

Guyana - A Timeless Paradise

Naturetrek Tour Report

20 October - 4 November 2008

Report compiled by Ron Allcock



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Day 1

Monday 20th October

The team arrived in Georgetown. On their arrival they were received by Lawson, the bus driver and myself. We over-nighted at Cara Lodge Hotel.

Days 2 - 4

21st - 23rd October

Arrowpoint Resort

After an early morning breakfast we departed for Arrowpoint Resort with Lawson the driver of the bus. We were met by staff and guide Roberto. We then boarded the boat for a two and a half hour trip to the resort. On our way we visited Santa Mission to check out the village and visited the craft shop. On arrival at the resort we were met by staff and manager Sonia at the landing. The usual welcome and introduction was done almost immediately which was a nice way to start.

Highlights

- The Crimson Topaz lek on the creek was excellent. The group saw over five mature males in display along with a few females in the distance.
- The Point-tailed Palm-creeper was also seen but only briefly, the group did not have a good look at the bird. However, the bird lives in the area which is a good sign for future trips.
- The camp fire on the final night during dinner was absolutely superb.
- Saw three new species there - Least Bittern, Masked Yellowthroat and River Warbler.

Days 4 - 8

23rd - 27th October

Kaieteur, Iwokrama and Canopy Walkway

Kaieteur Falls Visit:

The trip to Kaieteur was once again a successful one. The group saw the Guianan Cock-of-the Rock in full view. The famous Golden Frog was also seen and three species of swifts. Birds seen at Kaieteur are as follows: White-collared Swift, Black Swift and the White-tipped Swift.

Iwokrama:

At Iwokrama we took the opportunity to spend more time along the main road doing bird watching and looking for the possibility of Jaguar at the same time. We also visited Turtle Mountain and went out during the evening looking for nocturnal wildlife.

Highlights:

- The group saw two Pacas (Labba) in full view and took good pictures.
- The snakes on the trees along the river were also exciting to see in the night
- Saw good views of Red Howler Monkeys on the road
- Pompadour and Spangled Cotingas on the road beautiful views
- The Tailless Whip Scorpion was also a big highlight for them. (They said they saw it on a BBC programme about Guyana called "The Lost Land of the Jaguar")

Canopy Walkway

During the time of our visit the canopy was not active and unfortunately did not have too much going on there. However, the group enjoyed the experience. On our way back from the walkway we spent our time birding along the road corridor. There were countless birds to see on the road including Scarlet Macaws, Black-headed Parrots, Caica Parrots, Toucans to name a few, as well as the Red-rumped Agouti.

We did not see the Elusive Jaguar but we saw fresh foot prints of him/her. It is clear that the Jaguar is around but we just needed to spend more time on the road during the morning and evening period and be lucky!

Days 8 - 10**27th - 29th October****Surama Eco Lodge**

We arrived at Surama Eco-lodge after visiting the canopy walkway and the Cock-of-the Rock/Prince Charles Nature Trail on our way. Again we were lucky to see the male Guianan Cock-of-the Rock on its lek we also saw a nest of Scarlet Macaws.

Highlights

- On the first evening we visited the Great Potoo roost and the group saw two potoos in the same area.
- On our way to the Harpy Eagle nesting site Spider Monkeys performed for us by throwing sticks at us, we saw them very well and took good pictures.
- Early morning Burro-Burro river boating trip. We saw the Giant Otters, as well as the Neotropic Otter but only briefly. We did not get good view of them but saw lots of wonderful birds on this trip.

Days 10 - 12**29th – 31st October****Rock View Lodge**

The stay at Rock View was very good. We enjoyed the accommodation, meals and the swimming pool.

Highlights

- Birding in the environs for the Sooty-capped Hermit and the Buff-necked Ibis
- Early morning birding on the airstrip and came across a flock of five Toco Toucans in full view.
- Meals were excellent; kitchen staff did a great job.

Days 12 - 15

31st October - 3rd November

Karanambu

The visit to Karanambu was a stunning one. This time of year is the best to see the elusive Agami Heron and the Giant River Otters in the wild.

Highlights

- Being able to see so many large Black Caiman
- The Giant *Victoria amazonica* in full bloom during the evening and the beetles pollinating them.
- The Giant Anteater and the Vaquero early morning.
- Burrow of the Burrowing Owl, Bearded Tachuri, Long-winged Harrier sailing over the marsh.
- The Agami Heron was everywhere the best place and month to see them.
- A group of eight adult Giant River otters next to their den, and the Bearded Saki Monkey.
- The countless Nighthawks and Nightjars at the Sunset point and the Airstrip.

Comments:

I have had such a wonderful time with the Naturetrek group. We were treated very well at every place we visited. The group members appreciated every moment of their stay and the activities we did together. Overall the activities on this tour went very well. Thanks you to you all. Thanks also to all the locally-based staff, drivers, boat captains, managers and guides at the various destinations. I am looking forward to working with you all again.

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