



Dozens of Scarlet Ibis light up the mangroves as they gather in their night roost in the Caroni Swamp. (Photo by tour participant Mike Crewe)

Trinidad and Tobago provide an excellent introduction to the avian riches of "The Bird Continent" (aka South America), with representatives of many of the unique tropical families found in larger numbers further south. Add that to a couple of comfortable hotels, some tasty local cuisine, and a pleasant group of traveling companions, and you have the ingredients for a fine vacation. While evergreens and snow and mistletoe may seem more appropriate for the season, there's no question that we all enjoyed the Caribbean's tropical warmth during this holiday tour. Though we had a bit of tropical sogginess to cope with as well, we managed to dodge the raindrops on most occasions -- our decidedly damp day on the Blanchisseuse road notwithstanding!

Hummingbirds always rank high among the "favorite birds" of the tour, and this year proved no exception. We had amazing views of a female White-tailed Sabrewing as she danced through the foliage right around us, plucking insects from spider webs, so close we could almost reach out and touch her. White-necked Jacobins sparred at Asa Wright's feeders, and two showy male Tufted Coquettes (and a female) made regular visits to flowers below the veranda there. A male Ruby-Topaz dazzled in roadside flowers on Tobago.

Of course, there were plenty of other colorful species to enjoy as well. Speckled Tanagers swarmed over a roadside tree, nibbling fruits in the rain. Silver-beaked Tanagers flaunted their velveteen plumage (and startling white beaks) at Asa Wright's feeders. Barred Antshrikes, looking a bit like escaped convicts of old, chortled from nearby bushes. Masked Ducks, including a rusty male sporting a bright blue bill, floated among the sedges of a Tobago pond. Male Golden-headed Manakins moonwalked along branches in their leks. A Gray-headed Kite peered around from its perch atop a tree.

A pair of Bat Falcons spent several early mornings and late afternoons perched on snags near the veranda, occasionally nibbling (appropriately) on a bat or two. Red-billed Tropicbirds soared gracefully past our ridgetop lookout, and another sat

quietly on its nest among the leaf litter on Little Tobago. An unexpected Spectacled Owl sat on a pillar of christophine vines in the pouring rain, interrupting a soggy drive back to the lodge. A male Bearded Bellbird bonged his challenges from a branch over our heads, his dangling wattles waving as he called. Oilbirds rested on their fruit paste ledges, rocking and calling in the dim beam of Caleb's flashlight.

And who will soon forget the fabulous roost island in Caroni Swamp, with hundreds of Scarlet Ibis winging past in bright skeins unraveling against the dark green mangroves and sprinkled like gigantic Christmas ornaments across the tree tops?!

Thanks for joining in our adventure. I hope to see you all again on another tour, somewhere, some day!

-- Megan

For more information about this tour, including future departures, please visit our website at www.fieldguides.com

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Tinamidae (Tinamous)

LITTLE TINAMOU (*Crypturellus soui*) – We heard one calling from the forest as we piled back into the vans after our final stop up the mountain on the Blanchisseuse road. [*]

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – A little family group -- two red-billed adults and a quartet of plainer youngsters -- floated on one of the sewage ponds at Tobago Plantations.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Anas discors*) – A dozen or so -- all females or in eclipse plumage -- paddled out of sight behind some scrubby growth in one of the sewage ponds at Tobago Plantations.

MASKED DUCK (*Nomonyx dominicus*) – Three stripe-faced females were exciting enough -- but a bright, blue-billed male with yet another female was the icing on the cake. This species, previously a rare visitor to Tobago, has recently begun breeding on the island.

Cracidae (Guans, Chachalacas, and Curassows)

RUFOUS-VENTED CHACHALACA (*Ortalis ruficauda*) – Regular on Tobago, including raucous groups on the grounds of our hotel, and a gang intent on stripping a fruiting tree at Grafton Estate.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

LEAST GREBE (*Tachybaptus dominicus*) – A few, including an adult with two tiny striped chicks on one of the ponds at Tobago Plantations. They eventually climbed onto her back and were carried off through the lily pads.

PIED-BILLED GREBE (*Podilymbus podiceps*) – One preened and dove on a pond near the Caroni exit off the highway, not far from a big group of Common Gallinules. This is a scarce resident on Trinidad.

Phaethontidae (Tropicbirds)

RED-BILLED TROPICBIRD (*Phaethon aethereus*) – Many in graceful flight over Little Tobago, and one on a nest among the trees near the overlook. As we witnessed (while watching one trying to leave its nest), these birds are far less nimble when on the ground.



A Red-billed Tropicbird sits on its nest on the island of Little Tobago, while many others soar gracefully overhead. (Photo by tour participant Mike Crewe)

Fregatidae (Frigatebirds)

MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD (*Fregata magnificens*) – Regular along the coasts of both islands, but our best views came on our final morning, when dozens lurked menacingly over Little Tobago, waiting for some hapless Red-billed Tropicbird to return with a bellyful of fish. We saw several in hot -- and, judging from all the noise the tropicbirds made - - fairly scary pursuit.

Sulidae (Boobies and Gannets)

BROWN BOOBY (*Sula leucogaster*) – Dozens of them lined the rocky ledges of Little Tobago, preening and courting. The white bellies and yellow feet and bills of this species quickly separate them from the smaller Red-footed Boobies.

RED-FOOTED BOOBY (*Sula sula*) – A common nesting species on Little Tobago, with numbers snoozing on their stick nests in trees along the hillsides. Though most were white-tailed brown morphs, we saw a few white morph birds as well -- and had good looks at those red feet.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – One stood spread-eagled on a stump at Waterloo, drying its wings not far from a group of Brown Pelicans resting on a concrete slab, and two others flapped past overhead there.

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

ANHINGA (*Anhinga anhinga*) – Particularly common at Tobago Plantations, where dozens dried out in trees and around pond edges and a female wrestled with a fish that was doing its best (ultimately unsuccessfully) not to be swallowed.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

BROWN PELICAN (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) – Scores preened and snoozed on boats at Waterloo -- including dozens festooning the spread arms of a fishing vessel returning to shore -- while others flew ponderously past over the bay. We had another trickle on Tobago, including a few chummy regulars on the boat dock.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – One flew past while we searched for bitterns in the Melon Patch, another hunted prey along the mudflats at Waterloo and a third stood on the edge of a sewage pond in Bon Accord.

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – Scattered individuals in wetland areas on both islands.

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*) – The numbers winging low over the waters of Caroni Swamp, headed for the "roost island", were especially impressive. Unlike the Scarlet Ibis, which roosted in plain sight, these generally ducked in towards the center of the islands, disappearing from view.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*) – Common at Waterloo and Caroni Swamp (where the only way we could have been closer to a few of them is if they had landed on us), with a handful of others on Tobago, including an adult and a still-white youngster patrolling the stream near the entrance to Blue Waters Inn.

TRICOLORED HERON (*Egretta tricolor*) – Especially common in Caroni Swamp, where dozens flapped in loose flocks low over the water, headed for their roost among the mangroves.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Abundant, particularly around the feet of grazing animals, on both islands.

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*) – Nice looks at several along the ditches beside the road in Bon Accord. This species, which isn't found on Trinidad, lacks the gray on the neck and chest that the next species shows.

STRIATED HERON (*Butorides striata*) – Our best views probably came at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, where several hunted near a pond edging one of the pastures. This species is not found on Tobago.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – A youngster poked around near a line of pilings at Waterloo, looking for tidbits.



Bucking tradition, a rebel Savanna Hawk enjoys a day at the beach. The bird's long legs are perfectly adapted for hunting in its more typical grassland habitat. (Photo by tour participant Mike Crewe)

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nyctanassa violacea*) – Small numbers on Trinidad, including an intent adult hunting only 10 yards from us at Waterloo and a couple of adults flushing repeatedly in front of us as we started our boat trip in Caroni Swamp.

BOAT-BILLED HERON (*Cochlearius cochlearius*) – One roosting high in the mangroves at Caroni Swamp climbed even higher as we watched.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

SCARLET IBIS (*Eudocimus ruber*) – What a fabulous finale to our stay on Trinidad: a rain-free evening, a boat all to ourselves, icy cups full of rum punch, some tasty chocolate cookies and hundreds of Scarlet Ibis sprinkled across the tops of the mangroves, looking like gigantic colorful Christmas ornaments -- with dozens more arriving every minute!

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*) – Daily on Trinidad, often in enormous swirling kettles over the flatlands. They seemed particularly drawn to the buffalypsos at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, with dozens standing on nearby fence posts -- or the beasts themselves!

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*) – Also regular on Trinidad, but in far smaller numbers than the previous species.

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – Common along the coasts of both islands, particularly around Waterloo, where we saw several successful hunters carrying fish.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

GRAY-HEADED KITE (*Leptodon cayanensis*) – Fine views of an adult sitting in a tree down the hill from the Asa Wright veranda shortly before breakfast one morning.

PEARL KITE (*Gampsonyx swainsonii*) – One of these tiny raptors sat atop a dead snag along the highway, seen as we headed toward the Aripo Savanna. I think we all got binoculars on it -- and a lucky few got a look in the scope -- before it flew off.

LONG-WINGED HARRIER (*Circus buffoni*) – Best seen near Caroni Swamp, when we found a couple of males dancing low over the nearby rice fields. Those in the first van saw another quartering the overgrown fields of the Melon Patch, thanks to some great spotting by Ann.

WHITE HAWK (*Leucopternis albicollis*) – Scope views of an adult sitting in a tree up the hill from Verdant Vale, seen while we waited for Ramdass to switch vehicles, with another -- a very soggy youngster -- drying its wings in a tree near the start of the track at Las Lapas.

COMMON BLACK-HAWK (*Buteogallus anthracinus*) – Two adults and a calling youngster circled in a thermal over Asa Wright one morning, seen from the top of the Discovery trail. We had another flee before our boat in Caroni Swamp.

RUFOUS CRAB HAWK (*Buteogallus aequinoctialis*) – We were oh-so-close! As it was, only those in the first two rows of the first van saw two of these uncommon raptors (and then only for a few seconds) as they soared near the tops of the trees at Carli Bay. Sadly, they quickly dropped behind the leaves and disappeared.

GREAT BLACK-HAWK (*Buteogallus urubitinga*) – One glided past as we birded near the overlook on the Roxborough - Bloody Bay road, showing the distinctive broad white patch on its uppertail.

SAVANNA HAWK (*Buteogallus meridionalis*) – Seen particularly well on the drive south from Manzanilla beach to Nariva Swamp; we saw a half dozen perched on the ground, in the trees and flying overhead. We saw others around the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, including one that sat for long minutes in a nearby treetop while we searched for Grassland Yellow-finches.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (*Buteo platypterus*) – One, trying in vain to dry its wings on a soggy day, sat spread-eagled in a tree beside the Blanchisseuse road. We saw and heard a trio of the resident local subspecies "antillarum" (two youngsters and an adult) over the rainforest on Tobago.

GRAY HAWK (*Buteo nitidus*) – Surprisingly scarce this year, with only two youngsters seen: one playing hide and seek in the canopy of a roadside tree near Waller Field, and a second sitting atop a broken stump in the coconut palm grove near



Asa Wright's famous Oilbird caves are easily the most accessible site to see these strange and unique creatures. This was one of several perched near the cave's entrance. (Photo by tour participant Mike Crewe)

Nariva Swamp.

SHORT-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo brachyurus*) – Best seen during our search for Trinidad Euphonia, when a gorgeous light-morph adult moved closer and closer, eventually circling over our heads. We saw others daily on Trinidad.

ZONE-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo albonotatus*) – Single birds circled overhead on several days, with especially close looks at one over some farm fields in the Aripo savanna; those in Dave's van on the drive to Caroni Swamp also saw one well along the road through the rice fields.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

YELLOW-HEADED CARACARA (*Milvago chimachima*) – Regular on Trinidad, including one perched atop a nearby palm at Waller Field, several among the coconut palms on the island's eastern shore and three youngsters checking out some roadkill near our hotel on the final evening.

MERLIN (*Falco columbarius*) – We saw at least two different birds perched up in tree tops as we headed out of Waller Field late in the day, and watched another pair tangling in golden late afternoon light over the Melon Patch. Some of the group got brief glimpses of another bird flying past on two different days as we passed through the town of Roxborough.

BAT FALCON (*Falco ruficularis*) – Super scope views on several days of one or both of a resident pair at Asa Wright, seen perched atop dead snags off one end of the veranda. Appropriately enough, one ripped some poor bat to bits while we watched early one morning, and we saw the same bird later as it made multiple high-speed flights past the veranda, presumably hoping for an early mammalian visitor to the hummingbird feeders!

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – A big female flew past as we started our birding on the Aripo Agricultural Research Station. This is a winter visitor to the islands.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

CLAPPER RAIL (*Rallus longirostris*) – One crept back and forth through the mangroves near the fishing jetty at Waterloo, probing the mud and peering out onto the road.

PURPLE GALLINULE (*Porphyrio martinica*) – We spotted a few, including a brown youngster, surprisingly far off the ground in the reeds near where we parked in the Melon Patch, and had even better views of others scuttling across the lily pads at Tobago Plantations.

COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*) – Best seen at Tobago Plantations, where several busy adults fed fluffy black chicks. We had dozens of others more distantly in ponds beside the highway near Caroni Swamp.

Aramidae (Limpkin)

LIMPKIN (*Aramus guarauna*) – We all heard one calling -- loudly and repeatedly, sounding like someone (or something) in desperate need of assistance -- from a line of trees in the Aripo Savanna. Those in the first van had brief views of one that jumped up from a roadside field en route to Caroni Swamp, then disappeared over a higher bit of land.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

SOUTHERN LAPWING (*Vanellus chilensis*) – Regular on both islands, including noisy birds scuttling around (both in daylight and darkness) at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, others poking around the mangrove roots at Waterloo, and a couple snoozing along the edge of the creek at the entrance to Blue Waters Inn. This species is a recent arrival to the islands, first recorded in Trinidad in 1961 and Tobago in 1974.

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – A handful, all in drab non-breeding plumage, pattered on the mudflats at Waterloo.

SEMIPALMATED PLOVER (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) – A small flock hunted on a sandbar at Waterloo. Like the other shorebirds on this list (except the jacana), this is a winter visitor to the islands.

Jacaniidae (Jacanas)

WATTLED JACANA (*Jacana jacana*) – Regular in vegetation-covered wetlands on both islands, including a number of stripey-faced youngsters in Nariva Swamp and Tobago Plantations.



As inconspicuous as they are, any Masked Duck sighting is a good one, but a male in brilliant breeding dress is always an exceptional find! (Photo by tour participant Mike Crewe)

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*) – Seen every day but the first, with especially large numbers in the mangroves of Caroni Swamp.

SOLITARY SANDPIPER (*Tringa solitaria*) – A few at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, including one foraging in a little puddle near the buffalypsos and another snoozing along the edge of a small creek. We saw another with some yellowlegs beside a ditch in Bon Accord on Tobago.

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – Small numbers on scattered days, including a few in a canal edging some farm fields on Trinidad, a handful on the mudflats at Waterloo and a couple hunting in a shady ditch near the Bon Accord sewage ponds.

WILLET (*Tringa semipalmata*) – A dozen or so on the mudflats at Waterloo, including a few showing their flashy wing pattern as they moved from place to place.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*) – Two among the shorebirds at Waterloo, with a few others in the mangrove ditches at Bon Accord.

WHIMBREL (*Numenius phaeopus*) – Small numbers prowled the mudflats at Waterloo, looking for crabs.

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*) – A little flock snoozed on one of the anchored boats at Waterloo, but our best views came at Blue Waters Inn, where a dozen or more confiding birds ambled among the beachgoers or checked the bar floor for tidbits.

WESTERN SANDPIPER (*Calidris mauri*) – A handful scurried among the Semipalmated Plovers on a distant mudflat at Waterloo.

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*) – A few seen around the edge of some muddy puddles in the buffalypso pastures at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station.

STILT SANDPIPER (*Calidris himantopus*) – A group of 10 on the mudflats at Waterloo were a surprise; while common on migration through the islands, this species doesn't typically overwinter. One of the birds sported an orange leg flag reading "ACJ"; unfortunately, I haven't heard back from the project that banded it.



He may look all pretty and innocent, but this greedy Copper-rumped Hummingbird was a real bear, as it tried to repel all other hummingbirds from four of the Asa Wright feeders! (Photo by tour participant Mike Crewe)

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

LAUGHING GULL (*Leucophaeus atricilla*) – Hundreds and hundreds preened, snoozed and chatted on the mudflats of Waterloo.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (GRAELLSII) (*Larus fuscus graellsii*) – A few at Waterloo, including an adult preening among a big group of Laughing Gulls at Waterloo, looking enormous, with another snoozing in the background. We also saw a youngster being hotly pursued by a couple of Magnificent Frigatebirds there. This is a species which only recently began showing up on the islands.

ROYAL TERN (*Thalasseus maximus*) – Single birds seen flying past a few times at Waterloo; this species is normally far more common along the western coast of Trinidad than it was during our visit this year.

BLACK SKIMMER (CINERASCENS) (*Rynchops niger cinerascens*) – A flock of 20 or so rested at Waterloo, dwarfed by the Brown Pelicans that shared their sandbar.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Regular in the towns and cities of Trinidad, with a few recorded from the airport end of Tobago as well. [I]

PALE-VENTED PIGEON (*Patagioenas cayennensis*) – Daily on Tobago, including a pair in the mangroves at Bon Accord, with others at Blue Waters Inn and on roadside wires.

SCALED PIGEON (*Patagioenas speciosa*) – Some of the group had scope views of one sitting in a tree down the hill from the Asa Wright veranda, while we gathered before leaving the property for the day. Others saw one perched atop a Cecropia tree at one stop on our soggy outing along the Blanchisseuse road.

EARED DOVE (*Zenaida auriculata*) – Our best views probably came after lunch at the Mount Irvine Bay Hotel, when we

found a few resting in a tree in the parking lot. The "ear" of the bird's name is merely some black feathering on the side of its head.

RUDDY GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina talpacoti*) – Common and widespread in the lowlands of both islands, with particularly nice looks at a male busily nibbling a biscuit at the Trinidad airport.

WHITE-TIPPED DOVE (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – Especially nice views of one sitting quietly on a low branch at Grafton Estate, showing well that snazzy blue bare eye skin.

GRAY-FRONTED DOVE (*Leptotila rufaxilla*) – One seen trundling along Asa Wright's Discovery trail, with another under the veranda feeders one morning.

Psittacidae (Parrots)

RED-BELLIED MACAW (*Orthopsittaca manilata*) – It's been three long years since we've spotted this apparently declining species on a Field Guides tour -- so we were delighted to hear a raucous mob of them calling from some Moriche Palms in the Arena Forest. With a bit of shuffling up and down the road -- and a lot of patience -- we were able to get scope views of a courting pair as they bill clasped and head bobbed.

GREEN-RUMPED PARROTLET (*Forpus passerinus*) – Seen particularly well at Tobago Plantations, where we found one examining potential nest holes in a palm trunk beside the road. We saw others in Nariva Swamp and at Waller Field.

LILAC-TAILED PARROTLET (*Touit batavicus*) – A couple of these little parrots rocketed overhead (after peeling off from a passing flock of Orange-winged Parrots) while we birded along a back road in the Aripo savanna. Its call is a high-pitched scream rather than the twitter of the previous species.

BLUE-HEADED PARROT (*Pionus menstruus*) – A single bird perched high in a tree down the hill from the Asa Wright veranda, seen on our first morning.

ORANGE-WINGED PARROT (*Amazona amazonica*) – Easily the most common parrot of the tour, seen most days on both islands. The noisy birds flying up the Arima Valley provided particularly nice looks at those distinctive orange secondary patches as they banked against the lush green background.

YELLOW-CROWNED PARROT (*Amazona ochrocephala*) – Some fine spotting by Dave as we zoomed up Trinidad's eastern "highway" netted us scope views of a handful sitting on palm fronds before settling in among the coconuts for the night.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

SQUIRREL CUCKOO (*Piaya cayana*) – We heard the distinctive wolf whistle of this species as we climbed back up the Guacharo trail from the Oilbird cave, but never caught up with the singer. [*]

MANGROVE CUCKOO (*Coccyzus minor*) – We had super views of one clambering around in a spreading tree at Tobago Plantations, seen after we heard it calling from a nearby grove.

STRIPED CUCKOO (*Tapera naevia*) – One sang from a fence post at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, its crest rising and falling in time with its whistles.

SMOOTH-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga ani*) – Common throughout, including big noisy gangs feeding in the grasses of the Melon Patch.

Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

BARN OWL (*Tyto alba*) – Some of the group heard the hissing call of this species as we searched for nightjars at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station. [*]

Strigidae (Owls)

TROPICAL SCREECH-OWL (*Megascops choliba*) – Point-blank views of one calling from a tree right near the offices of the Aripo Agricultural Research Station.

SPECTACLED OWL (*Pulsatrix perspicillata*) – This one was a fabulous (if unexpected) finale to our afternoon in Nariva Swamp -- on our drive back up the hill to Asa Wright, we found one sitting in the rain, right beside the road!



Though situated in the Caribbean, Trinidad's bird life is decidedly South American in origin. Many of the species that occur here, this White-headed Marsh-tyrant included, occur widely in South America and reach their northern limit on the island. (Photo by tour participant Mike Crewe)

FERRUGINOUS PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium brasilianum*) – A tooting bird over Jogie's driveway had attracted quite a mob of angry passerines -- including two very determined Tropical Mockingbirds. We had great views of this fierce little predator before the birds finally drove it off.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

SHORT-TAILED NIGHTHAWK (*Lurocalis semitorquatus*) – A handful of these very dark birds flashed acrobatically back and forth near the tower at Morne Bleu, swallowing up the insects attracted to the lights. At some points, the birds were merely arm's length over our heads!

COMMON PAURAUQUE (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) – With some patience and Dave's big spotlight, we were able to walk right up to several of these long-tailed nightbirds on the road through the Aripo Agricultural Research Station. Their burry calls were a regular part of the post-sundown soundtrack there.

WHITE-TAILED NIGHTJAR (*Caprimulgus cayennensis*) – We saw a number of these small nightbirds flitting over the fields at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, where we also heard their high shrill whistles.

Nyctibiidae (Potoos)

COMMON POTOO (*Nyctibius griseus*) – One on a dayroost along the Discovery trail at Asa Wright did its best "ignore me, I'm just a tree stump" imitation -- though it rather spoiled the effect when it opened one large eye for a look around. We saw the pumpkin-orange eyes of several others glowing from fence posts at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station during our night drive.

Steatornithidae (Oilbird)

OILBIRD (*Steatornis caripensis*) – A fine afternoon experience with the famous birds of Dunstan Cave. A few rested on ledges right near the entrance while bigger numbers did the same in more sheltered spots further away. I think everybody got to hear their harsh hissing calls -- which certainly help to explain their local folk name, "Devil Bird"!

Apodidae (Swifts)

SHORT-TAILED SWIFT (*Chaetura brachyura*) – We saw a few mingled with the more numerous Fork-tailed Palm-Swifts over Waller Field, but had many more (in great swirling flocks) on Tobago. Our best views came at the Mount Irvine Bay Hotel, where dozens zipped back and forth over the pool.

BAND-RUMPED SWIFT (*Chaetura spinicaudus*) – A few flew with the more common Gray-rumped Swifts over the christophine field downhill from Asa Wright, with the white "bars" on their rumps flashing as they turned.

GRAY-RUMPED SWIFT (*Chaetura cinereiventris*) – Abundant over the big christophine field down the road from Asa Wright, showing well their namesake gray rumps as they zoomed back and forth.

FORK-TAILED PALM-SWIFT (*Tachornis squamata*) – Good numbers of these long-tailed swifts flew over the Moriche Palm grove at Waller Field, dropping steadily lower as dusk approached.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

WHITE-NECKED JACOBIN (*Florisuga mellivora*) – Very common at Asa Wright, where up to four at a time jostled around the feeders.

RUFOUS-BREASTED HERMIT (*Glaucis hirsutus*) – Seen well on both islands, including a regular early-morning visitor to the orange spiky flowers below the Asa Wright veranda, another feeding at red flowers on Morne Bleu and several along the Roxborough - Bloody Bay road.

GREEN HERMIT (*Phaethornis guy*) – Best seen as they fed at the huge salmon-colored torch ginger flowers on the trail below the Asa Wright veranda, their long curved bills probing deeply among the petals and their long white tail tips gleaming among the shadows.

LITTLE HERMIT (*Phaethornis longuemareus*) – One was regularly seen visiting the orange flower spikes (which dwarfed it) just below the Asa Wright veranda.

RUBY-TOPAZ HUMMINGBIRD (*Chrysolampis mosquitos*) – A gorgeous male fed on some Pride of Barbados flowers in Bon Accord, and another visited the feeders in front of the lower level rooms at Blue Waters Inn.

GREEN-THROATED MANGO (*Anthracothorax viridigula*) – A male sat high overhead in the mangroves, showing his maroon tail nicely as he stretched.

BLACK-THROATED MANGO (*Anthracothorax nigricollis*) – Surprisingly thin on the ground this year, with a single female foraging in some flowering bushes right beside our vans in the lowlands, and another briefly at some garden flowers in Bon Accord.

TUFTED COQUETTE (*Lophornis ornatus*) – Fabulous views of these crowd-pleasing little hummers from the Asa Wright veranda, where two males and a female pirouetted among the purple vervain flowers.

LONG-BILLED STARTRHOAT (*Heliomaster longirostris*) – One made a brief visit to some of the orange spiky flowers below the Asa Wright veranda on our first morning, seen by many.

BLUE-CHINNED SAPPHIRE (*Chlorestes notata*) – A regular visitor to the flowering bushes under the Asa Wright veranda gave us plenty of opportunities for good study -- and some wonderful shining flashes of that brilliant green gorget!

WHITE-TAILED SABREWING (*Campylopterus ensipennis*) – Views don't come much better than those we had along the Gilpin track, where a female hovered for several minutes right around us, gently plucking bugs from a multitude of spider webs. And as soon as she disappeared, a male flew in to perch right over our heads!

WHITE-CHESTED EMERALD (*Amazilia brevirostris*) – Best seen from the Asa Wright veranda, where several confiding little birds perched on nearby sticks or visited the hanging hummingbird feeders -- often only inches away from nearby human heads!

COPPER-RUMPED HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia tobaci*) – Common and widespread on both islands, including one feisty bird determined to keep four of Asa Wright's hummingbird feeders all to itself.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

GREEN-BACKED TROGON (*Trogon viridis*) – Blair and Claudia were the lucky ones who spotted this species, when it made an appearance down the hill from the Asa Wright veranda on a rainy morning when they stayed back at the lodge.

GUIANAN TROGON (*Trogon violaceus*) – A female sat in a tree near Asa Wright's Discovery trail, showing us her yellow belly, white eyering and barred undertail.

COLLARED TROGON (*Trogon collaris*) – A handsome male brightened a very wet morning on Morne Bleu when he sat for long minutes on the telephone wire right in front of us. We saw another more distant bird later in the day along the Blanchisseuse road, but it proved far less cooperative.

Momotidae (Motmots)

TRINIDAD MOTMOT (*Momotus bahamensis*) – Satisfyingly common -- and satisfyingly cooperative -- on both islands, including regular early morning visitors to the feeders below the Asa Wright veranda. This species was recently split from the Blue-headed Motmot complex.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

RINGED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle torquata*) – One of these big kingfishers sat on a telephone wire over a river along the highway.

GREEN KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle americana*) – Claudia and Barbara were the lucky ones looking in the right direction when Dave spotted one of these zipping past along one of the little creeks through Nariva Swamp.

AMERICAN PYGMY KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle aenea*) – One perched in the mangroves at Nariva Swamp, allowing scope studies. It wasn't much bigger than the nearby warblers!

Galbulidae (Jacamars)

RUFOUS-TAILED JACAMAR (*Galbula ruficauda*) – A female caught wasps in a bamboo stand in Trinidad's lowlands, but our best looks came along the Roxborough - Bloody Bay road in Tobago, where handfuls flashed back and forth along the roadsides and whistled shrilly from the trees.

Ramphastidae (Toucans)

CHANNEL-BILLED TOUCAN (*Ramphastos vitellinus*) – A pair sat atop a tree down the hill from the Asa Wright veranda on several mornings, yelping their vaguely froglike calls. Many of us saw another flying by at Waller Field, preceded by that enormous beak.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

RED-CROWNED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes rubricapillus*) – Especially nice views of many at Grafton Estate, including one hammering on a rotting tree not far from where we found our first Rufous-vented Chachalacas. Some of the group had others at Blue Waters Inn.

RED-RUMPED WOODPECKER (*Veniliornis kirkii*) – A pair worked among tangled branches over Asa Wright's Discovery trail, giving us plenty of time to study them in the scopes, waiting for that telltale red flash of the rump. We heard another near our first Red-crowned Woodpeckers on Tobago.

GOLDEN-OLIVE WOODPECKER (*Colaptes rubiginosus*) – Some of the group had superb views of one in a skinny dead tree right beside the veranda at Asa Wright, after some folks had already headed out toward the vans. Sadly, though we heard others along the Blanchisseuse road and the Roxborough - Bloody Bay road, we never laid eyes on another.

LINEATED WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus lineatus*) – Some fine spotting by Lenny netted us scope views of a male

clinging to a dead palm trunk in the middle of town.

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)

GRAY-THROATED LEAFTOSSER (*Sclerurus albigularis*) – After a few flybys (en route to its burrow nest in a nearby bank), one sat quietly at the base of a big tree downhill, a big moth clamped tightly in its beak.

STRIPE-BREASTED SPINETAIL (*Synallaxis cinnamomea*) – Our first was on Trinidad, dancing back and forth across a big tangled pile of fallen trees and vines. Our second searched for tasty morsels on the opposite bank as we neared the end of our Gilpin track walk.

YELLOW-CHINNED SPINETAIL (*Certhiaxis cinnamomeus*) – One on a tall weed at Carli Bay (not far from our Saffron Finch) posed so long and so well that we could all examine its namesake yellow chin in the scope. We saw others bouncing through the scruffy vegetation at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station.

PLAIN-BROWN WOODCREEPER (*Dendrocicla fuliginosa*) – One clung to the side of a tree over an army ant swarm, not far from the start of the long climb down to the Oilbird cave. The name is most descriptive -- this is an impressively featureless woodcreeper!

OLIVACEOUS WOODCREEPER (*Sittasomus griseicapillus*) – After hearing at least a half dozen different birds calling (and calling and calling) from the forest all along the Gilpin track, we FINALLY connected with one at the end of our hike, when Gladwyn spotted one climbing up a trunk right beside the path.

STRAIGHT-BILLED WOODCREEPER (*Dendroplex picus*) – We heard several calling from the mangroves at Caroni Swamp, but none of them approached close enough to be seen. [*]

COCOA WOODCREEPER (*Xiphorhynchus susurrans*) – Seen well on several days, with our best views on our last morning birding on Trinidad -- when we found a pair of them (along with some Plain-brown Woodcreepers) over a boiling swarm of ants along the Blanchisseuse road.

Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)

GREAT ANTSHRIKE (*Taraba major*) – A male hopping around in the very wet grass below the lights at Morne Bleu provided some entertainment on a soggy morning. There was also a pair near the main building at Asa Wright, regularly seen at the feeders or near the parking lot.

BLACK-CRESTED ANTSHRIKE (*Sakesphorus canadensis*) – A male sat for long minutes at eye level along a back road in the Aripo savanna, allowing great scope study. We had another in Nariva Swamp, chirring gruffly as it flitted through the mangroves.

BARRED ANTSHRIKE (*Thamnophilus doliatus*) – Regular throughout, including a noisy pair from the Asa Wright veranda most mornings, a cooperative female in the same tree as our Mangrove Cuckoo and a male bouncing through a bamboo stand on the Gilpin track.

PLAIN ANTVIREO (*Dysithamnus mentalis*) – A pair flicked in mid-height vegetation toward the end of our walk along the Gilpin track, proving far more cooperative than the male we'd found earlier in the day.

WHITE-FLANKED ANTWREN (*Myrmotherula axillaris*) – Two different males along the Blanchisseuse road gave great views to some -- though others only saw them flying back and forth.

WHITE-FRINGED ANTWREN (*Formicivora grisea*) – Tobago's antwren was far more cooperative than Trinidad's was! One at Grafton Estate clambered around in trailside vines, letting us examine him from pretty much all angles.

SILVERED ANTBIRD (*Sclateria naevia*) – A young male, still showing pale tips on many of his feathers, crept in for a look at us along a little stream in Nariva Swamp -- and crept away again without ever uttering a sound.

WHITE-BELLIED ANTBIRD (*Myrmeciza longipes*) – Superb views of a male singing from a little tree, just below us along the Blanchisseuse road.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

FOREST ELAENIA (*Myiopagis gaimardii*) – One flicked through the tree at the end of the Asa Wright veranda on several mornings, showing very well.

YELLOW-BELLIED ELAENIA (*Elaenia flavogaster*) – Scattered individuals on Trinidad, with others on the grounds of Blue Waters Inn on Tobago.

OLIVE-STRIPED FLYCATCHER (*Mionectes olivaceus*) – Barbara was the lucky person standing next to Dave when he found one of these very uncommon flycatchers foraging with the Speckled Tanager flock along the Blanchisseuse road. Between the fog and the raindrops, the rest of us weren't able to find it once it moved.

OCHRE-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Mionectes oleagineus*) – One was a regular visitor to the tree at the end of Asa Wright's veranda, showing its distinctive wing-flicking behavior. We saw others elsewhere in the rainforests of both islands.

- SLATY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER** (*Leptopogon superciliaris*) – One danced all around us over an ant swarm along the Blanchisseuse road, eventually giving everybody a good view.
- YELLOW-BREASTED FLYCATCHER** (*Tolmomyias flaviventris*) – A pair of these little flycatchers showed well along the edge of the ponds at Tobago Plantations, and another pair did the same -- practically at arm's length -- at Grafton Estate, where their high-pitched calls were a regular part of the walk's soundtrack.
- BRAN-COLORED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiophobus fasciatus*) – Dave and Barbara got the briefest of views of one -- initially passed off as another Long-billed Gnatwren -- zooming past as we birded along a little track in the Aripo savanna.
- EULER'S FLYCATCHER** (*Lathrotriccus eulerei*) – A calling bird flicked back and forth over the Blanchisseuse road, often settling long enough to allow extended scope views.
- OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER** (*Contopus cooperi*) – One hunted from a utility wire over the road up to Morne Bleu, showing its short-tailed / big-headed shape against the omnipresent mist.
- FUSCOUS FLYCATCHER** (*Cnemotriccus fuscatus*) – One hunted along the Gilpin track, showing well for some while the rest were still picking their way carefully down a muddy stream bank.
- PIED WATER-TYRANT** (*Fluvicola pica*) – Particularly common in the Aripo savanna and the Melon Patch, including a pair hunting along the little creek near the buffalypso shed.
- WHITE-HEADED MARSH TYRANT** (*Arundinicola leucocephala*) – Especially good views of a pair hunting from the tops of bushes in one of the pastures at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station. The local name, Nun Bird, seems particularly appropriate!
- BRIGHT-RUMPED ATILA** (*Attila spadiceus*) – We heard the far-off maniacal laugh of this species while climbing the hill after our Bearded Bellbird excursion. [*]
- VENEZUELAN FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus venezuelensis*) – Two flicked through the high canopy of some trees along the last track we walked in Tobago's rainforest, eventually perching right out in the open. The mournful whistles of these birds helped to make them a bit easier to locate.
- BROWN-CRESTED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus tyrannulus*) – Scattered individuals on both islands, with one at our pygmy-kingfisher spot giving us especially good views of its rufous-centered undertail.
- GREAT KISKADEE** (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) – Very common throughout Trinidad -- including a vocal pair that regularly visited the Asa Wright feeders -- but much less frequent on Tobago.
- STREAKED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiodynastes maculatus*) – One hunted low beside the Roxborough - Bloody Bay road, showing well its streaked chest and broad blackish eyestripe.
- SULPHURY FLYCATCHER** (*Tyrannopsis sulphurea*) – Several noisy pairs twittered their way back and forth across the road at Waller Field, often sitting conveniently right out in the open on their favored Moriche Palms. Though they resemble the kingbirds, these birds are quickly distinguished by their brown, rather than gray, heads and faces.
- TROPICAL KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – Daily, including a pair hunting from the wires over the upper parking at Asa Wright.
- GRAY KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus dominicensis*) – One atop a mangrove near the Bon Accord sewage ponds showed particularly well. We saw several others on roadside wires on Trinidad.

Cotingidae (Cotingas)

- BEARDED BELLBIRD** (*Procnias averano*) – WOW!! Great scope views in a rather ear-splitting encounter with several along Asa Wright's Discovery trail. The last one we found proved particularly accommodating, showing us all sides as he "bonged" his challenges at his rivals -- with those distinctive throat wattles quivering!

Pipridae (Manakins)

- WHITE-BEARDED MANAKIN** (*Manacus manacus*) – Small numbers of males lurked around the lek beside the Discovery trail, waiting for passing females. One sat on the top rail of the fence for a bit, allowing particularly good views, and we heard others "popping" (unseen) down the hill.
- BLUE-BACKED MANAKIN** (*Chiroxiphia pareola*) – Our first was a drab female in a bush along the Roxborough - Bloody Bay road. Then we found a red-capped olive youngster plucking fruits from a tree near the overlook. And finally, along the Gilpin track, we ogled an adult male in all his glory as he flicked among some branches over the stream.
- GOLDEN-HEADED MANAKIN** (*Pipra erythrocephala*) – The males dancing on their lek near the Discovery trail -- showing off with little trills, wing flicks, sliding side steps and the occasional "moonwalk" -- were especially fun to watch.

Vireonidae (Vireos)

SCRUB GREENLET (*Hylophilus flavipes*) – Certainly not among the islands' jazzier birds, but one along the edge of the ponds at Tobago Plantations gave us fine views none-the-less. We saw another with the Plain Antvireos at the end of our walk along Gilpin trail.

GOLDEN-FRONTED GREENLET (*Hylophilus aurantiifrons*) – A couple in the big mixed flock we found in the bamboo stand (while looking for the calling Limpkin in the Aripo savanna) showed very well as they searched for insects.

RUFOUS-BROWED PEPPERSHRIKE (*Cyclarhis gujanensis*) – As usual, we heard far more of these than we saw, but we had stellar views of several -- one in a tree alongside Asa Wright's Discovery trail and another with the mixed flock in the Aripo savanna.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

SOUTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) – Regular on Trinidad, with especially nice looks at the ones quartering back and forth over the christophine fields down the hill from Asa Wright, and of another sitting for long minutes on a wire near the tower at Morne Bleu.

GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN (*Progne chalybea*) – A handful hanging out on the wires near the entrance to the Aripo Agricultural Research Station gave us good opportunities for scope studies.

WHITE-WINGED SWALLOW (*Tachycineta albiventer*) – Seen particularly well at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, where a pair sat on a telephone wire near the main offices, and others flew back and forth over the pastures.

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*) – Dozens zipped back and forth over the sewage ponds in Bon Accord. Mike saw another en route to Manzanilla beach.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

RUFOUS-BREASTED WREN (*Pheugopedius rutilus*) – One twitched its way across a low brush pile, showing very well as it paused repeatedly in the open -- distracting us completely from our search for a singing Sooty Grassquit!

HOUSE WREN (*Troglodytes aedon*) – Seen or heard most days of the tour, with especially nice studies of one singing and checking for moths under the tower lights at Morne Bleu.

Poliptilidae (Gnatcatchers)

LONG-BILLED GNATWREN (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) – A pair along a dirt track in the Aripo savanna spent long minutes hitching up and down vines and bamboo branches, part of a big flurry of birds.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

YELLOW-LEGGED THRUSH (*Turdus flavipes*) – Great views of a pair bouncing around in fruiting tree near the overlook on the Roxborough - Bloody Bay road; the male proved particularly cooperative, often sitting out in the open on bare limbs.

COCOA THRUSH (*Turdus fumigatus*) – Best seen on (and under) the feeders near the Asa Wright veranda.

SPECTACLED THRUSH (*Turdus nudigenis*) – Daily on both islands, including several sharing the Asa Wright feeders with the honeycreepers and Bananaquits.

WHITE-NECKED THRUSH (*Turdus albicollis*) – Two near the White-bearded Manakin lek sat just above the ground in small saplings -- nice spotting Claudia! We saw a few others along the Blanchisseuse road, and more in the rainforest on Tobago.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

TROPICAL MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus gilvus*) – Common and widespread on both islands, seen every day of the tour.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – One proved to be a regular visitor at Asa Wright, checking out the pickings under the feeders most mornings; we saw others along the roads in the rainforests of both islands.

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER (*Protonotaria citrea*) – A bright bird showed nicely along a little stream in Nariva Swamp, near where we found our American Pygmy-Kingfisher.

MASKED YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis aequinoctialis*) – A chipping male flicked through a reed bed and bamboo stand along the edge of a road through the Aripo savanna, occasionally perching up for a long look around. Though it looks a lot like "our" Common Yellowthroat, its song is completely different.

AMERICAN REDSTART (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – A male hunting from the chain link fence around the communications tower on Morne Bleu showed particularly well. Some also spotted a more retiring female working in some mangroves at Nariva Swamp, not far from where we found our American Pygmy-Kingfisher.

TROPICAL PARULA (*Setophaga pitiayumi*) – I think Barbara and I were the only ones to get brief looks at one with a

mixed flock along the Blanchisseuse road, seen as we tried to get better views of the Euler's Flycatcher.

YELLOW WARBLER (*Setophaga petechia*) – Small numbers seen in "wet spots" in the lowlands of Trinidad, including a male in the same little group of mangroves as our Prothonotary Warbler and several others in the mangroves of Caroni Swamp.

GOLDEN-CROWNED WARBLER (*Basileuterus culicivorus*) – A territorial pair along the Blanchisseuse road called repeatedly as they flitted through the vine tangles. We had another hunting along the chain link fence below the tower at Morne Bleu on our early morning visit there.

Coerebidae (Bananaquit)

BANANAQUIT (*Coereba flaveola*) – If we had a penny for every one we saw...

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

BICOLORED CONEBILL (*Conirostrum bicolor*) – A male danced through the mangroves at Nariva Swamp, showing its blue back and reddish eye nicely as it foraged.

WHITE-SHOULDERED TANAGER (*Tachyphonus luctuosus*) – Some superior hearing on Dave's part brought us good - though damp -- looks at a male sitting out a rain squall in the Arena Forest.

WHITE-LINED TANAGER (*Tachyphonus rufus*) – Common and widespread on both islands, including multiple pairs swarming over the Asa Wright feeders each day.

SILVER-BEAKED TANAGER (*Ramphocelus carbo*) – Regular on Trinidad, with particularly nice looks at both males and females around the Asa Wright veranda.

BLUE-GRAY TANAGER (*Thraupis episcopus*) – Daily throughout the tour. The Tobago subspecies (*berlepschi*) is a richer blue overall than is the subspecies found on Trinidad (*nesophila*).

PALM TANAGER (*Thraupis palmarum*) – Abundant throughout, with particularly nice looks at the bold birds on the Asa Wright veranda most days -- even nesting behind the mirror in the library room!

TURQUOISE TANAGER (*Tangara mexicana*) – Seen especially well in a big stand of bamboo along the Discovery trail, with others in the tree at one end of the Asa Wright veranda. We often heard the very high-pitched twittering of these birds before we saw them.

SPECKLED TANAGER (*Tangara guttata*) – A busy mob of these small tanagers swarmed over a fruiting tree along the Blanchisseuse road.

BAY-HEADED TANAGER (*Tangara gyrola*) – Seen nibbling fruits in several spots in Trinidad's rainforest -- including the tree right off one end of the Asa Wright veranda. The green-bellied birds here belong to the subspecies *viridissima*, which occurs only on Trinidad and in northeastern Venezuela.

BLUE DACNIS (*Dacnis cayana*) – A pair of these handsome birds -- plus a tag-along female Violaceous Euphonia -- worked their way through a big bamboo stand in the Aripo savanna and ended up just over our heads.

GREEN HONEYCREEPER (*Chlorophanes spiza*) – Super views of males and females -- including some decidedly scruffy-looking molting youngsters -- from any and all angles around the feeders at Asa Wright.

PURPLE HONEYCREEPER (*Cyanerpes caeruleus*) – Somehow, "purple" seems such an understatement, particularly when your eyes are trying to cope with hordes of them swarming over the nectar feeders at Asa Wright! The combination of purple plumage and yellow legs is dazzling, and even the green-striped (and purple moustached) females are appealing.

RED-LEGGED HONEYCREEPER (*Cyanerpes cyaneus*) – Two males and a female were part of the big "Christmas tree" mob sitting in the top of a powder puff tree near the Asa Wright veranda one morning, and another small group of them swarmed over a red flowering vine along the Roxborough - Bloody Bay road.

GRAYISH SALTATOR (*Saltator coerulescens*) – Several noisy pairs in the Aripo savanna sat up in tree tops, allowing us good scope studies of their strong white eyebrows, heavy bills and peachy underparts.

Emberizidae (Buntings, Sparrows and Allies)

BLUE-BLACK GRASSQUIT (*Volatinia jacarina*) – Common in the lowlands of Trinidad, including a streaky female in a tree beside Jogie's driveway (seen while we enjoyed the Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl) and several males sitting on fence wires in the Aripo savanna.

RUDDY-BREASTED SEEDEATER (*Sporophila minuta*) – Super views of a bright male singing from bush tops at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station. This handsome species is now quite rare on the islands, courtesy of the (unfortunately) flourishing caged bird trade there.

SOOTY GRASSQUIT (*Tiaris fuliginosus*) – A pair flicked through a bamboo patch near the Blanchisseuse road, eventually popping out to a nearby tree for a look around.

BLACK-FACED GRASSQUIT (*Tiaris bicolor*) – A male investigated a chain-link fence in Bon Accord while his mate gathered nesting material nearby, and we spotted another male near the new visitor's center on Little Tobago.

SAFFRON FINCH (*Sicalis flaveola*) – A very bright male sat in some dead twigs not far from the road into the park at Carli Bay, allowing us leisurely scope studies.

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*) – A bright male gobbled moths from the concrete wall below the lights at Morne Bleu. This is a rare winter visitor to the islands.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

RED-BREASTED BLACKBIRD (*Sturnella militaris*) – Great views of several at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, where males sang (and flashed those snazzy red breasts) from fence posts and utility wires. Despite its common name, this species is actually a meadowlark.

CARIB GRACKLE (*Quiscalus lugubris*) – Common and widespread on both islands, primarily in the lowlands, including dozens rummaging around the smelly chicken sheds near the Aripo Agricultural Research Station.

YELLOW-HOODED BLACKBIRD (*Chrysomus icterocephalus*) – Bright-headed males seen in bushes and on fence wires at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, with others winging past in the Melon Patch. Though it resembles North America's larger Yellow-headed Blackbird, this species lacks the big white patches in its wings.

SHINY COWBIRD (*Molothrus bonariensis*) – A handful roamed the pastures or sat in bushes near our first Yellow-chinned Spinetails at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, distinguished from the Carib Grackle by their dark eyes, bluer iridescence and the lack of a keel-shaped tail.

EPAULET ORIOLE (MORICHE) (*Icterus cayanensis chrysocephalus*) – Arg! One was sitting right at the top of a big tree beside our vans as we climbed out for our visit to the Moriche Palm grove at Waller Field, but it flew off seconds after we arrived. We had quick glimpses of another in flight, but never had that defining "yes!" view.

YELLOW ORIOLE (*Icterus nigrogularis*) – In contrast to the previous species, we had multiple fine views of this handsome species, including two in fruit trees (orange and avocado) near where we found our Trinidad Euphonia, another among the reeds of the Melon Patch and still more near Caroni Swamp.

YELLOW-RUMPED CACIQUE (*Cacicus cela*) – One singing from the top of a bedraggled tree full of nests in Cumoto showed very well, and we saw others in flight as we drove along the highway toward Manzanilla beach.

CRESTED OROPENDOLA (*Psarocolius decumanus*) – Common and widespread on Trinidad, with smaller numbers on Tobago. The regular mobs rowing up and down the Arima Valley each morning and evening -- and the bold birds that raided the feeders at Asa Wright -- allowed especially nice study.

Fringillidae (Siskins, Crossbills, and Allies)

TRINIDAD EUPHONIA (*Euphonia trinitatis*) – One sang for long minutes from a whole series of branches high in a huge tree near the noisy quarry down the Arima Valley, showing well his distinctively dark purplish-blue throat.

VIOLACEOUS EUPHONIA (*Euphonia violacea*) – Small numbers seen well on both islands, typically around fruiting mistletoe clumps. Males of this species differ from males of the previous in having yellow, rather than blue, throats.

MAMMALS

GREATER WHITE-LINED BAT (*Saccopteryx bilineata*) – We saw many of these day-flying bats winnowing up and down trails and stream corridors in the highlands of Trinidad.

RED-TAILED SQUIRREL (*Sciurus granatensis*) – Barbara spotted one along the Guacharo trail as we returned from the Oilbird cave, but the rest of us had to wait until we reached Tobago to catch up with it. We found one scurrying through the fruiting tree where we spotted our first Yellow-legged Thrushes, and some of the group saw another on the grounds of the Blue Waters Inn.

RED-RUMPED AGOUTI (*Dasyprocta agouti*) – These normally shy rodents, which are heavily hunted elsewhere, are abundant and bold on the grounds of the Asa Wright Nature Centre -- particularly early in the morning, when there are still chunks of bread piled under the feeders.

EGYPTIAN MONGOOSE (*Herpestes ichneumon*) – Lithe individuals flashed across the road in front of the first van on two different occasions as we birded the Aripo savanna. This species was introduced to Trinidad, with predictably disastrous consequences for local ground-dwelling birds. [I]

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

We identified a handful of reptiles and amphibians on this tour as well:

Green Iguana (*Iguana iguana*) - One of these big lizards rested at the top of a tree at Grafton Estate, proving incredibly tough to spot without the scope.

Golden Tegu (*Tupinambis teguixin*) - These were the big tiger-striped lizards that patrolled under the feeders at Asa Wright each morning.

Common (Giant) Ameiva (*Ameiva ameiva*) - These medium-sized, green-backed lizards were relatively common on Asa Wright's grounds. The males were larger, with bright green backs and tails.

Spectacled Caiman (*Caiman crocodilus*) - Several small ones seen on the tour, including a little one that lept into the water with a splash as we approached in the Caroni Swamp boat.

Yellow-throated Frog (*Mannophryne trinitatis*) - This little Trinidad endemic was heard-only this year -- but we heard lots, echoing from the steep walls as we descended to the Oilbird cave.

Cane Toad (*Bufo marinus*) - Plenty of these gigantic toads hunted in the dark as we searched for nightbirds at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station.

Tree Boa (*Corallus ruschenbergerii*) - Though this species is often called Cook's Tree Boa on Trinidad, I've learned that that species is actually found only on Saint Vincent.

Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) - One swam under our boat as we enjoyed the reef through the floor of our glass-bottomed boat en-route to Little Tobago.

Totals for the tour: 215 bird taxa and 4 mammal taxa