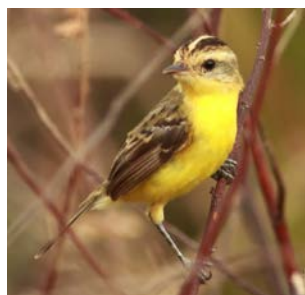


# Guyana: Unspoiled Wilderness | Trip Report

February 17 - 29, 2020 | Written by Dave Mehlman



With Guides Ron Allicock and Dave Mehlman, and participants Chris, Cindy, Kathy, Mike, Nancy, and Steve





The battle cry for this trip was surely Ron's constant call of "come, come, come" as he continually found new and amazing things for us to see and photograph. We were all personally saddened that two participants were not able to make it at the last minute due to an injury on the trip down; we hope they will be able to reschedule and experience all that we saw. All went well on our travels, though the final itinerary was changed from what had been sent out due to complications on availability at some of the lodges. Ron and his capable staff and all those working at the lodges (Surama Ecolodge, Atta Rainforest Lodge, Rock View Lodge, Caiman House, Manari Ranch) made our trip smooth and enjoyable and one that we will treasure for a long time.

## **Mon, Feb. 17 Arrivals in Guyana | Georgetown**

Arriving at zero-dark-thirty in the morning, everyone gradually straggled in for breakfast at the Cara Lodge Hotel in downtown Georgetown. After meeting and greeting, all had a chance to relax and rest for most of the day.

With the help of Francis, our local transportation logistics expert, some of the early arrivals (Chris, Cindy, Kathy, Steve) went with Dave in the late afternoon to the Georgetown Botanical Garden for a head start on the birds of Guyana at this birder, and photographer-friendly site. We got off to a great start, familiarizing ourselves with many species, including Snail Kite, Red-shouldered Macaw, Yellow-chinned Spinetail, Violaceous Euphonia, Black-necked Aracari, and, much to our collective surprise, a hooting Great Horned Owl.

We then returned to the hotel and the entire group met in the patio area of the hotel for a welcome dinner, introductions, and a briefing from Dave about the trip and plans for the next day. We also retrieved our breakfast boxes for the next morning. Then, off to bed for the first of many early starts.

## **Tues, Feb. 18 Mahaica River | Georgetown Botanical Gardens**

Up early, we made coffee in our rooms and ate our boxed breakfast and then boarded a small bus for a trip east along the coast to the Mahaica River. A stop at the Mahaica River Bridge yielded two Rufous Crab Hawks (one of the sought-after coastal endemic bird species), Laughing Falcon, and Great Black Hawk in the twilight. Continuing on through the nearby rice fields, we arrived at the boat launch on the Mahaica River. Most took the opportunity for a pit stop at Narish's house across the river before we headed upriver.

This trip, always a highlight of the tour, was primarily in search of Hoatzin (Guyana's national bird) and other riverine and riparian species. We did finally locate Hoatzins, but, much to Dave, Ron, and Narish's surprise, only after quite a while—for whatever reasons, the usually easy to see Hoatzin's were lurking in the dense vegetation and only showed themselves later in the trip. However, they were eventually seen well to everyone's





satisfaction. Lots of other things were seen very well, however, including Silvered Antbird (brought into close view with playback), Little Cuckoo, Red-capped Cardinal, Grayish Saltator, Blood-colored Woodpecker (another coastal endemic bird species), several Peregrine Falcons, Long-winged Harrier, and, perhaps most fun, multiple sightings of Giant River Otter! Returning to Narish's house mid-morning and quite famished, we enjoyed a classic Indian-Guyanese breakfast with curry and roti, plus got to meet Narish and Shanti's daughter, son-in-law, and grandchild visiting from New York City.

Crossing back over the river, we returned to our bus and went to the Hope Canal outlet on the ocean to look for coastal and mangrove birds. We were rewarded by some nice finds, including fly-by Scarlet Ibis, Magnificent Frigatebird, several more Rufous Crab Hawks, White-bellied Piculet, and an American Pygmy Kingfisher. We then returned to the Cara Lodge for lunch, organizing our things for the main luggage to be driven down to Surama Ecolodge that evening, and a siesta for those needing it.

Reconvening in the late afternoon, we headed over in a small fleet of vehicles to the Georgetown Botanical Garden, this time at full strength with Ron Allicock, our local guide extraordinaire. The garden provided its usual wonderful birding and photographing, including Festive, Mealy, and Orange-winged Parrots; Red-shouldered Macaw; Lineated Woodpecker; Common and Spotted Tody-Flycatcher; Grayish Saltator; another Blood-colored Woodpecker; and a sighting of the Great Horned Owl which we had heard the day before. After this super first day of the trip, we headed back to the Cara Lodge for dinner on the patio and sleep before our departure to the interior the next day.

### **Wed., Feb. 19 Ogle Seawall | Kaieteur Falls | Surama EcoLodge**

After breakfast at the Cara Lodge at a very civilized hour, we jumped into our fleet of vehicles to head to the Eugene F. Correia (Ogle) Airport, with a quick stop at the Ogle Seawall beforehand. The seawall was our last opportunity on the trip for coastal and shorebirds; however, the tides were very low and therefore most birds were far, far out on the mudflats necessitating the use of spotting scopes. The exceptions were a cooperative Whimbrel, feeding on fiddler crabs close by, and a very large number of Little Blue Herons of both white and dark phases. Intense scope work by Dave and Cindy yielded good views of White-cheeked Pintail feeding in the ponds on the mudflats, Scarlet Ibis, Black Skimmer, Laughing Gull, and some far-off Blue-winged Teal.

After this stop, we headed to the nearby airport for the check-in (and weigh-in) for our charter flight to Kaieteur Falls and on to Surama. Fortunately, the weather cooperated with us and we soon departed for the hour-long flight to Kaieteur, landing just before noon at the Falls airstrip. Meeting our park guide Kandasy, we started our walk by heading to the Falls and admiring the extraordinary view, though Dave noted that river flows were noticeably diminished from what he had seen a few weeks ago. Although the birds were few, they were of high quality: we saw King Vulture, 200+ White-collared Swifts, Cliff Flycatcher, and, best of all, really good views of several male Guianan Cock-of-the-Rocks at a lek! Perhaps a sign of our good luck to come, but we got one of the most desired trip bird species on our first day in the interior!



Our plane arrived at the Surama airstrip at about 2:30pm, where we met Ron's dad, Sydney Allicock, one of the vice presidents of Guyana! Perhaps a first for a Naturalist Journeys tour? After introductions, Rensford came over in our soon-to-be-trusty minivan and we drove to the nearby EcoLodge to get settled in and have a moderately late lunch. After a brief rest, we reconvened and headed out to a nearby potoo roost. Sure enough, thanks to the advance scouting of Ron and local guide Karlon, we soon spotted a roosting Great Potoo, only moving its eyelids infrequently. Another fine bird spotted there was a far-off adult male Pompadour Cotinga! Again, another hard to find bird seen early on in the trip.

We concluded the day with the first of many sundowners at Itch Pond, adding Finsch's Euphonia, Muscovy Duck, Fork-tailed Palm-Swift, Crimson-crested Woodpecker, and both Least and Lesser Nighthawks to our list as dusk fell. Returning to the lodge, we had dinner, reviewed the bird list, and enjoyed our first night in the field.

### **Thurs., Feb. 20 Surama Eco Lodge | Burro-Burro Trail**

After an early breakfast, we all walked through the savannah to the nearby Burro-Burro Trail for the morning's outing. This wonderful hike yielded many sought after birds, most notably intermittent views of several Capuchinbirds. Despite a lot of hunting and use of playback, we could not get one to sit still for long, but everyone got a decent look after much trying. But, perhaps the most unexpected and interesting find was a roosting Long-tailed Potoo! As with most potoos, this one sat very cooperatively allowing for very long looks, photos, and videos.

Among the other birds seen on the hike were several Gray-winged Trumpeters, Golden-headed Manakin males at a lek, Blackish Nightjar (roosting on a tree branch), 2 Pearl Kites, and, last but far from least, a young male Harpy Eagle! With the latter, neither Ron nor Dave could believe our luck to have found two such good birds (potoo, eagle) in one morning. The eagle perched rather cooperatively high in a dead snag allowing excellent views and photography after we looked around for better angles. We returned from the walk to be picked up in the van for the short drive back to the lodge, followed by lunch and then a siesta.

Reconvening late in the afternoon, we headed out to do some birding along the entrance road into Surama village. Stopping at several sites, lots of interesting birds were seen, including Variable Chachalaca, Hooded Tanager, White-browed Antbird, White-crowned Manakin, Buff-breasted Wren (foraging on the road for some reason), and Rufous-throated and White-chinned Sapphire. Of course, sounds were also a great component of our birding, with numerous species weighing in (without being seen) such as Cinereous and Little Tinamou and Plumbeous Pigeon. Staying out after dark we tried some owling, again with great luck! Ron was able to call in





and show us both Tawny-bellied Screech-Owl and Black-banded Owl in short order—our sundowners were well-deserved. After all this excitement, we returned to the lodge for our last night and dinner, along with the usual checklist review and sleep.

## **Fri., Feb. 21 Georgetown-Lethem Hwy | Atta Rainforest Lodge**

After breakfast and saying farewell to the wonderful staff at Surama, we loaded up (bags in one car, people in the minivan) and headed up the Georgetown-Lethem highway to our next destination: Atta Rainforest Lodge with many birding stops along the way, of course! We made 5-6 stops enroute, finding a variety of birds we had not seen yet. Way too numerous to list, but memorable sightings included Gray and Dusky Antbird, Guianan Puffbird, Golden-bellied Euphonia, Painted Parakeet, Gray-headed Kite, Blue Dacnis, and males of both Spangled and Purple-breasted Cotinga (the latter is particularly hard to find). The lucky people in front even saw Cinereous Tinamou cross the road. Nearing Atta lodge, we stopped to admire some Red-and-green Macaws at their nest hole while watching Band-rumped Swifts fly overhead. Arriving at Atta, we put our things in our room and enjoyed our first lunch at this great lodge, meeting our local guide Kendrick beforehand.



Reconvening in the afternoon, many quickly realized the great variety of birds to be found right in the clearing at Atta, particularly the fairly ubiquitous Purple-throated Fruitcrows, which came and went eating fruit. Tearing ourselves away, we traveled to another nearby potoo roost and, with Kendrick's help, spotted a roosting Rufous Potoo. This species, generally quite hard to find, sat quite still and posed for many pictures and, when the wind blew, rocked gently back-and-forth, a form of camouflage behavior—fascinating stuff. After this, we birded more on the highway until dark, finding Black Nunbird, Green Aracari, and Spix's Guan and hearing tinamous and a far-off Rufous-winged Ground-Cuckoo (which unfortunately did not seem interested in the seductive tones of Ron's recordings). After dark, Ron worked his magic yet again and called in a White-winged Potoo, which all were able to see and photograph in the dark with the aid of spotlights. Our 4<sup>th</sup> potoo species of the trip and we were not even halfway through! After that we returned to the lodge for dinner, checklist, and rest.

## **Sat., Feb. 22 Atta Rainforest Lodge | Canopy Walkway | White Sand Forest**

The routine at Atta is a bit different than other places in the morning: early coffee and cookies; a walk; a full, proper,





breakfast; another walk; then lunch. So, today we experienced the routine for the first time with coffee in the pre-dawn light while hearing Guianan Howler Monkeys and a Tawny-bellied Screech-Owl. Walking in the direction of the canopy walkway as soon as we could see, we immediately saw birds right near the lodge, especially including a Crimson Fruitcrow! Arriving at the walkway, we headed out to the middle platform and watched and waited. Although pretty quiet for most of the time, a spectacular Black-and-white Hawk-Eagle perched for a while in a tree. Although we had to go one-at-a-time out on the walkway between platforms to see it well, this was a truly amazing bird! Other sightings from the platforms included Mealy Parrot and Green Aracari. On the way back to the lodge, we picked up some more interesting birds, including Red-throated Caracara, Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher, and Plain-brown Woodcreeper. We truly merited breakfast!

After eating, we got in the minivan and traveled a short distance to a patch of White Sand Forest, a habitat type unique to the Guianan Shield portion of the Amazon basin. Although very quiet, with Kendrick's help we got great views of a Bronzy Jacamar, a species restricted to this forest type, and saw and heard the oddly named Olivaceous Schiffornis. We then returned to the lodge for lunch and a siesta, some of us watching the hummingbird feeders for Reddish and Long-tailed Hermit, Fork-tailed Woodnymph, and Gray-breasted Sabrewing. A feeding flock upon our return yielded Green Honeycreeper and Bay-headed Tanager in a Cercropia plus a Ringed Woodpecker made an appearance, unexpectedly.

For our afternoon outing, we concentrated on some of the trails through the forest near the lodge, walking a loop that led us out to the highway and then to the Atta entrance road. Although generally quiet, we saw more Gray-winged Trumpeters, Wedge-billed Woodcreeper, Spix's Guan, Purple and Green Honeycreeper, a minuscule Helmeted Pygmy-Tyrant, and an Amazonian Pygmy-Owl (the latter very well observed for a long period as it sat above us in a tree singing). Continuing, with the aid of the minivan, a bit down the highway, we enjoyed sundowners on a bridge while watching some Rufescent Tiger-Herons, Green-tailed Jacamar, Green Oropendola, and a Red-rumped Agouti crossing the road. After dark, we returned to the lodge for dinner, checklist, and sleep.

## **Sun., Feb. 23    Atta Rainforest Lodge | Georgetown-Lethem Hwy | Rock View Lodge**

Rising for early coffee, the "early birds" heard a Common Potoo singing for our 5<sup>th</sup> potoo of the trip! The pre-breakfast walk visited the clearing and more trails around Atta lodge. Highlights of this, our last morning at Atta, including the same or another Crimson Fruitcrow, Marail Guan (shield endemic!), Tiny Tyrant-Manakin (seen and heard), Chestnut-rumped Woodcreeper, and a variety of hard-to-see birds in a canopy flock, including Olive-green





Tyrannulet and Guianan Woodcreeper. We returned for our final breakfast, settled our bills, said our good-byes, and then loaded up the van and vehicles for the trip to Rock View Lodge.

Of course, no road trip on this tour is complete without numerous stops for observation. Particularly interesting finds along the way included a Red-fan Parrot sticking its head out of a nest hole, Black-bellied Cuckoo, Black Caracara, Pearl Kite, and a Brown Vine Snake on the highway. Nearing the savannahs outside Annai (the community near Rock View Lodge), we began to see savannah birds such as Vermilion and Fork-tailed Flycatcher. Arriving at Rock View just after noon, we were briefed by Josephine, the manager, since the legendary host and owner of Rock View, Colin Edwards, was temporarily indisposed. We settled into our rooms and then enjoyed our first Rock View lunch.

After lunch, there was time for a siesta and exploring the lovely grounds of Rock View. Explorations yielded Orange-backed Troupial, many Pale-breasted Thrushes (including one nesting outside Dave's room), and a few of the resident Weeper (or Wedge-capped) Capuchins. For the afternoon outing, we got into the minivan and explored several areas off the highway south of Rock View. These stops, in an area of transition between savannah and forest, yield great sightings of many birds, including Savannah Hawk, Gray and Ruddy-breasted Seedeater, Crested Bobwhite, Pale-eyed Pygmy-Tyrant, and Northern Slaty Antshrike. Our final stop, as the sun set, yielded Crane Hawk, Laughing Falcon, and a pair of Maguari Storks perched high on a cliff, regarding us carefully from their nest site. Very satisfied, we returned to the lodge for a happy hour (hosted by Josephine), dinner, checklist, and sleep.

## **Mon., Feb. 24 Georgetown-Lethem Hwy | Rock View Lodge**

After our now-normal early breakfast, we got into the minivan and headed north on the highway, back towards Surama, to explore some more forest before we dove deep into the Rupununi savannahs. We stopped along the highway a couple times, finding nice things including Long-billed Starthroat, Cream-colored Woodpecker, Burnished-buff Tanager, and (finally) decent views of Yellow-crowned Parrot. We also spotted a pair of Pearl Kite at their nest. Perhaps best of all, however, was a walk through a deeply forested trail, where, much to Ron's surprise, a Crested Eagle put in an appearance! Though tough to spot, sitting high in a tall tree surrounded by dense forest, all got some sort of view of this very hard to see (usually, in fact, harder to see than Harpy) eagle. Other very interesting (and new for the trip) birds were White-crested Spadebill, Rufous-bellied Antwren, and a lek of Long-tailed Hermits giving their squeaky call.



Back on the road, we soon arrived at our lunch spot: Surama Junction, where Auntie Madonna cooked us lunch in the roadside roundhouse. While waiting for food, we admired the nesting Yellow-rumped and Red-rumped Caciques and some spotted a pair of Violaceous Euphonias building a nest in with them. We also took a moment to admire Ron's chigger collection on his stomach—both were quite impressive!! After this tasty lunch, a few (Dave included) took siestas in the hammocks which were up in the roundhouse (which doubles as an overnight stop for the Georgetown—Lethem buses). We then returned to Rock View Lodge for a bit of a siesta.

Late in the afternoon, Dave led a walk from Rock View, out past the airstrip into the nearby savannah to enjoy the afternoon and early evening. While little new was seen, the evening was lovely and we admired a White-tailed Kite flying around as well as the local, resident Eastern Meadowlarks and a Plain-crested Elaenia. After that we enjoyed our last happy hour, dinner, and checklist at Rock View before heading to bed.

## **Tues., Feb. 25 Rock View Lodge | Caiman House Lodge | Rupununi River**

Another early breakfast, at which Colin Edwards made an appearance, we loaded up, this time in three trucks due to the poor quality of the roads for the remainder of the trip. We then headed for Caiman House, birding (of course!) along the way. A stop at a bridge over a river yielded 2 calling Collared Forest-Falcons (one seen by most), Finsch's Euphonia, Lesser Kiskadee, and Yellow-crowned Parrot.

Following Ron's intuition, we stopped at a roadside wetland where the previous tour had very good luck. Sure enough, Ron found a Crested Doradito almost right away and reasonable looks were had at this enigmatic and sought-after flycatcher. Other birds seen in the area included Jabiru, Wood Stork, Gray and Ruddy-breasted Seedeaters, and White-tailed Goldenthrout. Ron then continued to follow his instincts and we drove to a nearby clump of trees (or bush, as it is called in the Rupununi). Amazingly to everyone, a little walking around the wetland in this area produced at least 6 different individual Crested Doraditos, probably a record for any single tour in one spot. Also in the area were Plain-breasted Ground-Dove, White-headed Marsh-Tyrant, Pied Water-Tyrant, and Maguari Stork—what a great birding spot!

Arriving at Caiman House around noon, we were shown to our rooms and then enjoyed a fabulous lunch. Following a rest, we reconvened and drove a short distance to the Rupununi River for our second boat trip of the tour. This lovely trip, for which we used one boat, went down the river for a short distance where we got out and walked to a nearby pond. Many fun and interesting birds, some new, some seen before, were encountered on the trip. Some of these included Pied Lapwing, Osprey, Red-capped Cardinal, Long-winged Harrier, Large-billed Tern (one seen briefly flying over the boat), Green Ibis, and Black-collared Hawk. We arrived at the pond in





time for the sunset, creating a beautiful scene with its many Queen Victoria's water lilies, many in bloom, Purple Gallinules and Wattled Jacanas wandering about, and Black Caimans patrolling the open water. Enjoying our sundowners on the spot, we also found Brown-chested Martin, Green Kingfisher, and good views of another Green Ibis.

Returning to the boat at dusk, we set off on the return trip and Ron got out his spotlight to look for nightbirds. The goatsuckers put on a show, with the group spotting Band-tailed Nighthawk, White-tailed Nightjar, and Common Pauraque along the way, along with many caimans with their luminous eyeshine. Arriving back at the boat launch, we headed back to Caiman House for dinner and the checklist (although one car broke down and that group had to walk back).

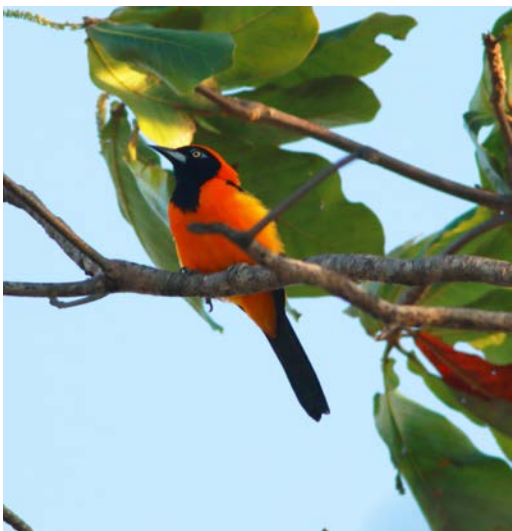


## Wed., Feb. 26 Northern Rupununi Savannah | Manari Ranch

Another early breakfast was followed by loading up and then heading off into the nearby savannahs. While it was pretty dark out, Marcelo (the local Caiman House guide riding on top of one of the vehicles) suddenly banged on the roof and yelled out—a Giant Anteater was walking across the savannah! We jumped out, got out the scopes and cameras, and watched as it slowly walked along and then into a clump of shrubs. Soon, we were joined by Uncle Clifford (the local “anteater whisperer”) and we quietly walked over to the clump. The anteater had settled down for its day roost so we could get good, but obscured, views of it relaxing in the shade. This was a super highlight, but our group could not stop, and we continued on!



The savannahs yielded many interesting birds, including Buff-necked Ibis, American Kestrel, Burrowing Owl, and a Barn Owl! A depression with many ité palms yielded Bicolored Wren and Fork-tailed Palm-Swift, although at that point we suffered the only major casualty of the trip: Steve’s camera fell over and met its demise. At another stop, Ron followed his instincts again and we hacked our way into a stand of trees. Sure enough, he nailed it again as we spotted a Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl singing in a tree. This, of course, attracted other birds, including our only Blue-backed Manakin of the trip, Rufous-browed Peppershrike, Chivi Vireo, and a Helmeted Pygmy-Tyrant. By that time, it was getting hot, so we returned to Caiman House for an early lunch.



Alas, due to our schedule change, we had only one night at Caiman House, so after lunch we assembled all our gear and loaded into the vehicles to head for Manari Ranch, exploring the savannahs along the way. Although it was hot and the sun intense, we found some quality birds along the way, including excellent views of a very cooperative Yellowish Pipit by the side of the road and, along Pirara Creek, another easy to see Ferruginous-Owl and a Rufous-tailed Jacamar glistening in the full sun.

Arriving at Manari ranch in mid-afternoon, we settled into our rooms, organized our things, and had a chance for a bit of a rest—some even used the inviting hammocks strung up in the breezeway. Late in the day, we walked around the ranch grounds, admiring the enormous mango trees and spotting a few birds such as Orange-backed Troupial, Brown-throated Parakeet, Common Ground-Dove, and Red-shouldered Macaw. After happy hour and the checklist, we enjoyed a wonderful Manari dinner and then headed to bed to prepare for a very early start the next day.





## **Thurs., Feb. 27 Karasabai | Manari Ranch**

Probably the earliest start of the trip, we were up very early for coffee and on our way to the village of Karasabai well before 5:00am. The early start was soon rewarded by another Giant Anteater! We celebrated with a road breakfast right at that spot. A few birds were seen early, too, including Wood Stork, Grassland Sparrow, White-tailed Goldenthrout, and White-tailed Hawk. Continuing on the long road, which gradually became bumpier and bumpier, we arrived at the well-organized town of Karasabai.

Beyond the town, we headed into the nearby foothills in search of our target bird of the day, the Sun Parakeet. As luck would have it, we soon found a flock of these unmistakable birds and spent the next couple of hours admiring this most spectacular of parakeets and finding a few other birds, too. Interesting things spotted in the valleys included Tropical Gnatcatcher, Guianan and Mouse-colored Tyrannulets, and Gray-lined Hawk.



By this time famished, we returned to the village for a very tasty lunch at the Karasabai Community Centre (where many partook of the free government wi-fi!). After lunch, we loaded back up, and retraced our steps back to Manari Ranch where we pretty much had the afternoon off to relax and pack. The day concluded with happy hour, checklist, another excellent Manari dinner, followed by sleep.

## **Fri., Feb. 28 Manari Ranch & Lethem | Fly to Georgetown**

Our last day in the field (and, for that matter, in Guyana) began early, as usual, with breakfast. We drove through the savannahs near the ranch to our birding site for the day along the Takatu River (which is the border between Guyana and Brazil). The savannahs yielded a few interesting sightings, including Grassland Yellowfinch, Eastern Meadowlark, and two Giant Anteaters! Three days in a row with Giant Anteater and two in one day—our group had unparalleled luck with this peculiar and sought-after species.



Although that was hard to top, we arrived at our site along the Takatu River in good order and enjoyed a wonderful morning of birding. We located fairly easily one of our target birds, the very range-restricted Hoary-throated Spinetail, although the other (Rio Branco Antbird) was not to be found, likely because of very recent fires that had burned through part of the area. But the birding was great that morning, for



whatever reason, and everyone had great looks at many new species (and old friends) for the trip. Some of the highlights included Black-crested Antshrike, White-fringed Antwren (superb view of both male and female of this attractive antwren), Grayish Saltator, Yellow-breasted Flycatcher, Pale-tipped Tyrannulet, Hooded Tanager, Chestnut-vented Conebill, Solitary Sandpiper, and a flock of 16 Least Sandpiper (the latter causing some discussion among the group).

Tearing ourselves away from this lovely spot, we crossed the savannah to nearby Mussu Lake, a favorite spot of Dave's (and, I think, everyone else's!). The lake yielded its normal large concentration of Snail Kites, along with Maguari Stork, Least and Pied-billed Grebe, Black-crowned Night-Heron, and a pile of very fresh-looking Capybara scat. After this very satisfying morning, we returned to Manari Ranch for the last of our excellent meals there, final packing, and a bit of down time before our long journey home.

Leaving the ranch in mid-afternoon, we were taken to the nearby Lethem airport, encountering our first paved highways in many days! Arriving at Lethem airport, we checked in and waited a few hours for our flight back to Georgetown on Trans Guyana Airways. We bid farewell to Ron and Marissa Allcock who had been with us for so long as they had to return to Surama that afternoon.

Boarding our flight in late afternoon, we had an uneventful flight back to Georgetown's Ogle airport, where we were met by Francis' friendly face and arrived back at the Cara Lodge by 6:00pm. Everyone dashed for their rooms to shower, retrieve stored luggage, and do final organizing before our final dinner at the Cara. Leaving the Cara in the evening, we arrived at the Cheddi Jagan International Airport about 10:30 pm, in plenty of time to check in, clear Guyana immigration, and check out the duty-free before our 1:30 am flight back to Miami and beyond (technically, this was Saturday, February 29, at this point in time). So ended our most excellent adventure into the unspoiled wilderness of Guyana.

## Photo Credits:

Bronzy Jacamar, Dave Mehlman (DM); Green Aracari, Mike Samuel (MS); Blackish Nightjar, MS; Violeaceous Euphonia, DM; Crested Doradito, MS; Guianan Cock-of-the-rock, MS; Yellow-crowned Parrot, MS; Giant Anteater, MS; Brown-chested Martin, MS; Birding in the field, DM; Glittering-throated Emerald, MS; Bicolored Wren, MS; Great Potoo, MS; Buff-necked Ibis, MS; Harpy Eagle, MS; Rufous Potoo, MS; White-chinned Sapphire, MS; Black-and-white Hawk-Eagle, MS; Long-tailed Hermit, MS; Green Aracari, MS; Cocoi Heron, MS; Bronzy Jacamar, MS; Vermilion Flycatcher, MS; Maguari Stork, MS; juvenile Wattled Jacana, MS; Hooded Tanager, MS; Purple Gallinule, MS; Giant Anteater, MS; Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, MS; Barn Owl, MS; Orange-backed Troupial, MS; Gray-lined Hawk, MS; Black-crested Antshrike, MS; Solitary Sandpiper, MS; Group shot, DM.