**Rufous-breasted Wren** *Pheugopedius rutilus*—This attractive wren was observed at Nariva and Blanchisseuse Road on Trinidad and at Main Ridge Forest on Tobago.

#### **MOCKINGBIRDS AND THRASHERS: Mimidae (1)**

**Tropical Mockingbird** *Mimus gilvus*—A constant companion throughout our tour. Similar to Northern Mockingbird but with less white in its wings.

#### **THRUSHES: Turdidae (4)**

**Cocoa Thrush** *Turdus fumigatus*—Heard but not seen.

**Yellow-legged Thrush** *Turdus flavipes*—Nice look at its yellow legs and yellow eye-ring while walking Gilpin Trace Trail in Tobago's Main Ridge Forest Preserve.

**White-necked Thrush** *Turdus albicollis*—Seen along Blanchisseuse Road and while walking Gilpin Trace Trail in Tobago's Main Ridge Forest Preserve.

**Spectacled Thrush** *Turdus nudigenis*—Observed many times with its namesake eye-rings. Easy to identify and fun to watch.

#### **WAXBILLS: Estrildidae (1)**

**Common Waxbill (1)** *Estrilda astrild*—Introduced member of the finch family from Sub-Saharan Africa. Seen at Nariva.

#### **FINCHES AND EUPHONIAS: Fringillidae (2)**

**Trinidad Euphonia** *Euphonia trinitatis*—Heard but not seen. Much less common than its Violaceous Euphonia cousin.

**Violaceous Euphonia** *Euphonia violacea*—Common but always lovely to see. Observed often.

#### **NEW WORLD BLACKBIRDS: Icteridae (8)**

**Red-breasted Meadowlark** *Leistes militaris*—Clearly seen by everyone perched above the grass in a field near the Trincity Sewage Treatment Plant.

**Crested Oropendola** *Psarocolius decumanus*—Observed often, and its strange mechanical calls were a regular part of the soundscape. Pendulous nests of a colony were seen well at Yerette.

**Yellow-rumped Cacique** *Cacicus cela*—A breeding colony of these striking birds were observed at close range from a road on the way to Nariva Swamp.

**Yellow Oriole** *Icterus nigrogularis*—Gorgeous bird seen at Nariva.

**Shiny Cowbird** *Molothrus bonariensis*—Observed several times.

**Giant Cowbird** *Molothrus oryzivorus*—Seen well near Brasso Seco with its prominent red eye.

**Carib Grackle** *Quiscalus lugubris*—Constant companion throughout our tour.

**Yellow-hooded Blackbird** *Chrysomus icterocephalus*—Dozens of these attractive birds observed in a wetland near Caroni Swamp.

#### **NEW WORLD WARBLERS: Parulidae (4)**

**Northern Waterthrush** *Parkesia noveboracensis*—Observed at Grand Riviere and Cuffie River.

**Tropical Parula** *Setophaga pitiayumi*—Observed at Grand Riviere.

**Yellow Warbler** *Setophaga petechia*—Seen at Nariva.

**Chestnut-Sided Warbler** *Setophaga pennsylvanica*—Seen in a mixed flock at Grand Riviere.

#### **CARDINALS, GROSBEAKS, AND ALLIES: Cardinalidae (1)**

**Dickcissel** *Spiza americana*—A flock of hundreds observed at Nariva.

#### **TANAGERS: Thraupidae (19)**

**Masked Cardinal** *Paroaria nigrogenis*—One bird seen at close range from our boat in Caroni Swamp. Very striking bird.

**White-shouldered Tanager** *Loriotus luctuosus*—Observed from Blanchisseuse Road.

**White-lined Tanager** *Tachyphonus rufus*—Seen often, both black males and brown females

**Silver-beaked Tanager** *Ramphocelus carbo*—Seen often and seen very clearly at close range from the veranda at Asa Wright. Males with their prominent silver beaks were stunning.

**Blue-gray Tanager** *Thraupis episcopus*—Became a familiar friend. The subspecies on Tobago, which may be elevated to species status in the future, was noticeably bluer—a deeper shade of blue than the birds on Trinidad.

**Palm Tanager** *Thraupis palmarum*—A constant companion. Attractive hints of yellow on this dull-green bird when it moved into good light.

**Turquoise Tanager** *Tangara mexicana*—This gorgeous blue-and-yellow tanager was seen in morning light at Grand Riviere.

**Bay-headed Tanager** *Tangara gyrola*—Seen several times. A real crowd pleaser when it visited the trees around the Asa Wright veranda.

**Blue Dacnis** *Dacnis cayana*—A couple of these gorgeous blue tanagers were seen at a roadside stop on the way to Nariva.

**Purple Honeycreeper** *Cyanerpes caeruleus*—Males and females, very sexually dimorphic, were seen often and seen well. Fun to watch them join hummingbirds drinking sugar-water from feeders.

**Red-legged Honeycreeper** *Cyanerpes cyaneus*—Observed at Grand Riviere, Blanchisseuse Road and Cuffie River.

**Green Honeycreeper** *Chlorophanes spiza*—Males and females, very sexually dimorphic, were seen often and seen well from the veranda at Asa Wright.

**Bicolored Conebill** *Conirostrum bicolor*—Seen from a bridge at Nariva.

**Saffron Finch** *Sicalis flaveola*—Observed at Hanuman temple.

**Blue-black Grassquit** *Volatinia jacarina*—Males observed in Trinidad doing their “johnny jump-up” maneuver, leaping up and down to impress females.

**Bananaquit** *Coereba flaveola*—A constant, charismatic and photogenic companion throughout our journey. Fun to watch these boldly colored, busy birds at the hummingbird feeders.

**Black-faced Grassquit** *Melanospiza bicolor*—Seen well in a field at Fort James.

**Sooty Grassquit** *Asemospiza fuliginosa*—Observed at Centre Street Ponds on Tobago.

**Olive-gray Saltator** *Saltator olivascens*—Observed at Nariva and Grand Riviere.

### **MAMMALS (10):**

**Northeastern Silky Anteater** *Cyclopes didactylus*—Lester Nanan spotted two of these little anteaters curled into a ball on our Caroni Swamp tour.

**Red-tailed Squirrel** *Sciurus granatensis*—Observed at Adventure Farm and Main Ridge Forest on Tobago.

**White-Lined Sac-Winged Bat** *Saccopteryx bilineata*—This day-flying bat was seen while walking the trails at Asa Wright, and also at Grand Riviere.

**The following bat species were identified at Cuffie River Nature Retreat by using an Echo Meter device attached to Stephen Grace’s phone:**

**Jamaican Fruit-eating Bat** *Artibeus jamaicensis*

**Thomas’s Shaggy** *Centronycteris centralis*

**Lesser Doglike** *Peropteryx macrotis*

**Greater Sac-Winged** *Saccopteryx bilineata*

**Sinaloan Mastiff** *Molossus sinaloae*

**Velvety Free-Tailed** *Molossus molossus*

**Seminole** *Lasiurus seminolus*

### **REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS (8):**

**Caribbean Treerunner** *Plica caribea*—Observed on a pole from the veranda at Asa Wright.

**Geckos** (Gekkonidae)—Geckos were heard many times and seen on the verandas of lodges but were not identified to the species level.

**Green Iguana** *Iguana iguana*—Seen from a distance at Caroni.

**Cryptic Golden Tegu** *Tupinambis cryptus*—Seen by several members of our group on the grounds of Hacienda Jacana.

**Spectacled Caiman** *Caiman crocodilus*—Caiman eyes were seen a few times protruding from water, and one large caiman completely out of the water was viewed by the group in a roadside wetland at Orange Grove on the way to Caroni.

**Cook’s Tree Boa** *Corallus hortulanus cookii*—Lester spotted a few of these large snakes hanging from the mangroves during the Caroni Swamp tour.

**Hawksbill Sea Turtle** *Eretmochelys imbricata*—Seen by most members of our group floating at the water’s surface among sea swell as we boated toward Little Tobago Island.

**Leatherback Turtle** *Dermochelys coriacea*—We didn't see these turtles on the beach at Grand Riviere, but locals said they came ashore during the night and slipped back into the water before we arrived. We saw their fresh tracks and the enormous pits they had excavated in the night.

#### **FISH (4):**

**Four-eyed Fish** *Anableps anableps*—This bizarre and captivating creature was seen in shallow water on the mudflats in the Gulf of Paria.

**Jumping Guabine** *Anablepsoides hartii*—This fascinating fish species that leaps out of the water to move from pool to pool was pointed out by Jason Radix in a tiny stream on the Gilpin Trace Trail of Tobago's Main Ridge Forest.

**Rays**—Seen cruising through the shallows at Pigeon Point.

**Reef Fish**—Parrotfish, Blue Tang and many other colorful fish species were seen on Angel Reef from our glass-bottom boat near Goat Island between Little Tobago and Blue Waters Inn.

#### **CRUSTACEANS (1):**

**Manicou Crab** *Eudaniela garmani*—Named for the local word for opossum (manicou), this crab broods its young against its body instead of laying eggs in water. This species has evolved to live separately from the sea, never returning to the ocean, spending its entire life high in the mountains.

#### **ARACHNIDS (2):**

**Chevron Tarantula** *Psalmopoeus cambridgei*—Seen on a night walk with Mukesh at Asa Wright. Impressive size!

**Harvestman**—Illuminated in a UV light on a night walk at Asa Wright.

#### **INSECTS:**

**Butterflies** (Rhopalocera)—Many beautiful species were observed while birding including monarchs, sulphurs, whites, heliconias, tigers and swallowtails. We also saw caligo, an owl butterfly.

**Army Ants** *Eciton burchelli*—Observed in their marauding multitudes at Asa Wright. They provide food for many bird species by stirring up invertebrates as they march, and they can be used to close a wound in human flesh with their pinching jaws.

**Leafcutter Ants** *Atta cephalotes*—Observed marching in lines that seemed to stretch for miles. The lines contained millions of ants carrying plant matter to feed the fungus that they cultivate in their nests to sustain them, as they have been doing for countless millennia. They developed a form of agriculture long before humans existed on this planet.