The Reptiles & Amphibians of Suriname

Naturetrek Tour Itinerary

Outline Itinerary

Day 1 – 2	Outbound flights via Amsterdam
Day 3	Herping Palulu
Day 4	Palulu to Fredberg
Day 5 – 6	Fredberg
Day 7 – 8	Sutopia and Peperpot Nature Park
Day 9 – 10	Inbound flights via Amsterdam

Post-tour Brownsberg Extension

Day 9 – 12	Brownsberg
Day 13 – 14	Inbound flights via Amsterdam



Emerald Tree Boa *(Corallus caninus)*



Amazon Palm Viper *(Bothrops bilineatus)*



Suriname Clown Frog *(Dendropsophus leucophyllatus)*

© Sandro Veltman

Departs

April

Focus

Reptiles and Amphibians

Grading

Important: please read the 'Tour Grading and Focus' section at the end of the document before booking.

Dates and Prices

See website (tour code SUR03)

Naturetrek

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How does this tour benefit the local community and wildlife?

At present, Suriname proudly retains the title for being the most forested country on Earth. However, despite the current abundance of flora and fauna, the native habitat is under increasing threat from illegal mining, slash-and-burn agriculture, and the hunting and trapping of native wildlife. Eco-tourism plays a crucial role by fostering appreciation for this unique habitat and providing the local population with a justified means to protect it. We work closely with local communities to promote eco-tourism as an effective and sustainable approach to safeguarding Suriname's rich natural heritage. Many of our local guides are former hunters who have now traded their traps for binoculars, and they make some of the best wildlife spotters you could hope for! Upon speaking with these individuals, you'll quickly come to realise that hunting was not a hobby for them but rather a means to earn a humble living. Given the chance to earn a livelihood by sharing their knowledge of their habitat with others and protecting wildlife, they warmly embrace these opportunities, and it is through eco-tourism that this vision can become a reality. A portion of the cost of your tour is donated to our local partners' wildlife conservation fund, which supports a diverse array of important ecological and educational projects in Suriname.

One of the projects we support is outlined below:

With Suriname's abundant forest cover, residents often come into contact with native wildlife. Unfortunately, these encounters can result in conflict, often due to a lack of awareness and education, especially concerning snakes – a globally misunderstood and feared group of organisms. The instinct of many locals is to eliminate any snake on sight. To address this issue, our local partners have launched the 'Snake Patrol Suriname' foundation, which aims to educate communities about snakes. Through informative workshops and a 'snake rescue' service that relocates and rehabilitates snakes found in homes, the team has helped to dispel negative stereotypes surrounding these fascinating reptiles, and their efforts have helped foster respect and awareness for the crucial environmental role they play in the broader biosphere. When you travel with us to Suriname, you not only support this charity but, on occasion (and only if you wish), may also have the unique chance to join our local experts on a snake rescue, witnessing firsthand the important work they do!



Snake Patrol Suriname



Introduction

Suriname is a lesser-known country tucked away on the north-east edge of South America. Sandwiched between Guyana, French Guiana, and Brazil, it lies within the Guiana Shield biodiversity hotspot. Despite being the smallest nation on the continent, Suriname boasts the highest percentage of forest cover of any country on Earth, enveloping a staggering 93 per cent of its territory. This largely undisturbed wilderness supports an exceptional and exciting diversity of reptiles and amphibians, many of which remain poorly documented.

This 10-day tour is designed to explore a range of habitats, from lowland rainforest and swamp forest to savanna edges and forested plateaus, in search of the region's rich herpetofauna. With extensive time spent in the field both by day and at night, we will maximise our chances of encountering a wide variety of species in their natural environment.

Suriname offers excellent opportunities to observe an array of snakes, including arboreal species such as Emerald Tree Boa *(Corallus caninus)* and Amazon Palm Viper *(Bothrops bilineatus)*, as well as more elusive forest specialists such as South American Bushmaster *(Lachesis muta)* and a diversity of coral snakes *(Micrurus spp.)*. Amphibian life is equally impressive, with poison frogs *(Dendrobatidae)*, the remarkable Suriname Toad *(Pipa pipa)*, and a host of treefrogs and leaf-litter species active in the humid conditions.

The intact nature of Suriname's ecosystems also means that encounters with other wildlife are likely. Mammals, birds and invertebrates all contribute to the experience, while night walks and spotlighting sessions provide opportunities to observe the forest's nocturnal inhabitants.

This tour offers a unique opportunity to explore one of South America's least-visited regions, focusing on its fascinating and often overlooked reptiles and amphibians within a truly pristine setting.

Brownsberg also offers an optional extension for those wishing to spend additional time in this rich and scenic area. With its elevated forest, network of trails and waterfalls, the plateau provides further opportunities to explore a diverse range of habitats and to continue searching for a wide variety of reptiles and amphibians. The combination of accessible terrain and high humidity makes this an especially rewarding location for additional field time.

Itinerary

NB. Please note that the itinerary below offers our planned programme of excursions. However, adverse weather & other local considerations can necessitate some re-ordering of the programme during the course of the tour, though this will always be done to maximise best use of the time and weather conditions available.

Day 1 Fly to Amsterdam

For those joining the group flights, we will depart from London Heathrow this morning on an early flight to Amsterdam. Upon arrival, we'll transfer to a very comfortable airport hotel for an overnight stay.

Please note that Amsterdam serves as a hub for many regional destinations. If you have a specific preference regarding outbound flights from the UK, kindly indicate this at the time of booking.

Days 2 – 3 Fly Amsterdam to Palulu

This morning we fly from Amsterdam to Paramaribo-Zanderij International Airport.



Emerald Tree Boa *(Corallus caninus)*
© Sandro Veltman

We will arrive in Suriname by mid-afternoon, after making our way through the airport we'll meet our local driver and head to our field base in Palulu, for our first taste of the amazing biodiversity this region has to offer. The lodge is just a short drive from the airport and sits in a mosaic of savanna and dense jungle interwoven by small, dark-coloured creeks. This unique blend of habitats is ideal for a diverse range of reptiles and amphibians.

After getting settled at the lodge, we'll take our first exploratory walk through the area in search of some of the region's specialties. Target species include Suriname Aquatic Coral Snake *(Micrurus surinamensis),* Emerald Tree Boa *(Corallus caninus)*, and South American Bushmaster *(Lachesis muta)* alongside a variety of other herpetological interest.

During our two-night stay, we will explore a variety of habitats both by day and after dark, maximising our chances of observing a wide range of species in their natural environment. These excursions will provide an excellent introduction to Suriname's remarkable herpetofauna, with opportunities to encounter a fascinating diversity of reptiles and amphibians.

Days 4 – 6 Fredberg

After a final morning at Palulu, we set off into the Surinamese wilderness, driving approximately three and a half hours south to Fredberg. The final section of the journey follows a rough, unpaved road, but the route offers excellent wildlife-viewing opportunities and we will stop whenever something of interest is spotted.

As we travel deeper into the forest, we will keep a close watch for mammals, particularly Pale-throated Three-toed Sloth, which is often seen resting high in cecropia trees. With a little luck, we may even encounter one of the rainforest's most iconic predators, the magnificent Harpy Eagle, which occasionally patrols these forests in search of prey.

The journey itself provides a fascinating introduction to the pristine habitats of central Suriname and the remarkable wildlife that inhabits them.

Fredberg itself is situated in a swamp forest on the bank of the Little Saramacca River. Accommodation is basic with limited facilities*, but the camp is situated amongst some of the finest habitat in Suriname. The in-house chef is well-known for preparing a delightful spread at mealtimes, while Fred, the owner of the lodge, is an extraordinarily sharp birder.

During our three nights in Fredberg we will venture into the dense jungle on daytime and night-time herping excursions, searching for some of Suriname's most captivating species, including the Green Anaconda *(Eunectes murinus)*, coral snakes *(Micrurus spp.)*, Rainbow Boa *(Epicrates cenchria)*, Emerald Tree Boa *(Corallus caninus)* and Garden Tree Boa *(Corallus hortulana)*. Fredberg is also a strong hold for the mighty South American Bushmaster *(Lachesis muta)*, indeed seen here by a Naturetrek group in March 2026. The combination of river, forest, and creeks makes this an excellent spot for spotting both aquatic and terrestrial species, as well as enjoying the some of the last true wilderness on offer.



Rainbow Boa *(Epicrates cenchria)* © Sandro Veltman



Garden Tree *Boa (Corallus hortulana)* © Sandro Veltman

Despite the wide variety of herpetological interest, Fredberg is perhaps best known for providing access to multiple lekking sites for the Guianan Cock-of-the-rock, which offer fantastic opportunities for photographers (when the birds are compliant!). Sightings are typically reliable (though may take a couple of attempts), and we'll be sure to visit at least one of these sites during our stay.

On the mammal front, all eight of Suriname's primates are present here, with near-endemics including Guiana (Red-faced) Spider Monkey, Golden-handed Tamarin, Chestnut Capuchin and White-faced Saki being key targets. Red-rumped Agouti is particularly common, but, as is typical in

much of Suriname, you never know what delights will show up, with records of Margay and Puma having been sighted close to camp.

There will be time to relax in the hammocks around the lodge during the heat of the day, as well as the unique opportunity to cool off in the Little Saramacca River.

*Accommodation note: Please be aware that the accommodation at Fredberg is basic, with limited facilities. Rooms are simple, wooden huts with double/twin beds and a basic en suite bathroom (no hot water). They do not have fans or air-conditioning. The access road to Fredberg is poor. If you have any questions or concerns before booking, please don't hesitate to contact Operations Manager, Dan Lay (dan@naturetrek.co.uk or 01962 733051).

Days 7 – 8 Sutopia

Today we will head back to civilisation to spend a couple of nights at Sutopia Resort in Meerzorg, Commewijne, within easy reach of Paramaribo. After our days in remote forest habitats, this provides a welcome opportunity to relax in more comfortable surroundings, set amidst attractive gardens of native plants and trees.

The resort offers well-appointed apartments, each equipped with air-conditioning, hot water, private bathroom facilities and Wi-Fi, and there is also a swimming pool.

Peperpot Nature Park – just a short drive from Sutopia – is a fascinating area of regenerating secondary forest established on former plantation land. Characterised by fruiting trees, dense vegetation and an extensive network of waterways, the reserve supports an abundance of wildlife. Although species diversity here differs somewhat from that of the interior, the sheer number of reptiles, amphibians, birds and mammals makes for rewarding exploration.

Following our return from Fredberg, we will undertake an evening excursion within the park. Here we will search for a variety of species, with possibilities including Fer-de-lance *(Bothrops atrox)*, Amazon Palm Viper *(Bothrops bilineatus)*, Snail-eaters *(Sibon spp.)*, and Keelbacks *(Chironius spp.)*. Amphibians may include Suriname Toad *(Pipa pipa)*, Clown Treefrog *(Dendropsophus leucophyllatus)*, and Tiger-legged Monkey Frog *(Pithecopus hypochondrialis)*.



Tiger-legged Monkey Frog *(Pithecopus hypochondrialis)* © Sandro Veltman

Day 9 Departure

We'll have a final early morning of wildlife exploration today before returning to our lodge to freshen up. For those not opting for the extension, we will then bid farewell to our local guide and transfer to the airport for our flights back to the UK via Amsterdam.

Day 10 Arrive UK

We will catch our connecting flight in Amsterdam and arrive back in the UK this morning.

Post-tour Brownsberg Extension

(The minimum number of participants required to run this extension is four; however, we may still be able to operate it with fewer guests for a small per-person supplement)

N.B. Please see accommodation/access note when considering this extension.

Days 9 – 11 Brownsberg

After a final early morning exploring or relaxing at our lodge, we will bid farewell to the rest of the group and drive for approximately one and a half hours before beginning our ascent to Brownsberg Nature Park. The final stretch is a one-hour climb by vehicle to the Bauxite Plateau, situated at around 515 metres above sea level in the Brokopondo district. This elevated area supports a rich tract of rainforest and offers excellent opportunities for herpetological exploration, combined with fine views over the surrounding landscape.



Hoogmoed's Harlequin Toad *(Atelopus hoogmoedi)* © Sandro Veltman

Our lodge is located on the plateau, close to several forest trails leading to waterfalls and streams, which provide ideal habitat for a variety of amphibians and reptiles. The laterite substrate retains moisture throughout the year, maintaining high levels of amphibian activity. During our three nights here, we will search for such species as Amazon Palm Viper *(Bothrops bilineatus)* and Fer-de-lance (*Bothrops atrox*). Brownsberg is also one of the best locations to find Emerald Tree Boa (*Corallus caninus*) the striking yellow Hoogmoed's Harlequin Toad *(Atelopus hoogmoedi)*, as well as the rarely seen caecilians.

The humid conditions and rocky terrain can also favour fossorial species, and we will look for coral snakes *(Micrurus spp.)*, Pipe Snake *(Anilius scytale)*, and Blind Snakes *(Leptotyphlops spp.)*, which may emerge to the surface. Both daytime walks and evening excursions will be undertaken to maximise our chances of observing these often elusive species elsewhere.

*Accommodation note: Please be aware that the accommodation at Brownsberg is very basic, with limited facilities. Rooms are simple, wooden huts with double/twin beds and a basic en suite

bathroom (no hot water). They do not have fans or air-conditioning. If you have any questions or concerns before booking, please don't hesitate to contact Operations Manager, Dan Lay (dan@naturetrek.co.uk or 01962 733051).

Day 12 Brownsberg to Sutopia

After a final morning wildlife walk down one of the forest trails, we'll depart Brownsberg and head back towards our lodge in the city suburbs.

Day 13 Departure

We'll have one last morning exploration today before returning to our lodge to freshen up. This afternoon, we will bid farewell to our local guide and transfer to the airport for our flights back to the UK via Amsterdam.

Day 14 Arrive UK

We will catch our connecting flight in Amsterdam and arrive back in the UK this morning.



Suriname jungle

Tour Grading & Focus

On a typical day on our herpetology tours we'll begin searching in the field after breakfast, when the sun has warmed the substrates and landscapes, often getting into the vehicles at 9am and, after stopping for approximately one hour for lunch, we'll continue into early-evening when we will stop for a rest and dinner. Most evenings it will be possible to do excursions in search of nocturnal species, which will on average be for three hours after dinner. With an equal percentage of the target reptile and amphibian species likely to be nocturnal, these night searches are an important part of the tour but are optional, with some participants preferring to rest on some of the days.

We'll focus our time in the field on building an enviable list of reptile and amphibian species seen. Whilst searching, there is no doubt we'll come across a huge variety of amazing fauna and flora, of which we'll also take time to enjoy, but reptiles and amphibians will strongly remain our focus. Sensitively checking under stones, logs and other refugia is an effective way of finding many species. Some of the target reptile or amphibian species may require longer field hours to locate and therefore this tour is suitable, and most enjoyable, for experienced herpetologists or naturalists who, aside from wishing to see the region's rarely-seen reptiles and amphibians, relish being in the field searching for and identifying the vast array of birds, mammals, butterflies, invertebrates, orchids and other wildlife which can be found sharing the wonderful habitats that we'll explore on the tour. Snakes do, of course, occur at low densities and are notoriously elusive, so it's unlikely that every species mentioned will be encountered. However, with the guidance of a leading herpetologist, your chances improve dramatically. A realistic goal might be to observe around 8-10 species –sometimes more, sometimes fewer – depending on conditions.

In summary, Naturetrek herpetology holidays are suitable, and offer tremendous value, for those of whom spending most of their holiday time in wildlife habitats and for whom seeing some of the world's superb reptiles and amphibians is the focus of their time away.

Although you can expect clean and comfortable accommodation during the most of the tour, during the stay at Fredberg, and those opting for the Brownsberg extension, the lodging will be basic with a bumpy drive, hot temperatures and walking on steep/uneven trails.

Despite Suriname's abundance of wildlife, its eco-tourism industry is relatively new. While our tours are meticulously planned, occasional inefficiencies in local operations may well arise. Please be aware that these occurrences are largely beyond Naturetrek's control and are a natural part of the travel experience. Rest assured, we are fully equipped to handle any challenges, but embracing a spirit of adventure and patience is needed and this will enhance your enjoyment during the tour.

Please do not hesitate to talk to the Operations Manager, Dan Lay (dan@naturetrek.co.uk or 01962 733051), if you have any additional questions regarding this holiday.

Weather, Clothing & Equipment

The weather is likely to be hot and humid throughout. While the tour is designed to fall at the end of the 'short dry season', it's important to be prepared for rain at any time, as is typical in any rainforest. If it does rain, it usually occurs in short, heavy downpours rather than lasting all day. Although weather patterns are increasingly unpredictable, Suriname typically experiences two main dry seasons: a 'long dry season' from August to November and a 'short dry season' from February to April. During the 'long dry season,' one can expect more stable weather, with the hottest, driest conditions of the year. In contrast, the 'short dry season' offers slightly cooler weather but also a higher chance of rainfall.

Please inspect the separate clothing list contained within the pre-departure information, of which a copy will be sent to you upon booking. Binoculars and cameras are of course essential for this holiday.

What's Included

All accommodation, meals and drinking water are included. Snacks, soft/alcoholic drinks and items of a personal nature are not included in the price of the tour.

Extending Your Holiday

Please note that there are a limited number of rooms available at Brownsberg, so this extension operates on a first-come, first-serve basis. If you have specific interests, please let us know, as there are other localities you may wish to visit before or after the tour. Alternatively, this trip can be arranged on an entirely Tailormade basis.

How to book your place

In order to book your place on this holiday, please give us a call on 01962 733051 with a credit or debit card, book online at www.naturetrek.co.uk, or alternatively complete and post the booking form at the back of our main Naturetrek brochure, together with a deposit of 20% of the holiday cost plus any room supplements if required. If you do not have a copy of the brochure, please call us on 01962 733051 or request one via our website. Please stipulate any special requirements and your interest in an extension at the time of booking.

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