



A White-tailed Nighthawk snoozes in the leaf litter on Little Tobago, its diagnostic rufous nape patch showing nicely. (Photo by guide Megan Crewe)

The islands of Trinidad and Tobago have long been known to birders and naturalists as a wonderful place to "wet one's feet" in the riches of South America's bird life. For those who've not yet visited the "Bird Continent", the islands offer a satisfying cross-section of neotropical families: motmots, jacamars, trogons, toucans, tinamous, manakins, cotingas, woodcreepers, and ovenbirds. Those exotic species mingle with southern relatives of familiar families, as well as a few winter visitors from "back home". Even those who've traveled widely will find things to enjoy; some species -- such as the bizarre, nocturnal, fruit-eating Oilbird and the rare, rainforest-dwelling White-tailed Sabrewing -- are far more easily found on these islands than elsewhere in their ranges. And as far as repeated up-close and personal encounters with lots and lots of species go, well, nothing beats a morning on the Asa Wright veranda!

Though the temperatures this trip were far chillier than normal (jackets for the checklist?! unheard of!) and the rain totals had us questioning the whole concept of "the dry season", we had a wonderful time regardless -- and the birds kept us well entertained. From our mornings on the fabled Asa Wright veranda, where an ever-changing parade of tanagers, honeycreepers, euphonias, hummingbirds, oropendolas, and thrushes swarmed over the feeders and nearby bushes, to our last day's visit to the bustling tropicbird and booby colony on Little Tobago, we enjoyed hundreds of species.

Among the highlights were a few genuine rarities. Two young gray American Flamingoes strolled along the shoreline at Waterloo -- among the very few individuals of this species ever to be recorded on the islands. A male Masked Duck, his blue beak glowing against his rust and black breeding plumage, floated near the edge of a pond on Tobago. And lucky Mildred spotted a long-staying Scaly-naped Pigeon, which strayed to Little Tobago several months ago from its more

normal haunts further up the chain of the Lesser and Greater Antilles.

Many of the quintessential neotropical scenes were well represented this year. Two male Bearded Bellbirds bonged challenges at each other as their tangles of brown throat wattles wobbled under their chins. Snazzy Golden-headed Manakins took a few half-hearted dance steps along thin branches, uninspired by the lack of females. Crested Oropendolas somersaulted off tree branches, fluttering their wings and fanning their yellow tails in an attempt to woo the ladies. A whistling Black-faced Antthrush stalked down a shadowed hillside, looking remarkably like a tiny bantam chicken. A pair of Green-backed Trogons took turns chewing their way into an arboreal termite mound, fashioning a safe nursery for their youngsters. Oilbirds peered down from their fruit paste ledges, calling harshly as their eyes glowed red in the faint light of Jason's flashlight. A little group of Plain-brown Woodcreepers patrolled the trees above a boiling swarm of army ants, capturing fleeing insects.

Eleven species of hummingbird -- including several wonderfully frilly male Tufted Coquettes, a pirouetting White-tailed Sabrewing, and an outrageously beautiful male Ruby-topaz -- jostled around flowers and feeders. A "reach up and touch him" Long-winged Harrier quartered overgrown pastures. Two Epaulet Orioles sorted themselves out after a bath. Brilliant Saffron Finches bathed in a puddle. And, of course, who will soon forget the noisy spectacle of thousands of Scarlet Ibis exploding from their roost and circling over the mangroves in a blizzard of whirring wings before settling back into the trees?

Thanks to all of you for contributing to the fun of this year's tour. I hope to see you all again somewhere, some day!

--Megan

For more information about this tour, including future departures, visit our website at www.fieldguides.com. And to see this same triplist online, go to <http://www.fieldguides.com/triplists/tri12aLIST.pdf> and you will find the list in its entirety.

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*) – A trio gave us a lovely serenade as the sun went down over Waller Field, adding some evocative ambient sound as we sipped our rum punches and waited for the Epaulet Orioles to show up. [*]

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Anas discors*) – A little group paddled on one of the weedy ponds at Tobago Plantations, gliding in and out of view.

MASKED DUCK (*Nomonyx dominicus*) – This species is tough to see everywhere it occurs, so to find a male right out in the open near the edge of one of the sewage ponds we visited on Tobago was a real treat -- particularly as he was in high breeding plumage, with that fantastic blue bill! We also found a couple of stripey-faced females bathing nearby.

Cracidae (Guans, Chachalacas, and Curassows)

RUFOUS-VENTED CHACHALACA (*Ortalis ruficauda*) – Very common on Tobago, particularly around our hotel, where they provided rather effective alarm clock services -- for some of us, at least!

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

LEAST GREBE (*Tachybaptus dominicus*) – A couple bobbed and dove on one of the little ponds at Tobago Plantations, disappearing occasionally among lily pads that were even bigger than they were.

Phoenicopteridae (Flamingos)

AMERICAN FLAMINGO (*Phoenicopterus ruber*) – Two youngsters wandered along the tideline at Waterloo. There are only a handful of previous records for this species on the island.

Procellariidae (Shearwaters and Petrels)

AUDUBON'S SHEARWATER (*Puffinus lherminieri*) – One nesting in a makeshift "burrow" (composed largely of

abandoned construction material) on Little Tobago allowed very brief peek-in-and-see-it views. These little seabirds may brood their egg for as long as a week at a stretch before switching with their partner and heading out to sea for a bite to eat. [N]

Phaethontidae (Tropicbirds)

RED-BILLED TROPICBIRD (*Phaethon aethereus*) –

Common around Little Tobago, where we watched dozens attempt the treacherous approach to their nesting sites, braving raiding Magnificent Frigatebirds, swirling winds and lots of prickly cactus to bring a bellyful of fish back to their youngsters. [N]

Fregatidae (Frigatebirds)

MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD (*Fregata magnificens*) –

Common along the coasts of both islands. The thugs around Little Tobago made it clear how the species got its name: like the pirates of old (in their frigates), they swooped down on unsuspecting prey returning to shore with their "cargo" (i.e. tropicbirds with bellies full of fish) and robbed them of their riches. Judging from all the noise the tropicbirds made -- and from the manhandling one poor bird got when the frigatebird grabbed it by the back end and shook it for a while -- it's all pretty scary for the victims!



The local alarm clock at our Tobago hotel: a noisy Rufous-vented Chachalaca -- one of many! (Photo by guide Megan Crewe)

Sulidae (Boobies and Gannets)

BROWN BOOBY (*Sula leucogaster*) – Fairly common on and around Little Tobago, including a few panting beside fluffy white chicks on the lower slopes of the island. The white belly and yellow bill and feet of this species separate it from the next. [N]

RED-FOOTED BOOBY (*Sula sula*) – Quite common on Little Tobago this year, with both color morphs visible on bush-top nests near the bottom of the hill, or soaring over the nearby ocean. A few of the birds showed us their namesake bright feet as they clambered awkwardly around in the treetops. [N]

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – A scattering along the shore in Waterloo (including a few standing spread-eagled on pilings) and another in a tree full of Anhingas on Tobago, where the species is not common.

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

ANHINGA (*Anhinga anhinga*) – Common on the ponds of western Tobago, including good numbers drying their wings around the edges of the bigger ponds at Tobago Plantations. Their local name is "Snake Bird", for reasons we could well appreciate when just the long, skinny neck and head of one female poked up from the water with a fish wriggling at the end of its long beak.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

BROWN PELICAN (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) – Hundreds decorated the boats around Waterloo (including scores like beads on strings on a spread-armed fishing boat well offshore), and small numbers flapped along the coasts on Tobago.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

PINNATED BITTERN (*Botaurus pinnatus*) – We were oh-so-close to a perfect encounter... As it was, only those in the front van saw the head and neck of one sticking, reed-like, out of tall grass in the Melon Patch. By the time the second van arrived, it had already pulled its head back down and disappeared, never to be seen again. Arg!

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – A few scattered birds on the mudflats at Waterloo and Caroni swamp, with another in ditch among the mangroves at Bon Accord. This species is a winter visitor to the islands. [b]

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – Scattered individuals in wetlands on both islands, including several hunting in the fields of the Melon Patch. [b]

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*) – Common on both islands, including dozens seen in picturesque flocks flying low over the water -- dramatic against the green background -- en route to their roosts among the mangroves in Caroni swamp.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*) – Seen on both islands, including dozens hunting the mudflats at Waterloo and Caroni swamp, and an adult and still-white youngster hunting along the little stream near the entrance to Blue Waters

Inn.

TRICOLORED HERON (*Egretta tricolor*) – Scores gathered on mudflats near the heron/ibis roost in the Caroni swamp, looking for one last morsel before retiring for the night.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Abundant in the lowlands, hovering around the feet of livestock on both islands.

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*) – A handful scattered around the ponds in Bon Accord and Tobago Plantations. This species is found only on Tobago, while the next occurs only on Trinidad.

STRIATED HERON (*Butorides striata*) – Especially nice views of one hunting along the edge of a watercress field in the Aripo savanna, and of another stalking along near a roadside ditch in the Melon Patch.

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nyctanassa violacea*) – Particularly nice looks on Tobago, where one hunted in a roadside ditch near the Bon Accord sewage ponds. We also spotted an adult and a youngster on the mudflats at Waterloo, and a few adults among the herons on our soggy Caroni swamp boat trip.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

SCARLET IBIS (*Eudocimus ruber*) – WOW!! While the weather certainly left a bit to be desired (ark, anyone?), the ibis certainly did their best to make us forget our discomfort, first exploding out of the tree in a whirling dance of color and noise (darn that illegally passing fishing boat!), then (after a few anxious moments on our part) settling back onto the roost island like magically alighting Christmas ornaments. Gorgeous!

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*) – Daily on Trinidad, often in massive circling kettles of hundreds and hundreds. They seemed particularly fond of the buffalypsos, standing on them (and the surrounding ground, fence posts, etc.) by the dozens.

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

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – Scattered individuals around Waterloo, including one ripping a fish to pieces on the mudflats near our first Scarlet Ibis. [b]

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

GRAY-HEADED KITE (*Leptodon cayanensis*) – Two circled with a flock of Black Vultures over the Blanchisseuse road on the morning we visited the Aripo savanna. One was "showing off" in a fluttering display flight that made it very easy to pick out from the other birds in the sky.

PEARL KITE (*Gampsonyx swainsonii*) – A female on a nest in the Aripo savanna was mostly a head and a back, though she occasionally stood up to shift something underneath her into a more comfortable position. [N]

LONG-WINGED HARRIER (*Circus buffoni*) – Splendid reach-up-and-touch-him views of a male right over our heads at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, drawn in the by the sounds of Mahase's squeaking. He made many passes over the pastures while we were there, sending the shorebirds, grackles and pigeons into repeated panicked flights.

WHITE HAWK (*Leucopternis albicollis*) – Two circled over the Arima valley, flashing white against the dark background of the trees as we watched from the veranda late one soggy afternoon.

COMMON BLACK-HAWK (*Buteogallus anthracinus*) – Single birds seen on scattered days, including one -- looking thoroughly fed up -- hunched against the rain in the mangroves of Caroni swamp.

GREAT BLACK-HAWK (*Buteogallus urubitinga*) – Two soared along a ridgeline on Tobago, showing their big white rump patches well as they banked and turned, seen shortly before we started our walk on the Gilpin trail.

SAVANNA HAWK (*Buteogallus meridionalis*) – Seen on scattered days on Trinidad, with our best views coming on the drive through the coconut grove en-route to Nariva Swamp when we spotted a number of individuals surveying their



The group enjoys some long scope (and binocular) views of a pair of nest-building Green-backed Trogons. (Photo by guide Megan Crewe)

surroundings from broken palm trunks.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (*Buteo platypterus*) – Those in the second van spotted one trying to dry out along the Blanchisseuse road, and we spotted a trio circling over the Roxborough - Bloody Bay road. The birds on Tobago are resident (subspecies *antillarum*), while those on Trinidad are winter visitors from points north.

GRAY HAWK (*Buteo nitidus*) – Particularly nice views of a perched -- and vocal -- adult along the track out to the watercress fields.

ZONE-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo albonotatus*) – One sailed low over a field in the Aripo savanna, its flight style looking so much like that of a Turkey Vulture that some of the group initially thought they were looking at the wrong bird -- until it got close enough that we could see barred wings and tail even without binoculars.

BLACK HAWK-EAGLE (*Spizaetus tyrannus*) – A dark youngster glided past the Asa Wright veranda late one afternoon, then circled on the updrafts rising from the ridge line further down the valley.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

YELLOW-HEADED CARACARA (*Milvago chimachima*) – One made a few strafing runs past us at Waller Field, drawing complaints from the neighborhood's Sulphury Flycatchers, but our best views came in the vast coconut grove en-route to Nariva Swamp. We saw others in flight at Carli Bay and Tobago Plantations; the species is a recent arrival to Tobago.

MERLIN (*Falco columbarius*) – A big female sat atop a tree Waller Field, then launched into the air to check for one last snack before retiring for the night; some of the group spotted another from the Asa Wright veranda on our final morning there. [b]

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – Seen on scattered days on both islands, including a huge female ripping some hapless prey to bits in a distant tree at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station and another swooping over a channel through the mangroves in Caroni swamp. [b]

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

CLAPPER RAIL (*Rallus longirostris*) – We heard one calling from the mangroves on the far side of the road as we started our Caroni swamp boat trip. [*]

SORA (*Porzana carolina*) – We heard two whinnying from the thick growth around one of the ponds at Tobago Plantations. [b*]

PURPLE GALLINULE (*Porphyrio martinica*) – A few skittish adults flew low over the vegetation-choked ponds at Tobago Plantations and popped their heads up out of the reeds occasionally, but only a brown youngster stood in the open for any length of time.

COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*) – A handful seen in the vegetation-choked ponds at Tobago Plantations.

Aramidae (Limpkin)

LIMPKIN (*Aramus guarauna*) – One flapped in and landed atop a column of tangled vines near the edge of the Melon Patch, getting us all out of the van one last time.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

SOUTHERN LAPWING (*Vanellus chilensis*) – Especially nice views of a group in one of the pastures at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, with others at Waterloo and Bon Accord.

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – A handful, all still in their drab winter plumage -- though a few were starting to show a black belly feather or two -- mingled among the other shorebirds at Waterloo. [b]

SEMIPALMATED PLOVER (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) – A few pattered around on a distant mudflat at Waterloo. [b]

Jacanidae (Jacanas)

WATTLED JACANA (*Jacana jacana*) – Common in the wetlands of



And here's one of the birds we were watching: the gorgeous male. (Photo by guide Megan Crewe)

Trinidad, including an initially small group that got larger and larger (and more and more nervous) as the Long-winged Harrier made repeated passes over the buffalypso shed at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*) – Regular on both islands, but particularly common in Caroni Swamp, where scores fled down the mangrove channels ahead of our boat. [b]

SOLITARY SANDPIPER (*Tringa solitaria*) – A few scattered individuals around ponds and along irrigation ditches in the Aripo savanna and the agricultural research station, often -- as with the birds foraging in the watercress fields -- in good comparison with the previous species. [b]

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – A handful snoozed or preened among some little mangrove saplings edging the mudflats at Waterloo. [b]

WILLET (*Tringa semipalmata*) – A few dozen foraged on the mudflats at Waterloo, or rested among the roosting birds there, occasionally lifting off in a flurry of black and white wings. [b]

WHIMBREL (*Numenius phaeopus*) – A few strode across the mudflats at Waterloo, looking for fiddler crabs (their favorite prey), and another hunted one of the drainage ditches at Bon Accord. [b]

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*) – A few trotted among the boats at Waterloo, snoozed on their decks or splashed in the shallows while taking baths. But our best views came at the Blue Waters Inn, where some very habituated birds even ventured into the bar to check out the leavings under the tables. [b]

WESTERN SANDPIPER (*Calidris mauri*) – A couple mingled with a handful of Semipalmated Plovers on a distant mudflat at Waterloo. [b]

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*) – Seen especially well along a stream in one of the pastures at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station. [b]

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

LAUGHING GULL (*Leucophaeus atricilla*) – Hundreds preened and snoozed and cackled on the mudflats at Waterloo, part of an enormous roost right near the road.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (GRAELLSII) (*Larus fuscus graellsii*) – An adult snoozed among a massive flock of Laughing Gulls, looming over his smaller companions. This is a relatively recent arrival to the islands, and overwinters in small numbers every year. [b]

ROYAL TERN (*Thalasseus maximus*) – A few seen along the coast at Waterloo.

BLACK SKIMMER (CINERASCENS) (*Rynchops niger cinerascens*) – Several big flocks rested on the mudflats at Waterloo, dwarfed by nearby Great Blue Herons and Scarlet Ibis. [a]

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) [I]

PALE-VENTED PIGEON (*Patagioenas cayennensis*) – Regular on Tobago, with especially nice looks at several on the grounds of the Blue Waters Inn.

SCALED PIGEON (*Patagioenas speciosa*) – A male preened atop the "toucan tree", down the hill from the Asa Wright veranda, its scaly chest showing nicely and its red bill glowing in the afternoon light, and another male sat at the top of a big Mountain Immortelle tree along the Paria road.

SCALY-NAPED PIGEON (*Patagioenas squamosa*) – Mildred was the lucky one who spotted this long-staying rarity on Little Tobago. This species is found throughout the Greater and Lesser Antilles.

EARED DOVE (*Zenaida auriculata*) – Including a massive flock gathered in the yard of a house in Bon Accord.

RUDDY GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina talpacoti*) – Very common in the lowlands of Trinidad, with a few seen along the



And his more subdued, but still attractive, mate. Until their recent split, these birds were known as White-tailed Trogons. (Photo by guide Megan Crewe)

roads in Tobago.

WHITE-TIPPED DOVE (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – Daily on the grounds of the Blue Waters Inn, chugging around the lawns in search of tidbits.

GRAY-FRONTED DOVE (*Leptotila rufaxilla*) – One plump bird trundled around under the feeders at Asa Wright each day, searching for breadcrumbs. This species is named for its pale gray forehead.

Psittacidae (Parrots)

RED-BELLIED MACAW (*Orthopsittaca manilata*) – Two distant birds, showing their distinctively long tails, flew along the horizon as we searched for Pinnated Bittern in the Melon Patch.

GREEN-RUMPED PARROTLET (*Forpus passerinus*) – Fine scope views of one perched on a nearby barbed wire fence at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station and another investigating a nest hole in an old palm trunk at Tobago Plantations. [N]

BLUE-HEADED PARROT (*Pionus menstruus*) – Sadly, our only sighting this year was a flock of 10-12 birds that flew by, screeching, as we explored the edge of the town of Brasso Seco.

ORANGE-WINGED PARROT (*Amazona amazonica*) – Daily, with good scope studies of dozens preening and feeding in trees around the Asa Wright veranda each morning, and lots seen in flight -- flashing their distinctive orange wing patches -- up and down the Arima valley.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

SQUIRREL CUCKOO (*Piaya cayana*) – One glided in to a tree near the Asa Wright veranda late one afternoon, perching so we could get a good view of its long, graduated tail in the scope. That bare blue skin around its eye is pretty snazzy too!

MANGROVE CUCKOO (*Coccyzus minor*) – One crept through the woods edging the ponds at Tobago Plantations, pausing regularly to peer around from the end of a branch.

GREATER ANI (*Crotophaga major*) – One sat hunched in the middle of a tree near the start of our Caroni swamp boat trip, looking as fed up with the weather as we were!

SMOOTH-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga ani*) – Common throughout, with big gangs of them moving through fields full of livestock -- or flying awkwardly across roads -- on both islands.

Strigidae (Owls)

TROPICAL SCREECH-OWL (*Megascops choliba*) – Wahoo! One started calling as we were enjoying scope looks at Jupiter's moons, and stayed put as we walked down the road. Heck the only way we could have been closer is if he'd SAT on one of us, rather than in the small tree he remained in as we walked right up to him. Wow!

FERRUGINOUS PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium brasilianum*) – One tooted from a nearby tree as we arrived at our picnic supper spot on the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, which certainly made finding him a lot easier! While we enjoyed scope views, his mate arrived and perched nearby in the same big tree. What a nice way to kick off a night drive!

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

COMMON PAURAQUE (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) – Super views of one we walked up to on the road at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, plus another perched on a branch beside the road, showing well its white throat patch.

WHITE-TAILED NIGHTJAR (*Caprimulgus cayennensis*) – Though we saw a few on our our night drive, our best views -- by far -- came on Little Tobago, where we found one snoozing in the leaf litter not far from a Red-billed Tropicbird nest. What great camouflage!

Nyctibiidae (Potoos)

COMMON POTOO (*Nyctibius griseus*) – One hunted from a fence post at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, its huge eyes glowing in the light of Mahase's spotlight. Through the scope, we could see its long tail hanging down on one side of the post.



This Long-winged Harrier made multiple passes over our group, sending the nearby shorebirds and Carib Grackles into a real tizzy. (Photo by guide Megan Crewe)

Steatornithidae (Oilbird)

OILBIRD (*Steatornis caripensis*) – A nice encounter with these bizarre nocturnal fruit-eaters (the only such species in the bird world) at their roost in Dunstan Cave, where several huddled on ledges near the entrance, lit by the dim beam of Mahase's flashlight. We even had brief glimpses of a few in flight, further back in the cave.

Apodidae (Swifts)

SHORT-TAILED SWIFT (*Chaetura brachyura*) – Very common over the sewage ponds at Bon Accord, looking decidedly stumpy at the back end.

GRAY-RUMPED SWIFT (*Chaetura cinereiventris*) – A big flock hunting over the christophene fields gave us fine views of their paler rumps as they coursed up and down the road in the rain.

FORK-TAILED PALM-SWIFT (*Tachornis squamata*) – Small numbers zipped back and forth above us at Waller Field, twittering occasionally as they chased bugs or courted with brief display flights (wings held in high "vee"). The long pointed tail of this slim species is distinctive.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

WHITE-NECKED JACOBIN (*Florisuga mellivora*) – Common around the Asa Wright veranda, where as many as four males at a time jousted over the feeders. Many in the group saw a drabber female perched in a tree below the veranda on our first morning.

RUFOUS-BREASTED HERMIT (*Glaucis hirsutus*) – Seen particularly well along the Gilpin trail, where we found two birds interacting near a nest -- which looked suspiciously like a bedraggled tail of fallen debris hanging from a leaf. This is the only hermit on the islands that doesn't show a long white-tipped tail. [N]

GREEN HERMIT (*Phaethornis guy*) – One made repeated visits to a hummingbird feeder hanging on the porch at Asa Wright our first afternoon there, allowing us to get "up close and personal".

LITTLE HERMIT (*Phaethornis longuemareus*) – One made several quick visits to the spiky orange flowers below the Asa Wright veranda before breakfast one morning, and many in the group spotted another foraging along the edge of the Blanchisseuse road on our final morning on Trinidad.

RUBY-TOPAZ HUMMINGBIRD (*Chrysolampis mosquitos*) – Wow! This one's a real stunner, as we saw nicely from the veranda at Asa Wright on several days, as a male foraged in flowers below the balcony. We also spotted another roadside male (flashing all those gorgeous colors!) in some flowering Pride of Barbados plants in Bon Accord, and some fantastic spotting by Gladwyn netted us a female on her nest among the bamboos along the road on Tobago. [N]

GREEN-THROATED MANGO (*Anthracothorax viridigula*) – One sat high in a mangrove in Nariva swamp -- though sadly backlit, and with his back towards us. We could see his green throat in the scope as he swiveled his head back and forth, but never had that real "yowza" moment.

BLACK-THROATED MANGO (*Anthracothorax nigricollis*) – Regular on both islands, including a male catching insects (and flaring his distinctive maroon tail) over a field in the Aripo savanna.

TUFTED COQUETTE (*Lophornis ornatus*) – At least one snazzy male spent long minutes visiting the flowers downslope from the Asa Wright veranda, and a tiny female regularly visited the purple vervain flowers around the feeders there.

LONG-BILLED STARTHROAT (*Heliomaster longirostris*) – We watched one catching insects, twisting in the air near a big stand of bamboo in the Aripo savanna, then spotted another briefly visiting some of the flowering bushes around the Asa Wright veranda on our last morning on Trinidad.

BLUE-CHINNED SAPPHIRE (*Chlorestes notata*) – Regular at the vervain flowers below the Asa Wright veranda.

WHITE-TAILED SABREWING (*Campylopterus ensipennis*) – We had to walk a fair way down the Gilpin trail before we finally caught up with a cooperative male, which flashed above our heads for a bit (flycatching) before settling down on bamboo twig. We had nice views of another feeding on a bank of flowers along the Roxborough - Bloody Bay road, not far from where we found the Blue-



A Trinidad Motmot hung around our picnic table near the Gilpin track, waiting for leftovers. The mud on its beak suggests it's been excavating a nest hole. (Photo by guide Megan Crewe)

backed Manakins.

WHITE-CHESTED EMERALD (*Amazilia brevirostris*) – Regular around the veranda at Asa Wright, including one determined bird that did its best (wasting lots and lots and LOTS of energy) to keep every single White-necked Jacobin away from its favorite feeders. Its **THREE** favorite feeders!

COPPER-RUMPED HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia tobaci*) – Abundant throughout, seen every day of the tour.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

GREEN-BACKED TROGON (*Trogon viridis*) – Fantastic looks at a pair excavating a hole in an arboreal termite nest right beside the road in Brasso Seco -- talk about dirty faces! We saw another female near our picnic spot in the Arena forest. **[N]**

GUIANAN TROGON (*Trogon violaceus*) – A female flashed out of the woods along Asa Wright's Discovery trail, then perched just above it. And when the female moved off, Mildred spotted a male, sitting with his gorgeous blue-green back towards us -- which set off his yellow eye ring nicely!

COLLARED TROGON (*Trogon collaris*) – A handful along the Blanchisseuse road, including a trio calling and flashing back and forth through the trees at one spot; we had another female at Gilpin Estate.

Momotidae (Motmots)

TRINIDAD MOTMOT (*Momotus bahamensis*) – Regular throughout, including a pair that visited the Asa Wright feeders very early most mornings, and one that waited patiently for us to leave the picnic area near the Gilpin trail, so that it could check for leftovers!

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

RINGED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle torquata*) – One sat on a roadside wire along the highway, intently watching the stream below.

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle alcyon*) – A female along the edge of one of the ponds at Tobago Plantations made a few unsuccessful attempts to catch a fish. **[b]**

GREEN KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle americana*) – Seen on scattered days on both islands, including one checking out the tiny stream along the Roxborough - Bloody Bay road.

AMERICAN PYGMY KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle aenea*) – All-too-fleeting glimpses for a lucky few of one that rocketed past down a little stream in Nariva Swamp.

Galbulidae (Jacamars)

RUFOUS-TAILED JACAMAR (*Galbula ruficauda*) – Almost ridiculously common along the Roxborough - Bloody Bay road, with others seen well at Grafton Estate.

Ramphastidae (Toucans)

CHANNEL-BILLED TOUCAN (*Ramphastos vitellinus*) – A pair seen from the Asa Wright veranda, typically sitting atop (and yelping from) some big trees downslope. We also heard one calling from the Arena Forest while we ate our picnic lunch there.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

RED-CROWNED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes rubricapillus*) – Seen nicely at Tobago Plantations, where we found one examining a nest hole in a dead palm tree, and at Grafton Estate, where we found several others. **[N]**

RED-RUMPED WOODPECKER (*Veniliornis kirkii*) – One foraging in a tree downslope from the Asa Wright veranda on our first afternoon showed its namesake red rump patch nicely as it poked its way along the branches.

GOLDEN-OLIVE WOODPECKER (*Colaptes rubiginosus*) – One made several appearances in a thin dead tree beside the Asa Wright feeders on several mornings, and we heard others calling loudly from the forest along the Gilpin trail.

CHESTNUT WOODPECKER (*Ceolus elegans*) – Two calling birds at Las Lapas proved tough to get much of a look at -- particularly once the weed whackers showed up!

LINEATED WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus lineatus*) – One high in a tree over the Asa Wright entrance road proved surprisingly difficult to see (heck, it is more than a foot long, after all)! Some of the group saw it hammering its way along a branch, while others just couldn't find the "magic spot".

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)

GRAY-THROATED LEAFTOSSER (*Sclerurus albigularis*) – Darn weed whackers! One flashed across the road early on our day in the Northern Range and started singing from just downhill -- but sadly, the road maintenance crew arrived at virtually the same time and ensured we couldn't even HEAR the bird, let alone see it. Arg!

PALE-BREASTED SPINETAIL (*Synallaxis albescens*) – One crept back and forth through some roadside weeds, proving exceptionally good at staying out of view. Eventually, I think most of us saw it, as it kept returning to the same few open branches -- when it did make an appearance, that is!

STRIPE-BREASTED SPINETAIL (*Synallaxis cinnamomea*) – It's not often that we get quite the response we got this year when I whistled at a singing bird along the Gilpin track -- the pair rocketed towards us from the other side of the stream and perched for a good 20 seconds on a branch right beside us. Wow!

YELLOW-CHINNED SPINETAIL (*Certhiaxis cinnamomeus*) – One sang from (and preened on) a fence post at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, giving us a great opportunity to examine its namesake yellow chin in the scopes.

STREAKED XENOPS (*Xenops rutilans*) – Two foraged on some twisted vines dangling from a tree in Brasso Seco, sometimes hanging upside down in the effort to get at something tasty. Great spotting, Mildred!

PLAIN-BROWN WOODCREEPER (*Dendrocincla fuliginosa*) – A little group of these aptly named woodcreepers (they're certainly plain and brown) fed on insects fleeing from an ant swarm along the Blanchisseuse road.

OLIVACEOUS WOODCREEPER (*Sittasomus griseicapillus*) – One investigated some big tree trunks upslope from the Gilpin trail while we scuttled around on the muddy track below, trying to find good vantage points. The birds found on Tobago (subspecies *griseus*) have a strikingly different song than Olivaceous Woodcreepers found both in Central America and Brazil. Stay tuned!

STRAIGHT-BILLED WOODCREEPER (*Dendroplex picus*) – One found hitching up a mangrove tree in Caroni Swamp, after a LOOOOONG time spent looking, was the last new bird we saw before heading to the Scarlet Ibis roost.

COCOA WOODCREEPER (*Xiphorhynchus susurrans*) – Easily the most widespread of the tour's woodcreepers, seen well on several days -- from a very vocal bird along the Asa Wright entrance road our first afternoon to one rummaging along a diagonal branch right over the Gilpin trail.

Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)

GREAT ANTSHRIKE (*Taraba major*) – A male singing from high in a big stand of bamboo along the Blanchisseuse road was extraordinarily hard to actually spot -- though most eventually saw him when he moved across the road. We heard another singing (and singing and singing) from the thick vegetation across the road from the christophene field.

BLACK-CRESTED ANTSHRIKE (*Sakesphorus canadensis*) – Fine views of a male foraging busily in a bush right beside the road in the Aripo savanna; it was particularly visible when it checked out several big tangles of dead leaves.

BARRED ANTSHRIKE (*Thamnophilus doliatus*) – A young male -- still sporting some rust among all those black and white bars -- was a regular at the Asa Wright feeders most days, and we saw noisy pairs at several locations on Tobago.

WHITE-FRINGED ANTWREN (*Formicivora grisea*) – A most cooperative pair entertained us at Grafton Estate, creeping up and down branches and vines as they searched for insects.

SILVERED ANTBIRD (*Sclateria naevia*) – We heard one calling from the mangroves along the road through Nariva Swamp, but couldn't entice it in to where we could see it. [*]

WHITE-BELLIED ANTBIRD (*Myrmeciza longipes*) – A calling male bounced through the undergrowth in the Arena Forest, occasionally stopping briefly on a log or branch. It took a bit of shuffling around -- and lots of pointing with the green dot -- but I think we all eventually got an unobstructed view of him.

Formicariidae (Antthrushes)

BLACK-FACED ANTTHRUSH (*Formicarius analis*) – One strolled in from beyond a ridge on the Guacharo trail, climbed down the hill, scampered across a gully, then climbed back up over the next ridge, whistling all the while. These forest dwellers look a bit like small dark rails -- or bantam chickens.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

SOUTHERN BEARDLESS-TYRANULET (*Camptostoma obsoletum*) – A pair showed well in tiny bushes right beside the Blanchisseuse road, whistling their high-pitched song as they twitched ever closer -- and distracting us briefly from our search for Trinidad Euphonia.

FOREST ELAENIA (*Myiopagis gaimardii*) – A couple flicked through a tree near the end of the Asa Wright entrance road.

YELLOW-BELLIED ELAENIA (*Elaenia flavogaster*) – Seen on scattered days on both islands, including a pair calling from the treetops at Carli Bay and several around the new visitors center building on Little Tobago.

OCHRE-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Mionectes oleagineus*) – Many fine views of a pair that frequented the tree right off the end of the Asa Wright veranda on most days. Their habit of regularly flicking one wing or the other is distinctive. [N]

YELLOW-BREASTED FLYCATCHER (*Tolmomyias flaviventris*) – A couple of birds at Grafton Estate bounced through tree branches right beside the trail.

- EULER'S FLYCATCHER** (*Lathrotriccus euleri*) – One flicking along the edge of the track at Las Lapas was particularly cooperative as it hunted for insects, and we saw another along the Blanchisseuse road.
- OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER** (*Contopus cooperi*) – One made repeated forays from a dead snag along the Paria road. We could really see those distinctive white flank patches when it returned to its perch. [b]
- TROPICAL PEWEE** (*Contopus cinereus*) – Best seen making repeated forays from a utility wire near the upper parking lot at Asa Wright on our final morning there, with another (for most of the group) along the Blanchisseuse road.
- PIED WATER-TYRANT** (*Fluvicola pica*) – Scattered birds in wetland areas on Trinidad, including a few hunting along the edges of the puddles in the buffalypso pastures at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station and one fluttering along the edge of the road out to the Waterloo fishing boat pier.
- WHITE-HEADED MARSH TYRANT** (*Arundinicola leucocephala*) – A pair hunted in the buffalypso pastures at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, and another few flicked among the houses in the Melon Patch.
- BRIGHT-RUMPED ATILA** (*Attila spadiceus*) – We heard the far-off maniacal laughter of this species on several mornings at Asa Wright. [*]
- DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) – Two over our picnic lunch spot on the Blanchisseuse road had us scuttling back and forth with the scope for a while before they finally perched near the BOTTOM of the canopy instead of the top!
- VENEZUELAN FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus venezuelensis*) – It proved far easier to hear their mournful calls than to actually SEE these flycatchers. Our first showed up just as an enormous noisy group rounded the corner on the Gilpin trail (flushing it immediately away), but our second -- along the Roxborough - Bloody Bay road later in the day -- proved a bit more accommodating.
- BROWN-CRESTED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus tyrannulus*) – One around the ponds at Tobago Plantations, with another at Grafton Estate, but our best views came on a pre-breakfast walk on the grounds of the Blue Waters Inn, where a loudly calling pair proclaimed their territorial rights from a little tree right beside the driveway.
- GREAT KISKADEE** (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) – Abundant on Trinidad, with dozens along roadside wires, and a regular pair visiting the Asa Wright feeders for huge mouthfuls of bread each morning. [N]
- BOAT-BILLED FLYCATCHER** (*Megarynchus pitangua*) – Two chased a Gray Hawk along a hillside above the Blanchisseuse road one morning, and another hunted in the busy "flycatcher tree" on the Paria road. The massive beak of this kiskadee look-alike is distinctive.
- STREAKED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiodynastes maculatus*) – Best seen at Asa Wright, where one hunted in a big tree near the corner of the upper parking lot. A few of the group saw another along the Paria road, during one of our miraculously rain free stops in the afternoon.
- PIRATIC FLYCATCHER** (*Legatus leucophaeus*) – One sang from the top of a tree in the Aripo savanna. This species gets its name from its habit of taking over completed oriole nests -- saving it the effort of building its own nest.
- SULPHURY FLYCATCHER** (*Tyrannopsis sulphurea*) – A handful chased each other through the Moriche palms at Waller Field, occasionally perching in plain view for a preen or a song as they readied themselves for a good night's sleep. We saw another in the Arena forest, while searching for Red-bellied Macaws.
- TROPICAL KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – Common and widespread on both islands, typically hunting from roadside utility wires.
- GRAY KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus dominicensis*) – One preening in a tree at Waller Field was a great marker for a whole string of nice birds: female Blue Dacnis, Sulphury Flycatcher and -- in a wonderful grand finale -- TWO Epaulet Orioles! We saw others around the ponds at Tobago Plantations.

Cotingidae (Cotingas)

- BEARDED BELLBIRD** (*Procnias averano*) – WOW!! It was a bit of a scramble on a rain-slicked, root-strewn path, but worth it in the end, as we ogled two different males while they bonged their challenges to each other. It's pretty impressive how LOUD that call is when you're standing right underneath the bird!

Pipridae (Manakins)

- WHITE-BEARDED MANAKIN** (*Manacus manacus*) – Seen most days on Trinidad, including one male that sat for long minutes on a fence rail along Asa Wright's Discovery trail, though we never got the full-on "dancing extravaganza" at the lek this year.
- BLUE-BACKED MANAKIN** (*Chiroxiphia pareola*) – An olive green youngster sporting a bright red cap drew our attention to a berrying bush along the Roxborough - Bloody Bay road, which soon led to our fine encounter with a stunning adult male. Both birds spent a long time jumping back and forth through the bush, plucking ripe berries from the branches.

GOLDEN-HEADED MANAKIN (*Pipra erythrocephala*) – Superb views of many males along the Discovery trail, including a few wing-flicking and doing some half-hearted sidesteps along branches at their lek. Too bad there wasn't a female or three around!

Tityridae (Tityras and Allies)

BLACK-TAILED TITYRA (*Tityra cayana*) – A pair posed in a dead tree right beside the Paria road, allowing us great opportunity to study them in the scope.

WHITE-WINGED BECARD (*Pachyramphus polychopterus*) – A male sang from a roadside bush in the Aripo savanna, showing nicely after we'd just about given up any hope of finding this species.

Vireonidae (Vireos)

RED-EYED VIREO (MIGRATORY CHIVI) (*Vireo olivaceus chivi*) – Those who joined the final pre-breakfast walk on Tobago spotted one in a big tree along the hotel's driveway, and we watched another work through some trees on the climb up to the seabird overlook on Little Tobago. The latter gave us a good excuse for a "breather"!

SCRUB GREENLET (*Hylophilus flavipes*) – One gleaning in branches along the wooded edge of the ponds at Tobago Plantations showed very well indeed; we could even see its distinctly pinkish beak -- about the only distinctive thing on an otherwise rather drab bird.

GOLDEN-FRONTED GREENLET (*Hylophilus aurantiifrons*) – One poking through a silk tree (the one with all the pink pom pom flowers) near the turnoff to the Guacharo trail at Asa Wright showed very well. As someone pointed out, it's really not green at all -- more gold with a tawny head.

RUFOUS-BROWED PEPPERSHRIKE (*Cyclarhis gujanensis*) – We heard the rich, rolling song of this species regularly in Trinidad's Northern Range, but our best views came at Carli Bay, where a bird singing from the top of a roadside tree cooperated nicely.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

SOUTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) – A couple fluttered overhead, occasionally landing for a rest on a wire near the road, while we searched for Trinidad Euphonias along the Blanchisseuse road, and we saw others among the big swift flock over the christophene field.

CARIBBEAN MARTIN (*Progne dominicensis*) – Common over much of Tobago, including numbers resting on wires in the Bon Accord subdivision and a big swirling mob hunting low over the grassy hill behind our rooms at the Blue Waters Inn one afternoon.

GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN (*Progne chalybea*) – A few sailed over Cumoto, seen as we studied the Yellow-rumped Cacique colony, and others flashed over Nariva Swamp and the Melon Patch.

WHITE-WINGED SWALLOW (*Tachycineta albiventer*) – Especially nice views at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, where one perched on the wires over our vans, and near a gas station where we stopped for drinks one day, where another alternated between sitting on a wire and flying off after insects.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

RUFOUS-BREASTED WREN (*Pheugopedius rutilus*) – As usual, this species was heard far more frequently than it was seen, but we did connect nicely with an inquisitive pair along the Blanchisseuse road one morning and spotted others at the Grafton Estate.

HOUSE WREN (*Troglodytes aedon*) – A pair bounced along a concrete wall, the pathway and the grass below one end of the veranda at Asa Wright one morning, looking for tasty morsels. We had another warbling briefly from the top of a fence post at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station.

Poliophtilidae (Gnatcatchers)

LONG-BILLED GNATWREN (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) – Judy was the lucky one who was on the veranda when the lodge guide spotted one of these little cuties.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

COCOA THRUSH (*Turdus fumigatus*) – Several were daily visitors to the feeders at Asa Wright, and we saw others along various roads and trails in the Northern Range.

SPECTACLED THRUSH (*Turdus nudigenis*) – Also seen daily on the feeders at Asa Wright, with others around the houses in Bon Accord. This species was formerly known as the Bare-eyed Thrush, but was renamed to avoid confusion with a thrush of the same name found in Africa.

WHITE-NECKED THRUSH (*Turdus albicollis*) – A few bouncing along the edge of the Discovery trail showed well their namesake white throats.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

TROPICAL MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus gilvus*) – Seen (and heard) every day of the tour, including the regular pair singing over the Asa Wright feeders each morning.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – One was a regular visitor under the Asa Wright feeders most days, and others were seen along the Blanchisseuse road and in the mangroves of the Caroni swamp. [b]

MASKED YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis aequinoctialis*) – A territorial male chipped from atop a bush, and then a reed stem near a crop field in the Aripo savanna. Though it looks much like North America's Common Yellowthroat, this one's song is much more complex.

AMERICAN REDSTART (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – A few folks spotted a male from the Asa Wright veranda during the break our first afternoon, and most of the group saw a female in Nariva Swamp, while we waited for the Silvered Antbird to make an appearance. [b]

TROPICAL PARULA (*Setophaga pitiayumi*) – One high over our heads along the Blanchisseuse road showed well its distinctively bright yellow throat.

YELLOW WARBLER (*Setophaga petechia*) – One flicked through the mangroves at Waterloo, near where we found our Bicolored Conebills, and some of the group spotted another in a roadside tree as we drove through Bon Accord.

GOLDEN-CROWNED WARBLER (*Basileuterus culicivorus*) – A territorial bird along the Blanchisseuse road proved to be a highlight of our soggy last morning on the island, singing and descending lower and lower as we watched from the edge of the road.

Coerebidae (Bananaquit)

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

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

BICOLORED CONEBILL (*Conirostrum bicolor*) – Two males hanging out in the same little mangrove along the road to the Waterloo boat ramp were cooperative, singing and surveying the world from right out in the open.

WHITE-LINED TANAGER (*Tachyphonus rufus*) – Daily, including many pairs swarming over the feeders at Asa Wright each day. The male flashes his white wing linings almost like a semaphore, warning rivals away from "his" feeder -- and his female!

SILVER-BEAKED TANAGER (*Ramphocelus carbo*) – Daily in Trinidad's Northern Range, including regular visits to the Asa Wright feeders by a couple of females and occasional visits by a bright-beaked male. That velveteen plumage is amazing!

BLUE-GRAY TANAGER (*Thraupis episcopus*) – Common and widespread on both islands. The birds found on Tobago (endemic subspecies *berlepschi*) are a much brighter blue overall, with a more intensely colored rump and shoulder patch, than are birds on Trinidad.

PALM TANAGER (*Thraupis palmarum*) – Also very common and widespread on both islands, with particularly good studies of the very confiding birds that spent each night roosting in the rafters of the Asa Wright veranda -- and most days rummaging in the bar for leftover tea scraps!

TURQUOISE TANAGER (*Tangara mexicana*) – Particularly nice looks at a little mob eating melastoma berries in a tree right near the Asa Wright veranda our first morning.

SPECKLED TANAGER (*Tangara guttata*) – Several of these handsome tanagers clambered through a fruiting tree on the Blanchisseuse road for a while, then flew up the hill to mob a calling but unseen (by us, anyway) pygmy-owl.

BAY-HEADED TANAGER (*Tangara gyrola*) – Best seen in a fruiting melastoma tree along Asa Wright's Discovery trail, sharing space with the Turquoise Tanagers, with others along the Blanchisseuse road and (for some of the group) in the tree right off the end of the Asa Wright veranda.

BLUE DACNIS (*Dacnis cayana*) – An eye-catching male sat atop a tree near the christophene field, seen shortly after we saw our first Rufous-breasted Wrens.

GREEN HONEYCREEPER (*Chlorophanes spiza*) – Particularly common around the Asa Wright feeders, with smaller numbers of others seen in the flowering immortelles all across Trinidad.

PURPLE HONEYCREEPER (*Cyanerpes caeruleus*) – Hordes swarmed over the Asa Wright feeders each day -- both shockingly purple males (with those great bright yellow legs and feet) and more soberly-plumaged females (with their little purple moustache stripes). Somehow, "purple" seems like such an understatement!

RED-LEGGED HONEYCREEPER (*Cyanerpes cyaneus*) – Singletons seen on a couple of days along the Blanchisseuse road, including one that sat for long minutes right at the top of the tree (and in the scope) in rather harsh light, but our

best views came on the Roxborough - Bloody Bay road on Tobago, where most of the group FINALLY saw the red legs -- and the male's fabulously iridescent blue plumage.

GRAYISH SALTATOR (*Saltator coerulescens*) – One near the nesting Green-backed Trogons flitted through the trees for a bit before finally moving into a spot where we could watch him sing.

Emberizidae (Buntings, Sparrows and Allies)

BLUE-BLACK GRASSQUIT (*Volatinia jacarina*) – Most common in the open fields of Trinidad's Aripo savanna, with another male along the Blanchisseuse road (quickly abandoned when the Trinidad Euphonia made its appearance) and a big feeding flock along the entrance road into Carli Bay.

RUDDY-BREASTED SEEDEATER (*Sporophila minuta*) – A male sang from one of the pasture fences at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, one of the few remaining "strongholds" of this species on the island. Because of their attractive song and colorful plumage, this species is a favorite with the caged bird trade -- despite being legally protected on the island.

SOOTY GRASSQUIT (*Tiaris fuliginosus*) – One sang near the turnoff to Las Lapas, though he'd positioned himself so that only his back end was clearly visible. The rest of him was largely obscured by leaves, though with patience, most of us eventually got a look at his head.

BLACK-FACED GRASSQUIT (*Tiaris bicolor*) – Best seen in the Bon Accord subdivision, where we found a male feeding near a pile of garden waste along the edge of one open lot.

SAFFRON FINCH (*Sicalis flaveola*) – Lovely views of several -- including a couple of males bathing in a puddle in the middle of the road, and a few scratching around under some of the trees -- at Carli Bay. This handsome species is found throughout much of South America.

GRASSLAND YELLOW-FINCH (*Sicalis luteola*) – A dozen or so of these slim yellow finches were spotted in the grassy fields at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, where Mahase found the first-ever records for the island in 2007.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

RED-BREASTED BLACKBIRD (*Sturnella militaris*) – Common on the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, where we had fine looks at several perched on roadside barbed wire fence strands. These snazzy birds are actually meadowlarks.

CARIB GRACKLE (*Quiscalus lugubris*) – Very common everywhere but the rainforest, with scores seen in the Aripo savanna and the mangroves.

YELLOW-HOODED BLACKBIRD (*Chrysomus icterocephalus*) – Remarkably scarce this year, with only a single bird recorded -- a female mooching along the edge of one of the flooded watercress fields along Sellier road.

SHINY COWBIRD (*Molothrus bonariensis*) – Quite common around the livestock at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station, with others scattered along the roadsides on Tobago. The dark eye of this species helps to separate it from the pale-eyed Carib Grackle.

GIANT COWBIRD (*Molothrus oryzivorus*) – A couple of these very large cowbirds flew past as we drove through the Melon Patch. This species is a brood parasite, with 22 known host species on Trinidad and Tobago.

EPAULET ORIOLE (MORICHE) (*Icterus cayanensis chrysocephalus*) – WOW!! Two at Waller Field played hard to get initially, bobbing and weaving among the leaves before dropping out of the trees entirely. Fortunately, they returned later (having apparently had a good bath) and preened their wet plumage vigorously at the top of a convenient roadside tree -- a spectacle we enjoyed with rum punch in hand!

YELLOW ORIOLE (*Icterus nigrogularis*) – Seen on most of our days on Trinidad, including a pair in a fruiting tree where we found our Trinidad Euphonia and one in the reeds at the Melon Patch.

YELLOW-RUMPED CACIQUE (*Cacicus cela*) – Best seen in Cumoto, where we scoped a colony tree with lots of nests and a few singing birds in attendance. Several other birds made repeated visits to their nests as we watched, apparently feeding youngsters. [N]

CRESTED OROPENDOLA (*Psarocolius decumanus*) – Common throughout, with spectacular views of dozens -- including several amorous males performing their comical somersaulting, wing-waving displays -- around the Asa Wright veranda. And how about those blue eyes! [N]

Fringillidae (Siskins, Crossbills, and Allies)

TRINIDAD EUPHONIA (*Euphonia trinitatis*) – A handsome male sang from several (conveniently bare) tree tops along the Blanchisseuse road, showing well his distinctively dark throat. This is by far the less common euphonia on the islands.

VIOLACEOUS EUPHONIA (*Euphonia violacea*) – We saw fewer this year than we normally do, but still had nice views of several pairs foraging in the flowering bushes near the Asa Wright veranda, with others along the Guacharo trail (en

route to the Oilbird cave) and near the trogon nest in Brasso Seco.

Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)

COMMON WAXBILL (*Estrilda astrild*) – A flock of a half dozen foraged in the tangled weeds growing in one of the ponds at Tobago Plantations, then flew past, calling. This is a new arrival to the island; until recently, it was only found on Trinidad. [H]

MAMMALS

COMMON OPOSSUM (*Didelphis marsupialis*) – Mahase spotted one frozen on a branch in a small tree in one of the pastures at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station.

GREATER WHITE-LINED BAT (*Saccopteryx bilineata*) – Regular in Trinidad's Northern Range, where we saw them winnowing back and forth along shadowed roads, trails and stream corridors.

RED HOWLER MONKEY (*Alouatta seniculus*) – Two big males sat up in the mangroves edging Nariva Swamp after some showers, drying out.

RED-TAILED SQUIRREL (*Sciurus granatensis*) – A few of these dark little squirrels were seen chasing each other around in the trees on the Grafton Estate.

RED-RUMPED AGOUTI (*Dasyprocta agouti*) – Fine views under the feeders at Asa Wright, where agouti-friendly piles of bread lure these normally shy rodents out of the surrounding forest.

EGYPTIAN MONGOOSE (*Herpestes ichneumon*) – One scampered across the highway in front of the first van as we headed towards the Arena Forest. [H]

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Here is the list of reptiles and amphibians we identified on the tour:

Common Coral Snake (*Micrurus lemniscatus*): Based on the list of Trinidad & Tobago's snakes, if what we saw along the Asa Wright entrance road was indeed a true coral, it was likely to be this species.

Tree Boa (*Corallus ruschenbergerii*): Seen coiled up and snoozing (draped from tree branches) in the mangroves of Caroni Swamp. Sometimes still called Cook's Tree Boa, though a recent split now confines that species to the Caribbean island of Saint Vincent.

Gold Tegu (*Tupinambis teguixin*): Many, often quite large, scrounged for breadcrumbs daily under the feeders at Asa Wright; some of the group also saw one leap on (and devour) an unwary Crested Oropendola that was foraging on the ground one morning -- nature red in tooth and claw, and all that!

Giant Ameiva (*Ameiva ameiva*): These were the speedy half-brown, half-green lizards that frequented the open areas around the buildings at Asa Wright.

Spectacled Caiman (*Caiman crocodilus*): One basked on the shore of one of the bigger ponds at Tobago Plantations -- not far from the sign warning potential swimmers away.

Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*): Neil and Judy were the lucky ones who saw one through the bottom of their glass-bottomed boat while taking a cruise around the bay at Speyside (on the day the rest of us were hiking the Gilpin trail).

Cane Toad (*Bufo marinus*): These giant toads, which can weigh upwards of FIVE POUNDS(!) were very common at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station after dark, hunting along the roads and around the street lights.

Yellow-throated Frog (*Mannophryne trinitatis*): These tiny frogs have surprisingly loud voices, as we discovered on our walk down to see the Oilbirds. We spotted a few hopping along the sides of the little stream near entrance to Dunstan Cave - though their yellow throats weren't particularly obvious!

Totals for the tour: 212 bird taxa and 6 mammal taxa