

# Trinidad & Tobago

Naturetrek Tour Report

3 – 16 March 2015

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Report compiled by Paul Dukes



Naturetrek Mingledown Barn Wolf's Lane Chawton Alton Hampshire GU34 3HJ England

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

F: +44 (0)1962 736426

E: [info@naturetrek.co.uk](mailto:info@naturetrek.co.uk)

W: [www.naturetrek.co.uk](http://www.naturetrek.co.uk)

Tour Leaders:	Paul Dukes	Naturetrek
	Mahase Ramlal	Trinidad
	Gladwyn James	Tobago

Participants:

- Ian Tulloch
- Fiona Tulloch
- David Lovell
- Andy Shand
- Jan Shand
- Barbara Lovell
- Tony Mainwood
- Helen Mainwood
- Peter Walliss
- Lin Walliss
- Stuart Hay
- Penny Hay
- Richard Hargreaves
- Judith Hargreaves

## Day 1

## Tuesday 3rd March

Shaking off the soporific effects of a trans-Atlantic flight we passed through arrival formalities at Trinidad's Piarco Airport and emerged into a balmy 25C early evening to be met by a cheery Mahase and the Asa Wright Centre (AWC) crew. Son of legendary Bird guide Jogi Ramlal, Mahase was taught his trade over twenty or more years at his father's side and is now one of the most experienced and sought-after local leaders working for the AWC. Luggage was quickly stowed into the Centre's minibus and we climbed into the vehicles for the 45-minute drive to the Centre. It transpired that Mahase was awaiting the imminent delivery of a brand new minibus and tonight was behind the wheel of a large black SUV with seating for four while the rest of the group was carried in a minibus driven by a local taxi-driver Augustine. The replacement bus failed to arrive during the period of our stay but the ad hoc arrangement was fine and no doubt provided an amusing diversion for Augustine from his more usual routine of taking passengers between Arima and Port of Spain.

Heavy traffic filled the busy dual-carriageway from Piarco to Arima but after negotiating the outskirts of the town we soon began to climb up into the northern range of hills replacing the noise of the streets with the chirping of frogs and crickets in the forest. At length we finally reached the world-famous Centre where we were surprised to be greeted by torchlight in the car park as both the National grid and the Centre's back-up generator had failed, plunging the area into darkness! A somewhat difficult check-in ensued with manager Ann Sealey and her staff doing their best to show guests to their rooms and ensure that luggage followed to the correct location. Fortunately lighting was soon restored and after the opportunity for a quick wash, we reassembled in the dining hall for a buffet dinner. Although still only mid-evening, body-clocks were telling us that it was well after midnight GMT and we retired early, but not before making plans for an exciting day around the Centre beginning with the dawn entertainment from the verandah.

## Day 2

## Wednesday 4th March

The night serenade of crickets and cicadas suddenly ceased about 5.30am as the first whistles and squeaks of the birds began and by 6am the birds were in full voice with House Wren and tanagers leading the dawn chorus. At least one Ferruginous Pygmy Owl had been calling on occasions through the night, his voice competing with the sound of heavy rainfall on the roof. The showers persisted on occasions through the day but we were only caught in one heavy downpour during an afternoon excursion.

We started to assemble on the verandah from 5.45am for the morning performance. It was comforting to note that the two hot drink urns were already bubbling nicely and fresh brewed coffee helped the waking up process.

Turning attention to the freshly replenished bird tables and hummingbird feeders we found an ever increasing horde of avian arrivals heralding another 12 hours of verandah entertainment. Many years of visiting Trinidad have not blunted the sense of excitement and anticipation that I felt, sitting with my cup of coffee watching the forest wake up. First on parade were the immaculate, but pugnacious White-necked Jacobins, ready to see off intruders from the moment they began sipping the morning sugar solution. Palm Tanagers were soon feasting on the fruit and bread, quickly joined by their White-lined and Silver-beaked brethren, Violaceous Euphonias, Crested Oropendolas, and Cocoa and Spectacled Thrushes. Swarms of tiny Bananaquits quickly dominated activities around the hummingbird feeders, competing with the jacobins, and White-chested Emeralds for the 'nectar' whilst Black-throated Mango and Copper-rumped Hummingbirds explored the choice of flowers in the garden. The flowers of the Vervain bushes below the veranda were a big attraction to the smaller hummingbirds including the tiniest of them all, the amazing Tufted Coquette. At first one or two females could be observed flitting among the foliage but soon a splendid male appeared and posed beautifully for the admiring humans. Almost imperceptibly, the late rising honeycreepers arrived and all at once the Bananaquits found their perches filled by a flood of purple and green bodies. These brightly coloured little birds rapidly asserted their presence so that on occasions every port on the feeders was occupied by either a Purple or a Green Honeycreeper with dozens more scrabbling to take over a position. During a morning, notable for the range of hummingbirds, we were also treated to views of Blue-chinned Sapphire, Brown Violetear, Long-billed Starthroat, Green Hermit and Ruby-Topaz although the last named favoured a Powder-puff bush near the Discovery Trail and did not venture into the area below the verandah.

7am and it was a riot of activity in front of the verandah. Kiskadee Flycatchers shouted their names, a House Wren poured out his song from the undergrowth and Blue-Grey Tanagers jostled with the other birds for the rapidly dwindling supplies of fruit. Rather more distantly, Grey-rumped and Band-rumped Swifts glided over the forest and Orange-winged Parrots screeched their way across the valley. Soaring Black Hawks and White Hawks were also taking advantage of the developing thermals. The ringing of a bell summoned us to our own breakfasts in the dining hall but we were anxious not to miss any of the action and were soon installed again for another hour or two on the veranda. Red-rumped Agoutis nervously emerged from the vegetation to scavenge beneath the tables, joined later in the morning by several large Tegu Lizards. We were fortunate on this first day to have the company of Martyn Kenefick. Once a well-known member of the Sussex birdwatching fraternity, Martyn now lives in Port of Spain and has become a leading light in Trinidad ornithology. As an old friend of Naturetrek, Martyn kindly agreed to meet us at the Centre and we were grateful for his expertise which was particularly welcome as we set off for an introductory walk along the Discovery Trail.

A Yellow-Olive Flycatcher was an early find beside the trail although it soon moved away into the canopy. The Golden-headed Manakin lek site produced only one bird, which was not clearly seen by the entire group, but we would have other opportunities during the week to see these striking little birds. Nearby the more terrestrial White-bearded Manakin lek was a scene of only half-hearted display but we did have excellent views of a male and heard the extraordinary whip-crack sounds produced by flicking specially adapted wing feathers. Moving along the trail, past lines of Leaf-cutter Ants, we heard a Black-faced Ant-thrush calling near the start of the Chaconia Trail but it remained concealed in the undergrowth. Diurnal White-lined Sackwing Bats skimming over the path were the next attraction before we finally reached the Bearded Bellbird display site helpfully identified by a large sign containing details about these strange birds. The sign was superfluous because the displaying males were creating a remarkable volume of noise in the canopy above the trail, so loud on occasions that it was actually painful to the hearing. Sometimes it can be difficult to see the callers but not today as first one, then a second individual danced around in open view only 20 metres away. I have never witnessed such an extrovert performance and even Martyn was impressed by the encounter. At least half a dozen males were calling in this fairly small area but we concentrated on the duo showing right above our heads!

The walk back to the Centre was accomplished at different speeds by the group but a highlight for those of us at the rear was a fine Lineated Woodpecker hacking away at the bark of a tall tree. Back on the verandah we enjoyed further sightings as the morning progressed and some of the shyer forest inhabitants put in brief appearances. Among the species noted were; Boat-billed Flycatcher, Ochre-bellied Flycatcher, Guianan Trogon, Barred Antshrike, Bay-headed Tanager, Yellow Oriole and Channel-billed Toucan.

After a hearty lunch we filled in the interval before the serving of tea at 4pm by wandering along the entrance road to the Centre, following the tarmac strip back to the main road before turning back. A heavy shower caught us out at the beginning of the walk but it soon passed and the afternoon sun quickly dried any wet clothing. A Rufous-breasted Hermit gave close views as it visited Heleconia flowers beside the road, and a Northern Waterthrush tripped wagtail-like along the wet verges. These ground-loving warblers are numerous winter visitors to the island and whilst often inconspicuous they can be detected by their distinctive call note which to my ears resembles a Grey Wagtail in the UK. A pale-phase Short-tailed Hawk glided overhead among an increasing number of vultures as the raptors took advantage of the afternoon thermals. A Plumbeous Kite appeared briefly in silhouette but it was the profile of another much smaller bird high on a ridge that caused a bit of head-scratching before Martyn pronounced it to be an Olive-sided Flycatcher. Obliging perched atop a dead branch on the other side of a valley, it was initially difficult to judge size or plumage detail but eventually subtle changes in the light enabled us to see through the telescope features such as the grey shading at the sides of the breast which are indicative of this scarce winter visitor. A Tropical Pewee opposite the entrance gates was far less static and moved away before most had obtained views.

We ambled back for our afternoon cakes and drinks and there followed a period on the verandah during which a Squirrel Cuckoo made a frustrating appearance, offering brief views for some observers but mostly remaining hidden in foliage. At the end of a typically exciting first day we had seen a great mix of species and a run through the bird list after the serving of rum punches at 6pm revealed some individual sightings such as Scaled Pigeon, Grey-headed Kite, Great Antshrike and Southern Rough-wing Swallow. With a constantly changing cast of birds, each visit to the veranda can provide a surprise or two and it was the pattern of the week that some tour members would have the good fortune to be present when something unexpected popped into view.

Thanks are also due to Martyn who had been a great help during the day. As Recorder for Trinidad his involvement with the Naturetrek tour was to be renewed before the end of our stay but that is a tale for another day.

## Day 3

## Thursday 5th March

On the verandah at 5.45am the night shift of fruit bats were paying their final visits to the fruit on the bird tables. As the valley began to receive the first rays of the rising sun the birds began a repeat performance of the previous morning with Tufted Coquettes back on the Vervain flowers and Orange-winged Parrots flapping their way from roost to breakfast. During the pre-breakfast period we soaked up the atmosphere of birding from the verandah and in doing so were treated to a few long-distance telescope views of Bearded Bellbird, Scaled Pigeon, Guianan Trogon and Channel-billed Toucan as well as the usual scrum of tanagers and hummingbirds closer to hand.

Nariva Swamp was our objective for the day but before beginning the long drive to the coast we passed through the dry savannah grasslands of Wallerfield and turned into the Agricultural Research Station at Aripo to sample the range of new birds in this change of habitat. These came in quick succession as we left the vehicles and wandered a short distance along a farm road bisecting large overgrown fields dotted with occasional tall trees and shelters for the cattle which were grazing in some of the paddocks. We had scarcely entered the Station when Mahase stopped and walked back to the main road where he pointed out a lovely little Pearl Kite sitting close by a nest in the top of a tree. These diminutive raptors are not uncommon but not always easy to find so it was particularly satisfying to see this rather obliging bird.

As usual, the multiple appearances of new species made it difficult for tour members to know which way to look first as fresh names were called out, but eventually everyone managed to get satisfactory views of all the Research Station residents. Primrose winged Wattled Jacanas were among the first additions followed by noisy Southern Lapwings, White-winged Swallows and Grey-breasted Martins flying around our heads, flocks of Cattle Egrets stalking around the livestock, and some rather mobile Green-rumped Parrotlets. Fly-catching Tropical Kingbirds were numerous and other birds taking their toll of the insects included a number of dapper White-headed Marsh Tyrants and several Pied Water Tyrants.

A small party of Grassland Yellow Finches roamed the weedy fields looking rather canary like as they perched on seed heads, although they were quite flighty and proved difficult to telescope. More obliging residents were the smart Red-breasted Meadowlarks flaunting their scarlet chests in display. Overhead literally hundreds of Black Vultures were drifting and spiralling in the morning thermals accompanied by a few Turkey Vultures, whilst several Savannah Hawks observed us from tree-top perches. The margins of a small stream and a muddy pool near barns housing a herd of Water Buffalo were fertile feeding areas for a Solitary Sandpiper. Nearby a Green-rumped Parrotlet finally gave superb views in a low bush, and following the farm track around to get out of the way of some frisky Water Buffalo we enjoyed excellent views of a Yellow-chinned Spinetail perched on the lowest strand of a barbed wire fence. Other species included Great Egret, Ruddy Ground Dove, Spotted Sandpiper, Smooth-billed Ani and Shiny Cowbird.

The Research Station always promises a feast of birds but we had enjoyed a particularly productive visit and it was hard to drag ourselves away when Mahase eventually announced that it was time to depart. Continuing south

after a brief 'comfort stop' at Vallencia, we reached the coast at Manzanilla Beach which had been inundated during very stormy weather in November; a familiar story to those of us living in flood ravaged areas of Britain. Astonishingly a new coast road had been constructed in the few months since the disaster but many of the buildings along the shore were in a very sorry state including the public recreational area where we usually eat our packed lunches. Continuing along the coast, Mahase searched for a suitable replacement and eventually stopped outside a boarded up beach house which offered a degree of shelter. Amieva Lizards scuttled in every direction as we disturbed their tranquillity but our stay was short as the Asa Wright buffet was quickly dispatched by a hungry group. Overhead gliding squadrons of Frigatebirds reminded us that the Atlantic waves crashing on the beach were on the tropical side of the ocean even if their current appearance looked rather uninviting with a stiff wind driving the breakers ashore. After lunch we continued to motor south with rows of battered coconut palms between the road and ocean. A few Yellow-headed Caracaras and a close Savannah Hawk warranted brief stops but it is always an uncomfortable experience to pause along the road as most drivers seemed to follow a Lewis Hamilton driving style with feet pressed firmly on the floor and it is a bit like stopping on the hard-shoulder of a motorway. At the mouth of the Nariva River, a lone immature Brown Pelican seemed a little incongruous as it sheltered from the rough sea.

Planned stops further along the road allowed us to look for a few of the mangrove specialities at several places where fingers of marsh extend to the edge of the highway. At the first bridge, an American Pygmy Kingfisher gave all-too brief a glimpse to those lucky enough to be in the right position, but on the other side of the road a pair of Green Kingfishers were much more co-operative offering prolonged telescope views as they perched above the water. Turquoise Tanagers showed well in the bushes nearby and a big woodpecker identified initially as Lineated proved to be Crimson-crested although like the Pygmy Kingfisher, it did not stay long enough for everyone to see the diagnostic features. Mahase led many of the group along a footpath into the mangroves and they were rewarded by views of Bicoloured Conebill, Black-crested Antshrike, American Redstart, Yellow-bellied Elaenia, Blue Dacnis and Northern Scrub Flycatcher.

We rejoined the Atlantic and continued along the road for a few more kilometres before turning off to enter the 'swamp'. The pristine heartland of Nariva Swamp is largely impenetrable and lies many kilometres from this peripheral area but for the purposes of birdwatching tours this is as close as we get. Several rather prosperous buildings on stilts stood either side of the track with piles of huge Watermelons heaped outside. Large tracts of the former marsh have now been taken over for agriculture and clearly business was good. I learnt from Mahase that significant amounts of Government money had also been invested in the area which helped explain why it looked so much more prosperous than it did during my earlier visits when everything was rather run-down. Despite the massive amount of cultivation, and the associated influx of such birds as Smooth-billed Ani, water is still a significant feature of the landscape and we had not progressed far along the track before such species as Striated Heron, Pied Water Tyrant and Wattled Jacanas appeared beside the road. A distant Great Egret and Limpkin indicated a wetter area beyond the farmland but the highlight of the afternoon, perhaps the trip, was rather surprisingly only metres from the road close to one of the buildings. Here, at the edge of a ditch, a superb Pinnated Bittern was intent on stalking a fish and paid little attention to our excited, and somewhat noisy, arrival. I set the telescope on this handsome bird but it was hardly necessary so close were the views. For many minutes the bittern followed his prey and eventually succeeded in capturing the doomed creature thus providing a great deal of subject matter for the photographers. Pinnated Bitterns have a reputation for being confiding, and I have been fortunate to see a number of obliging birds but none so totally unconcerned as this individual which was

still in clear view as we took our leave. Other birds noted in the agricultural area included Blue-black Grassquit, Yellow-hooded Blackbird, Tropical Kingbird and Carib Grackle.

With time in hand we drove deeper into the area heading to a spot where patches of trees managed to intrude into the fields. Here we found several Giant Cowbirds but no sign of the macaws which sometimes visit the trees. It was a suitable moment to serve rum punch and cake before slowly beginning the return drive to the main road. This proved to be very productive beginning with a Crested Caracara near the forest fire-tower and then several Blue and Yellow Macaws. Although part of a re-introduction scheme, the macaws wander over a large area and we were lucky to obtain good telescope views. Unfortunately the same could not be said for an extremely distant, fast-flying flock of birds which could only have been the elusive Red-bellied Macaws. Once a certainty on these tours, the macaws have become very difficult to find and our encounter was extremely frustrating.

Further more satisfying sightings included a close Grey Kingbird, Solitary Sandpiper, Plumbeous Kite and a bizarre pair of adult and immature Purple Gallinules creeping about the foliage of a waterside bush. With memories of some terrific birding during the day we had now to endure the long drive back to the AWC, most of which took place in the dark. Fortunately our drivers were more than capable for the task and we arrived back at the Centre in good time for a delayed but welcome evening meal.

## Day 4

## Friday 6th March

Our morning excursion was to visit the Aripo and Arena Forests in the lowlands which entailed a 6am breakfast and 6.30am departure in order to fit in birding before the intense heat of the day. Everyone was very punctual and before the other guests were tucking into their breakfasts, we were enjoying some early morning birding at the roadside lower down the Arima valley.

The first of several inspired stops by Mahase was to scan the canopy of a flowering Immortelle tree near the road and among the small birds visiting the flowers we saw our first Red-legged Honeycreepers, the males looking even more striking than their Purple relatives at the Centre. A Southern Rough-wing Swallow perched somewhat incongruously at the top of a dead tree and at least one Northern Waterthrush was feeding on the cultivated slopes behind us. A Grey-lined Hawk swooped across the valley and perched for some while in a tree allowing us to focus the telescope on this handsome pale grey raptor. A Common Black Hawk soared overhead then a Black Hawk Eagle appeared offering excellent views as it glided above the road, every feather lit by the rays of the rising sun. This flurry of bird activity had produced two new species for our list and a singing Long-billed Gnatwren nearby would have been a third if only it had allowed a glimpse.

Stop number two was close to the rather unattractive quarry near Arima but Mahase had a purpose and this was revealed when a smart Trinidad Euphonia responded to calls and showed reasonably well at the top of a tree which was also frequented by an elusive Tropical Parula.

A flying Channel-billed Toucan was seen by some of the group when we paused near Mahase's farm while he collected his mobile phone, but the third fortuitous stop of the morning was occasioned by another flowering Immortelle tree near Wallerfield. Various tanagers were flying back and forth as they visited the flowers but the star was a Moriche Oriole, a very scarce resident in Trinidad and one that is often difficult to find away from

known nesting locations. Although it did not remain in view for long everyone had the opportunity to see this rather unexpected roadside bird.

On reaching the lowlands Mahase took us to one of his favourite birding spots, an isolated mix of trees and bushes far removed from the noise of the main road we had left behind. A Masked Yellowthroat made several parachute song-flights but stubbornly refused to perch in the open, unlike a nearby Yellow Warbler which showed nicely as it moved through the foliage. Golden-fronted Greenlet, Yellow-breasted Flycatcher, Green-rumped Parrotlet and Barred Antshrike also appeared in the bushes, and a Little Hermit paid a brief visit to a line of flowers.

Passing around a metal barrier we followed Mahase along a track leading to the rather unexpected sight of cress-beds intersected by the necessary water channels. A Pale-breasted Spinetail was singing from a bush beside the track and as we neared the water, several Southern Rough-wing Swallows were hawking after insects. The cress-beds were frequented by several Solitary and at least one Spotted Sandpiper as well as a Little Blue Heron which entertained us by struggling to swallow a wriggling snake (or maybe eel?) which made several bids to escape before it finally succumbed. This tranquil spot also produced views of Lineated Woodpecker at a nest hole, Striated Heron, and a couple of Short-tailed Hawks soaring among the scores of Black Vultures. Both White-headed Marsh Tyrant and Pied Water Tyrant were welcome additions to our list for a second consecutive day.

We continued our exploration of the arid lowlands, disturbing flocks of Ruddy Ground Doves and passing several confiding Savannah Hawks. A few pairs of Southern Lapwing were encountered as were several Yellow-headed Caracaras. Tropical Kingbirds were widely distributed and would probably have won the award for 'bird most often seen on roadside wires and thought to be something different'.

At length we reached the edge of Arena Forest which is probably the largest area of forest in the lowlands and fringes the huge Arena reservoir which unfortunately is no longer accessible. It was by now far too late in the day for the forest to be at its best but none the less we finished our morning with more memorable sightings including a remarkably obliging White-bellied Antbird which perched in open view just metres away. A shelter close to the forest entrance is our usual lunch spot and we were soon tucking into another Asa Wright picnic punctuated by news of birds in the surrounding area as the group wandered off to explore. An information sign by the shelter described how this was the site of a decisive battle between the resident Indian population and the invading Europeans but fortunately we had nothing more than a few aggressive looking wasps to contend with. During the lunch interval, Guianan and Green-backed Trogons, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Brown-crested Flycatcher Rufous-browed Peppershrike and Cocoa Woodcreeper were among the birds noted but there was also some mammal interest amid the restoration work being undertaken on a solitary building at the forest edge. This large house has been empty and derelict for as long as I have been visiting Arena but this year it seems some restoration work has begun and as a consequence parts have already been demolished. Despite this destruction the resident Sackwing bats were still present and we counted eight or more clinging to the wall in one half shattered room.

Birding over, we sped back to the Asa Wright Centre for a relaxing afternoon which the group spent in different ways; some choosing to catch up on card writing whilst others occupied the verandah and visited the Upper Car Park area. Both Barred and Great Antshrikes were patrolling the shrubbery between the chalets and the evening log revealed that Forest Elaenia, White-necked Thrush and Plain Brown Woodcreeper were all encountered

during the day. In the interval before afternoon tea, some of the group accompanied the writer on a walk around the Chaconia Trail but we failed to see the hoped for Black-faced Ant-thrush although compensation came in the form of Red-crowned Ant Tanager and several large Tarantulas tucked away in the hollow hand-rails, although the latter may not be viewed as compensation by some!

As we sipped our rum punches at nightfall, a nighthawk dashed over the building and disappeared among the trees below. It was most probably a Short-tailed Nighthawk but frustratingly would have to remain a mystery.

## Day 5

## Saturday 7th March

Another early start today, this time to head north through the hills to be at the highest point as early as possible. It was a windy morning following overnight showers but we remained hopeful that we might find the endemic Trinidad Piping Guan which had been recently reported by visitors. These impressive birds are shy and frequently shot for food, so every search requires a large element of luck which we hoped would be our just reward for leaving at 6.45am! The tall communications tower at Morne Bleu was our starting point, the vehicles arrival causing great excitement for the guard's dog before it realized we were yet more of the strange birdwatching creatures. Unfortunately the guans did not greet us in the same way and after an hour of searching we concluded that this was not to be our lucky day. Nest-building Scaled Pigeons provided our best views so far and a Hepatic Tanager was seen by some before we finally admitted defeat and continued on our way.

Much of the birding in these forested northern hills consists of opportunist roadside stops and short walks along the few available trails. By such means we encountered a fine array of species including Collared and Green-backed Trogons, Plain Ant Vireo, Stripe-throated Spinetail, Golden-crowned Warbler and Euler's Flycatcher. A Ferruginous Pygmy Owl was enticed into view by Mahase's impression of its call and he had similar success with a Black-faced Ant-thrush scuttling like a chicken through the undergrowth. Raptors soaring around over the trees included Common Black Hawk, White Hawk and for some of the group, an Ornate Hawk Eagle. A stroll along a track at the summit failed to produce the hoped for Swallow Tanagers which presumably were still en route from South America but we did see Golden-Olive Woodpecker, Red-rumped Woodpecker, White-necked Thrush and it is here that we obtained some good trogon views.

After a number of stops we finally reached Brasso Seco where a strangely deserted visitor centre provided shelter for the distribution of another classic AWC picnic lunch. Rather amusingly, because the toilets were locked, the group had to drive into the nearby village to use the facilities in a bar. In contrast to previous visits, the birdlife was rather sparse as we ate our lunch but that did not detract from the enjoyment of the cottage pie.

A noisy Yellow-rumped Cacique colony was one of the highlights of the return journey but with an early afternoon lack of activity in the roadside forest there were few other distractions and we were soon back at the AWC. Plenty of time remained to catch up on the residents including Tufted Coquette and Long-billed Starthroat. For some of the group a Double-toothed Kite was a bonus, whilst Graham might regard his to be the birthday cake which the staff brought out after dinner with candles lit and the restaurant lights dimmed to enhance the display.

A night walk took place later and began with a fine Chevron Tarantula sitting on the sign indicating the car-park!

## Day 6

## Sunday 8th March

Even with the luxury of an eight night stay at the Asa Wright Centre, time soon slips by and with various excursions filling up some of the days it is possible to leave Trinidad with regrets about the actual time spent around the Centre. For this reason we always include a 'free day' without any planned excursions to allow tour members the opportunity to pursue their own agenda. This might involve following some of the hiking trails, chasing that definitive photograph or simply relaxing on the verandah with activities punctuated by the serving of meals, afternoon tea and rum punches.

As we ran through the bird list at the end of the day it was clear that many of the tour members had used the time to undertake a thorough exploration of the trails and this was reflected by a diverse mix of birds recorded including: Grey-fronted Dove, Trinidad Motmot, Golden-olive Woodpecker, Forest Elaenia, Ochre-bellied Flycatcher, Streaked Flycatcher, Long-billed Gnatwren, Red-legged Honeycreeper and Yellow Oriole. The hummingbirds and honeycreepers provided non-stop entertainment for the watchers on the verandah with ten species of hummer recorded including the male Long-billed Starthroat, Tufted Coquettes and Rufous-breasted Hermit.

## Day 7

## Monday 9th March

Today's programme included a visit to Dunstan Caves for the Oilbirds and night birding, but like most other days it was the dawn performance from the verandah that got things started! The now familiar stream of birds paid their first visits to the tables whilst telescope scans of the valley revealed a very distant Bellbird and a somewhat closer pair of Orange-winged Parrots apparently investigating the nest potential of several tree holes.

After breakfast we joined AWC guide Makesh to visit Dunstan Cave, the site of the oilbird colony. The Guacharo trail is quite steep in places (over 150 steps!) and more demanding than some other trails in the grounds, but negotiable with care and progress is invariably slow as we bird along the way, noting today such species as Rufous-breasted Hermit, Red-crowned Ant-tanager and Ruby-Topaz Hummingbird.

Safely assembled down in the valley, the group took turns to scramble over rocks to the mouth of the grotto from where the Oilbirds could be viewed. These peculiar nocturnal birds are certainly quite extraordinary and it is not surprising that early explorers, on hearing the assortment of shrieks and noises produced by the birds thought that such caves were inhabited by evil spirits. Surprisingly large birds, the Oilbirds were mostly sitting on ledges at the back of the cave but several flew around as we watched, their long wings and tail giving an almost falcon like silhouette. A partial collapse of the cave roof now allows much more light into the interior, but this doesn't seem to have upset the Oilbirds and simply makes viewing easier than before, particularly when the sun is shining. As always, it was a magical experience and a privilege to share a few moments with these remarkable birds. Viewing has been greatly improved by the construction of a wooden platform which makes things much easier than before even if the climb back to the Centre remains as challenging as ever!

The period between the visit to Dunstan Cave and departure for the Night Birding excursion was quite productive for some with sightings of Lineated Woodpecker, Collared Trogon, Stripe-breasted Spinetail, Plain Brown Woodcreeper, and Dusky-capped, Euler's and Piratic Flycatchers.

Soon after the serving of afternoon tea we departed with Mahase for the Night Birding trip. First stop was at the remnant patch of Moriche Palms which remain on the old Wallerfield airfield. This deserted war-time airfield was formerly an important element of our lowland birding activities including the night excursion but it is now gradually being developed as an industrial park and as a consequence is closed to visitors. The Centre had obtained permission for us to enter and having satisfied the security guards we sped to the oasis of palms which thankfully have been unaffected by the building work. The dependable Sulphury Flycatchers were soon located and offered excellent views but the other palm specialist, the Moriche Oriole, was less obliging despite our efforts. We also failed to find any Red-bellied Macaws but whilst investigating the palms once frequented by the parrots, Roger was fortunate to come across a Squirrel Cuckoo although this striking bird unfortunately moved off before the rest of the group arrived. The macaws were once regular here but in recent years have changed their habits and are now far less reliable. A few Fork-tailed Palm Swifts dashed among the palms but with rump-punches dispatched and dusk approaching we were soon obliged to leave this excellent little spot.

With the airfield out of bounds the night birding is now undertaken at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station which we had previously visited on the way to Nariva. Turning into the entrance, Mahase and Augustine wasted no time in unpacking the AWC picnic meal, their every move followed by the gaze of a farm dog which had immediately attached itself to our group at the smell of food. As usual their timing was perfect and by the time we had finished the meal it was almost dark enough to begin the search for nocturnal birds. Before setting off in the vehicles we had a Tropical Screech Owl to look for in a line of trees near the picnic spot and this proved to be very co-operative albeit a little flighty. Nearby, a fat Cane Toad also attracted attention and became the subject of several photographs.

Night birding, whether at the old airfield or here at Aripo, consists of driving around in tandem sweeping the area on either side of the vehicles with a powerful spotlight. It no doubt added a little excitement to the evening for the Research Station livestock as we travelled around but thankfully no stampedes ensued. The target birds appeared magically as if to order and whilst sometimes the views were brief or partially obstructed, the trio of Parakee, White-tailed Nightjar and Potoo were soon achieved. Rather unusually, the Potoo was actually observed in flight and passed over the group's heads much to everyone's delight. Satisfied with the success of the drives we headed back to the AWC arriving back just as the bug-hunters were making their way along the entrance road.

## Day 8

## Tuesday 10th March

Our final action-packed day at the AWC began like all the others with the convening of the Gam club on the verandah and the gradual coming-alive of the forest birds. There was a poignancy about this being our final free show but the performers came and went in their usual manner and a new intake of guests marvelled at their first morning in the stalls as we 'veterans' exchanged knowing glances!

After breakfast we joined Mahase and Augustine at the start of a long day in the field which would involve visits to Waterloo mud-flats, Caroni Swamp and other wetlands on the west side of the island. First stop was at Trincity Water treatment ponds just off the main highway into Port of Spain. These tree-fringed freshwater ponds have a distinguished history of rare bird sightings and always reward even the briefest of stops, although a new building development has almost reached the perimeter and I fear that Trincity will soon become part of Trinidad birding history. Despite the encroachments, four reed-fringed pools remain and within moments of

stopping we were admiring an Osprey perched in a waterside tree and saw a number of egrets scattered around the embankments which divide the pools. Yellow-hooded Blackbirds were diving in and out of the reeds whilst jacanas and gallinules picked their way through the vegetation and White-winged Swallows swooped overhead. Trincity could easily have occupied several hours if only access was possible, but half the pools are now private and a number of workers watching our movements suggested that we would soon be ejected if we wandered any further. As we were watching the Osprey, a huge Ringed Kingfisher flew high over the pools and fortunately it must have doubled back because as we were about to re-join the main road the bird was spotted perched on a telephone wire close to the track. It was a bonus to get perched views of this very attractive kingfisher and a suitable ending to our Trincity visit. For some in the group, the kingfisher was not quite the finale however and as we made our way through the traffic on the carriageway, two large stork-like birds were seen by Andy as they flew low over the countryside opposite Trincity. Peter managed to obtain a couple of photographs (which was no mean feat considering the circumstances), and these images together with Andy's description confirmed that the birds were North American Wood Storks, a very rare visitor to Trinidad with only a few previous records. Sadly many of the group missed these birds including those travelling with Mahase who had set off ahead of the minibus.

We then meandered around the edge of the extensive Caroni rice fields keeping particular watch for Long-winged Harriers or indeed any raptors or waterbirds. A scan from the bridge near Caroni jetty revealed the only Large-billed Tern of the holiday, and a selection of herons which included several Great Egrets. From here we endured the heat and noise of the main road for another half an hour as we made our way to the area known generally as Waterloo, a flat uninspiring stretch of mudflats and fields south of Caroni Swamp but a mecca for shorebirds. First stop was a spectacular moment as we emerged from the vehicles to inspect the birds resting and feeding on the exposed mud a few hundred metres from the shore. Many Little Blue and Tricoloured Herons were scattered over the mudflats along with Snowy and Great Egrets, whilst in the distance we could see resting Brown Pelicans admixed with Laughing Gulls and a few Royal Terns. Waders included Greater Yellowlegs and Willet but light conditions were a little hazy for long distance identifications. A tight packed mass of Black Skimmers could be discerned towards the Hindu Temple and from time to time several of these unusual birds flew along the shoreline demonstrating their specialized feeding technique.

Moving a few kilometres along the coast we spent some time at the delightfully named Orange Valley where a road affords access to a jetty giving views of the mudflats on either side. Even before we reached the mud we could hear the excited clamouring of Laughing Gulls and some 200 of these handsome gulls were packed closely together near the road, many adults resplendent in summer plumage, but also a fair number of immatures. A Scarlet Ibis was the first of many seen today and other birds observed from the spit of land included: Neotropical Cormorant, Hudsonian Whimbrel, Grey Plover, Willet, Ruddy Turnstone, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Osprey and Great Blue Heron.

Our last AWC picnic lunch of the tour was eaten in a public recreational area where the number of stray dogs reached a new peak much to the annoyance of Mahase. Nearby the resident Saffron Finches were soon added to the trip list in their favourite patch of scrub near the beach.

We had enjoyed great coastal birding but time was marching on and we headed back to Caroni, temporarily entering the madness of the highway for another thirty minute run, this time driving north towards Port of Spain. In complete contrast to the noise and mayhem of the roads it was peace and tranquillity at the Caroni

Swamp information centre where we had time to relax for a while before the afternoon boat trip, an interlude which produced among other species Osprey, Short-tailed Hawk and Red-headed Cardinal. We eventually boarded one of James Nandoo's boats for an exploration of the Swamp with his young-looking but extremely competent nephew Shawn in control of the boat. Just before four we set off along the long, straight canal which leads to the beginning of the Swamp, pausing along the way for a few diversions to show us Masked Cardinal, Anhinga, Green-rumped Parrotlet and several Green-throated Mangos beside the creek.

Our youthful captain pointed out some of the inhabitants such as the tiny crabs inhabiting the forest of roots, and the Four-eyed Fish, or Anableps, a strange little mud-skipper which can survive on the mud at low tide. Sean also explained the differences between the three species of mangrove growing at Caroni. After this brilliant start we could hardly fail and were soon beginning to encounter more herons and egrets amongst the trees accompanied by more Scarlet Ibis as we approached the more open areas. Several Greater Ani were characteristically hard to approach in the waterside mangroves but Northern Waterthrushes were more obliging, an American Redstart briefly appeared, and the muddy creek edges were favoured by a number of Spotted Sandpipers. Two roosting Tropical Screech Owls were revealed to us as Sean nosed the boat into position amid the mangrove branches and by the same technique we had close views of a Cook's Tree Boa curled like a Cumberland sausage above our heads!

Nosing into the main channel we found large numbers of herons and egrets scattered about, some in the mangroves others on the exposed mud. Eventually we moored with several other boats in a remote corner of the swamp to watch the ibis fly-past and this was our cue to distribute cakes and rum punches. At first there was a relative lack of action on this clear sunny evening but gradually the influx began and with drinks in hand we settled back to watch flock after flock of ibis, herons and egrets flying over the water to either pitch onto an island ahead of us or continue over the trees to another more distant site. Rather like a firework display, the biggest, closest flocks elicited cries of delight followed by quieter intervals until the next influx. Large numbers of Tricoloured Herons accompanied the Scarlet Ibis but there was also plenty of both Snowy and Great Egrets, and a lone Cocoli Heron provided an unexpected surprise. Each species took its allocated space on the island so that the foliage, which was predominantly green when we arrived, gradually changed into a patchwork of fluorescent red and white. It was a very impressive spectacle and it was encouraging to see a fair number of immatures among the adult Ibis indicating a good level of breeding success. At length it was time to return and as we raced back, wave after wave of herons and egrets were still passing low over the water.

The crimson of the setting sun, the pink sky and the scarlet of the ibises combined together to provide an enduring memory of our visit and a fine climax to a very enjoyable week of Trinidadian birding. We arrived back at the AWC in time for a late evening meal and a little last-minute packing in readiness for an early departure in the morning.

## Day 9

## Wednesday 11th March

We went down the hill one last time as we drove to Piarco for an early-morning flight to Tobago. It was sad to wave goodbye to Mahase and Augustine, who had been such pleasant company for the week, and also a bit unnerving to be cast out into the big wide world after the security of life at the AWC!

We checked-in with plenty of time to spare and twenty minutes after taking off from Piarco, the aircraft touched down at Crown Point, Tobago and we emerged into the morning heat. Predictably, Caribbean Martin flying above the buildings was the first Tobago bird speciality for our list; a noticeably bluer and darker-looking bird than the Grey-breasted Martins left behind on Trinidad. At first there was no sign of our guide Gladwyn James but we were actually 20 minutes earlier than scheduled. At the expected time a coach drew up in front of the almost deserted terminal building driven by distinctive figure of our Tobago bird guide who greeted us with his loud booming voice which at close quarters had something of the quality of a Bellbird call! Gladwyn has now taken over guiding duties from his father Adolphus and having travelled a number of times with the parent I was amused to see how many of his traits had been inherited by Gladwyn who shares his dad's slow and measured approach to life.

The nearby settlement of Bon Accord was our first destination after leaving the airport. The water treatment works at Bon Accord, like Trincity, was once an essential birding spot but most of the open water has now been choked with weed and entry is no longer allowed. Birding activities now take place in the areas between the coast and the treatment works, a mix of rather litter strewn muddy ditches, scrub forest and wider channels of water much favoured by waders. On this first morning we made the acquaintance of typical Tobago birds such as Eared Dove, Brown-crested Flycatcher and Black-faced Grassquit, and there were other species to admire including Green Heron, Purple Gallinule, White-cheeked Pintail, and best of all a magnificent roosting Potoo which made a fine telescope study. Waders frequenting the ditches included Solitary and Spotted Sandpipers, and both Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs which at times could be compared as they stood side by side. Several Northern Waterthrushes were among the smaller inhabitants of the thickets along with three of the tanager species from Trinidad and a few Copper-rumped Hummingbirds. Perhaps the biggest surprise came with the discovery of at least four yellow Boas in bushes beside the road. A couple of the snakes were actively moving around the branches as we watched and possibly this congregation had something to do with courtship activities.

Travelling across the island to the east coast we paid a brief visit to the lake contained in the grounds of the former Hilton Hotel which now belongs to a different hotel chain. As usual, numbers of Anhinga and Neotropic Cormorants were scattered around the lake and in one corner we noted three Least Grebes diving in the shallows. Several Black-crowned Night Herons flew off as we disembarked from the vehicles but a Great Egret was untroubled by our arrival and posed for photographs in a dead tree. No doubt a longer perusal would have added a few more species but it was already past midday and today the pond was no more than a short diversion.

After this brief birding interlude we re-joined the main road and headed north. One of the mysteries of science is that Tobago is only 21 miles long yet it seems to take forever to get from the south to the north, but today the journey did not seem too bad. At last, after passing through various immaculately maintained villages with very British names like Glamorgan and Mount Irvine, we finally reached the viewpoint overlooking Speyside and dropped down towards the coast for one last time. Idyllic coves and beaches along the way had been populated by a few Laughing Gulls and Brown Pelicans whilst roadside birds had included White-tipped Doves and Orange-winged Parrots in the forested areas. The Blue Waters Inn is tucked away in a private cove a few kilometres outside the village and as we approached the hotel I could see from the way some tour members were looking at the azure waters of the bay, that swimming would be high on the afternoon agenda! We settled into our beachside rooms and reflected on how pleasant it was to have arrived at our final destination. Bateaux Bay is just about as idyllic a spot as you can wish to find and birds visible from the beach included Laughing Gulls offshore, more distant Brown Boobies, frigatebirds beyond Little Tobago Island, and fifteen or so extremely

confiding Turnstone on the sand. It has always intrigued me how these waders, raised in the high Arctic, become such adept scavengers during their winter in Tobago. The flock, which mostly comprised juveniles, scamper towards any source of discarded food and were soon trained by Andy to take morsels from his fingers on the balcony of his room. Their rush up the steps was invariably seen by the Chachalacas which quickly flew in to scatter the smaller waders and claim their own rewards.

Leisurely afternoon walks through the hotel garden and along the entrance road towards Speyside produced a typical assortment of Tobago birds including White-tipped Dove, Pale-vented Pigeon and Rufous-vented Chachalaca which seemed to be calling all over the grounds. Barred Antshrikes announced their presence in the shrubbery, a White-fringed Antwren was seen and Ruby Topaz Hummingbirds visited the hotel feeders along with several Copper-rumped Hummingbirds.

Later, sitting at the hotel bar sipping a cool cocktail with the sound of the waves lapping on the beach, Trinidad already seemed far away.

## Day 10

## Thursday 12th March

The Blue Waters Inn provided an early breakfast for us to facilitate a prompt departure to the Tobago Rain Forest although the pre-dawn din created by the Chachalacas made an alarm call unnecessary. Despite living at the other end of the island, Gladwyn arrived soon after we had finished eating and we departed for the forest, a drive of some 45 minutes. Children were on their way to school as we passed through the villages, their school uniforms looking pristine and clean on this Thursday morning. We were soon climbing away from Roxborough into the Rain Forest Preserve, the oldest forest sanctuary in the Caribbean, as proclaimed on a roadside sign. The densely forested central spine of hills not only forms the geological back-bone to the island but is also the refuge of many interesting birds including the three Tobago specialities we particularly hoped to find; White-tailed Sabrewing, Blue-backed Manakin and Yellow-legged Thrush. These we would look for along the Gilpin Trace trail but before entering the forest, roadside birding provided us with close-up views of Rufous-tailed Jacamar and sightings of several interesting species including Golden-Olive Woodpecker, Giant Cowbird, Streaked Flycatcher and the nest of a Black-throated Mango. A migrant Broad-winged Hawk was also seen and several Red-tailed Squirrels.

We had a 'comfort stop' at the Bloody Bay lookout point which has now been turned into a visitor centre and I was amused to note that the famous 'cake-lady' was still in residence selling a mouth-watering selection of home cooked cakes. Gilpin Trace is a narrow trail through the heart of the forest which can be muddy at times providing a source of income for enterprising locals who hire out wellington boots to visitors with inappropriate footwear! As a precaution several of our group provided them with business today although conditions were not particularly wet.

We proceeded slowly, allowing time for the forest birds to reveal themselves although typically it was quite hard work with long periods of seeing very little. Blue-backed Manakins were almost constantly heard uttering their variety of calls, but obtaining views was a different matter and the same was true of Stripe-throated Spinetails which 'peeped' away from the undergrowth at several places. Eventually several displaying Manakins showed quite well although the spinetails were always elusive. White-necked Thrushes were seen and heard several times along the trail and we had progressed only a short distance before the fluty tones of a Yellow-legged Thrush

proclaimed the presence of this shy forest thrush high in the canopy of a giant tree. Thanks to Gladwyn's laser pen we were soon able to watch the singer in more or less open view. Although superficially like a British Blackbird, the bright yellow legs and eye ring are striking and the bright yellow bill is distinctly broad based giving a different look to the head.

A Rufous-breasted Wren showed briefly in the undergrowth but soon after this encounter I began to struggle as I suffered the effects of a virus which had laid me low in Trinidad and I was obliged to abandon the walk. As a consequence I have no personal record of the species seen but I understand that the third member of the 'Tobago trio', the impressive White-tailed Sabrewing, obligingly appeared beside the track and other sightings included more jacamars, Ochre-bellied Flycatcher, Rufous-breasted Hermit at nest and for some, an unsatisfactory glimpse of a White-throated Spadebill. Back at the entrance I stretched out on a bench in the shelter we would later occupy to eat lunch and after a while became aware of a Trinidad Motmot watching me from a perch just metres away. Gladwyn has been feeding motmots here for some years and this very tame individual was clearly determined to be first in the queue. It was almost an hour later before the group began to arrive back but the bird remained patiently on his perch and was joined by a second individual closer to lunch time. The wait paid off and when their benefactor began tossing pieces of banana and other treats onto the ground the motmot wasted no time in taking advantage.

A return visit to Bloody Bay gave the cake-lady another chance to sell her produce whilst during the stop a Great Black Hawk soared over the forest for all to see. After this interlude we began a desultory return to Speyside, stopping a few times along the way but not finding anything of particular note.

Back at Blue Waters Inn there was time for an afternoon dip for the energetic, or a drink or two in the bar under the pretext of counting the Turnstones!

## Day 11

## Friday 13th March

At 9.15am we boarded Frank Wordsworth's glass-bottomed boat at the Blue Waters quay and headed out over the reefs to Little Tobago Island. Departure had been scheduled for 9am but the Captain, Zolani (or Zee) had encountered transport problems and arrived in a breathless and sweaty state having just jogged from the main road! The delay was somewhat fortuitous for while we waited on the jetty a Great Black Hawk glided along the ridge behind the hotel and three Broad-winged Hawks passed over.

Steering across the slightly choppy waters beyond Goat Island, we soon arrived at Little Tobago where a slightly tricky dry landing was achieved on the narrow, wave washed quay. Resisting the temptation to tick the feral chickens which forage in the undergrowth, we climbed up through the forested slopes of the island stopping to look at Chivi Vireo, Trinidad Motmot and Brown-crested Flycatcher along the way. We also paused to inspect an Audubon's Shearwater nest burrow at the beginning of the trail but it was not possible to see whether it contained a youngster. We paused for breath as the path levelled out and waited for a while near the ramshackled building which serves a visitor centre to watch mockingbirds, Blue-grey Tanager and other small birds coming to seek drink from bamboo troughs. Sturdy Brown-crested Flycatchers also lined up to sip the water whilst other birds in the vicinity included White-tipped Dove and Ruby Topaz hummingbird. Unfortunately few of the drink containers had been filled and as a consequence the birds were not staying in the area for very long. A little further along the trail we came upon three exquisite little lizards clinging to the bark of trees beside the

path. These were Ocellated Geckos (*Gonatodes ocellatus*), a somewhat scarce endemic to northern Tobago which were also present in the same spot for our 2014 group.

Continuing along the main path we continued up to the highest viewpoint where a wooden shelter affords some protection from the fierce sun. Here the wider panorama of the cliffs was easy to appreciate as tropicbirds glided past at eye level and boobies circled around the bay. Somewhat closer, a juvenile Red-billed Tropicbird was desperately trying to be inconspicuous in a nest literally at our feet.

Continuing a trend of recent years, many more pairs of Red-footed Boobies were present and indeed dozens of tree top nests were evident. Both light and dark phase adults were present although most of the nesting adults seemed to be the paler form. Brown Boobies, formerly the commoner of the two species, were very much scarcer and few seemed to be on their usual ledges although some were fishing with the Red-footed Boobies in the waters offshore. This traffic was not unnoticed by the many Magnificent Frigatebirds which harassed both tropicbirds and boobies, especially offshore where the birds were feeding. It was the Red-billed Tropicbirds that perhaps created the most impressive spectacle as dozens of these exotic birds repeatedly flew past the watch point at eye-level or dashed over the sea below, long tail streamers giving them the elegance of oversized terns. Their screeching calls added an eerie almost prehistoric quality to the scene!

The essence of Little Tobago is not the number of species but the overall spectacle of the seabirds in this wonderfully tranquil and picturesque setting with the St. Giles group of islands visible in the distance and the forested hills of the mainland just a few kilometres to the west. Although plenty of summer plumage Laughing Gulls were displaying noisily in some of the mainland beaches, terns were not yet in residence but within a month or so Little Tobago would also be home to Brown Noddies, and Sooty and Bridled Terns.

On the return trip to Blue Waters Inn our skipper took us over the corals and the clear, shallow water enabled us to have ringside seats for a wonderful show of tropical underwater life with our guide giving his own distinctive commentary. Groups of Black Surge wrasse and Creole Wrasse cruised the reef, and like actors crossing a stage, various other species swam into view below the observation glass. Zee missed little and rattled off the names like a Caribbean John Motson as Stop-light Parrot-fishes, Four-eyed Butterflies, Blue Tang and many other exotic fishes made their appearances. Equally amazing were the diverse corals of many different forms and colours such as Fire Coral, Pillar Coral, Dead Man's Fingers and the rare towers of Black Coral. Giant Clam Sponges completed a whistle-stop introduction to the Reef and whetted the appetite for any of the group wishing to explore the underwater life in more detail.

Back at Blue Waters Inn we were surprised during lunch by a torrential downpour accompanied by strong winds which caused mayhem among the restaurant tables nearest to the open sides. We were grateful not to still be on Little Tobago during this unseasonal cloudburst but others were not so fortunate and we saw some very soggy passengers being disembarked on the jetty! Although the front slowly passed over to the south it left a misty damp atmosphere which lingered for much of the afternoon.

## Day 12

## Saturday 14th March

After an early breakfast we again joined Gladwyn for a second visit to the Rain Forest, the group split between those choosing to relax at the hotel and those ready to do battle with the forest birds. Regrettably I was still incapacitated by the virus and decided to stay behind so once again I do not have any personal notes but I understand that the group went on a long and strenuous trek along the Nilpig Trail, eventually emerging from the forest not far from the Bloody Bay Visitor Centre. Many of the specialities such as Blue-backed Manakin, Yellow-legged Thrush and Trinidad Motmot were met with again along the trail but there were several additional species such as Olivaceous Woodcreeper, Collared Trogon and Venezuelan Flycatcher.

The forest contingent arrived back at Blue Waters Inn mid-afternoon and the remainder of the day was spent relaxing around the hotel or pottering about the grounds. As always there were plenty of birds to look at including Red-crowned Woodpecker, White-fringed Antwren, Barred Antshrike, Pale-vented Pigeon and the inevitable Chachalacas. Out at sea boobies, frigatebirds and tropicbirds were just about visible feeding in the rougher waters beyond Goat Island. Our stay was coming to an end but we had plenty of memories to take home and hundreds of photographs to remind us all of these delightful islands

## Day 13

## Sunday 15th March

A leisurely morning was spent prior to a 10am departure to Crown Point for the return flight to Piarco and thence to Gatwick. Gladwyn was taking another group to the Rain Forest so the transport for our transfer was provided by one of his colleagues rejoicing in the unlikely name of 'Pussycat'

The domestic flight left on time and after checking-in for the London flight at Piarco we were able to repair to the nearby food outlets to purchase lunch although the quality fell well short of the meals at Blue Waters Inn. Looking out of the windows in the Departure Hall I think the last Trinidad bird of the tour was White-winged Swallow but others may have another candidate?

## Day 14

## Monday 16th March

An overnight flight is never a particularly enjoyable experience but after a brief stop in St Lucia to pick up numbers of pink holidaymakers, we sped smoothly across the Atlantic to reach Gatwick more or less on schedule.

This has inevitably been a subjective account of the holiday and I am sorry for any omissions or errors. My illness for a greater part of the tour meant that I was unable to participate with my usual level of energy or enthusiasm which in turn was reflected in a paucity of notes for certain days. I am grateful for the understanding shown by my travelling companions and appreciated the compassion shown in the post-tour comments made to Naturetrek.

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## Species Lists

Birds (Figures in parenthesis - number of days seen)

<b>Least Grebe</b> <i>Tachybaptus dominicus</i>	3 Hilton Pond Tobago
<b>Red-billed Tropicbird</b> <i>Phaethon aethereus</i>	Offshore from Blue Waters & many Little Tobago island where juvenile seen
<b>Brown Booby</b> <i>Sula leucocaster</i>	Small numbers Little Tobago Island + nests
<b>Red-footed Booby</b> <i>Sula. sula</i>	50+ Little Tobago Island inc. a number of nesting birds + juveniles
<b>Brown Pelican</b> <i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i> (4)	Small numbers offshore from coastal points on Trinidad with larger numbers Waterloo (40+)- Seen Tobago in small numbers
<b>White-cheeked Pintail</b> <i>Anas bahamensis</i>	3 Bon Accord Tobago
<b>Neotropic Cormorant</b> <i>Phalacrocorax brasillianus</i>	4-5 Waterloo, several Hilton Pond Tobago
<b>Anhinga</b> <i>Anhinga anhinga</i>	Caroni Swamp & 10+ Hilton Pond Tobago
<b>Magnificent Frigatebird</b> <i>Fregata magnificens</i> (7)	A few Trinidad inc 2 over AWC & 40+ Manzanilla Beach - locally numerous Tobago especially Little Tobago Island & offshore from Blue Waters
<b>Great Blue Heron</b> <i>Ardea Herodias</i>	One Waterloo
<b>Cocoi Heron</b> <i>Ardea cocoi</i>	One Caroni Swamp
<b>Great Egret</b> <i>Egretta alba</i> (3)	Scattering on Trinidad wetlands with 3-4 Nariva, Waterloo & Caroni, several Hilton Ponds Tobago
<b>Snowy Egret</b> <i>Egretta. thula</i> (2)	Nariva & Waterloo/Caroni
<b>Little Blue Heron</b> <i>Egretta. caerulea</i> (6)	Waterloo Aripo & Caroni on Trinidad, Bon Accord Tobago & a few singles elsewhere on island
<b>Tricoloured Heron</b> <i>Eretta. tricolor</i> (2)	Waterloo & Caroni (100's at dusk) on Trinidad – Also on bird list for 12 <sup>th</sup> presumably Bon Accord or Hilton Pond
<b>Cattle Egret</b> <i>Bulbulcus ibis</i> (4)	Common in lowlands
<b>Green Heron</b> <i>Butorides virecens</i>	5+ Tobago, most at Bon Accord
<b>Striated Heron</b> <i>Butorides. striatus</i> (4)	Nariva, Caroni, Aripo
<b>Yellow-crowned Night Heron</b> <i>Nycticorax. violacea</i>	immature Waterloo
<b>Black-crowned Night Heron</b> <i>Nycticorax nitycorax</i>	Several Hilton Ponds
<b>Pinnated Bittern</b> <i>Botaurus pinnatus</i>	One Nariva
<b>Scarlet Ibis</b> <i>Eudocimus ruber</i>	1,000+ Caroni Swamp
<b>Wood Stork</b> <i>Mycteria Americana</i>	Two in flight opposite Trincity Ponds 10 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Black Vulture</b> <i>Coragyps atratus</i> (8)	Very Common Trinidad
<b>Turkey Vulture</b> <i>Cathartes aura</i> (7)	Small numbers locally Trinidad
<b>Osprey</b> <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> (3)	Trincity Pond, Waterloo & Caroni Trinidad – singles from Blue Waters Tobago
<b>Grey-headed Kite</b> ( <i>Leptodon cayanensis</i> )	Three sightings Asa Wright Centre

<b>Pearl Kite</b> ( <i>Gampsonyx sainsonii</i> )	Two at nest Aripo
<b>Double-toothed Kite</b> <i>Harpagus bidentatus</i>	One seen on 3 occasions Asa Wright Centre
<b>Plumbeous Kite</b> <i>Ictinia plumbea</i> (2)	Single Asa Wright Centre & 2 Nariva
<b>White Hawk</b> <i>Leucopternis albigollis</i> (3)	Arima Valley & Asa Wright Centre
<b>Common Black Hawk</b> <i>Buteogallus anthracinus</i> (7)	Regular Arima Valley & also on excursions
<b>Great Black Hawk</b> <i>Buteogallus. Urubitinga</i>	Seen over Tobago Rain Forest & behind Blue Waters
<b>Savannah Hawk</b> <i>Buteogallus meridionalis</i>	Several Wallerfield (ARS) also Aripo & 1-2 north of Nariva
<b>Grey-lined Hawk</b> <i>Buteo nitidus</i> (3)	Adult Arima Valley
<b>Broad-winged Hawk</b> <i>Buteo platyperus</i>	Tobago Rain Forest & behind Blue Waters
<b>Short-tailed Hawk</b> <i>Buteo brachyurus</i> (4)	AWC & Aripo-maybe 6 birds
<b>Zone-tailed Hawk</b> <i>Buteo albonotatus</i>	Single Caroni (not seen by all in group)
<b>Black Hawk-Eagle</b> <i>Spizeatus tyrannus</i>	One Arima Valley
<b>Ornate Hawk Eagle</b> <i>Spizeatus ornatus</i>	One Northern Range
<b>Yellow-headed Caracara</b> <i>Milvago chimachima</i> (3)	Several around lowlands (Wallerfield, Aripo& Nariva)
<b>Crested Caracara</b> <i>caracara cheriway</i>	Adult Nariva
<b>Peregrine</b> <i>Falco perigrinus</i> (5)	Two Trinidad, four Tobago (but maybe overlap)
<b>Rufous-vented Chachalaca</b> <i>Ortalis ruficauda</i>	Widespread and locally common Tobago (esp Blue Waters)
<b>Limpkin</b> <i>Aramus guarauna</i>	One Nariva
<b>Purple Gallinule</b> <i>Porphyryla martinica</i> (3)	Two Nariva & also Trincity Pond & Bon Accord Tobago
<b>Moorhen</b> <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Several Bon Accord Tobago
<b>Wattled Jacana</b> <i>Jacana jacana</i> (4)	Fairly numerous Nariva, also Wallerfield, Aripo & Trincity Pond
<b>Southern Lapwing</b> <i>Vanellus chilensis</i> (8)	Small numbers in lowlands (often pairs)
<b>Grey Plover</b> <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	Two Waterloo
<b>Greater Yellowlegs</b> <i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>	Several Waterloo & Bon Accord Tobago
<b>Lesser Yellowlegs</b> <i>Tringa. Flavipeps</i>	Several Bon Accord Tobago
<b>Hudsonian Whimbrel</b> <i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	Waterloo
<b>Solitary Sandpiper</b> <i>Tringa. Solitaria</i> (3)	ARS, Aripo (5+) Nariva & Bon Accord
<b>Spotted Sandpiper</b> <i>Actitis macularia</i> (6)	Ones and twos at several localities Trinidad & Tobago – most Caroni
<b>Willet</b> <i>Catoptrophorus semipalmatus</i>	Several Waterloo
<b>Ruddy Turnstone</b> <i>Arenaria interpres</i> (5)	Waterloo but also up to 20 daily Blue Waters
<b>Laughing Gull</b> <i>Larus atricilla</i> (4)	200+ at Waterloo and around Tobago coast
<b>Lesser Black Backed Gull</b> <i>Larus fuscus</i>	At least Two Waterloo
<b>Large-billed Tern</b> <i>Phaetusa simplex</i>	One only near Caroni

<b>Royal Tern</b> <i>Sterna. maxima</i>	20+ Waterloo
<b>Black Skimmer</b> <i>Rynchops niger</i>	c.60+ Waterloo
<b>Feral Pigeon</b> <i>Columba livia</i>	Common
<b>Pale-vented Pigeon</b> <i>Columba cayennensis</i>	Tobago (esp Blue Waters)
<b>Scaled Pigeon</b> <i>Columba. specios</i> (3)	Seen several days Asa Wright Centre & Morne Bleu
<b>Eared Dove</b> <i>Zenaida auriculata</i>	Fairly numerous in south of Tobago
<b>Ruddy Ground-Dove</b> <i>Columbina talpacoti</i> (6)	Widespread & locally numerous in Trinidad lowlands
<b>White-tipped Dove</b> <i>Leptotila verreauxi</i> (2)	Tobago
<b>Grey-fronted Dove</b> <i>Leptotila. Rufaxilla</i>	Only a couple of sightings at AWC
<b>(Red-bellied Macaw</b> <i>Orthopsittica manilata</i>	Possibly 15+ over Nariva)
<b>Blue &amp; Yellow Macaw</b> <i>Ara ararauna</i>	Several Nariva
<b>Green-rumped Parrotlet</b> <i>Forpus passerinus</i> (3)	Wallerfield & Aripo-also Caroni
<b>Orange-winged Parrot</b> <i>Amazona amazonica</i> (11)	Widespread and numerous in forested areas on both islands
<b>Squirrel Cuckoo</b> <i>Piaya cayana</i>	One AWC & one Wallerfield but both only seen by a few group members
<b>Greater Ani</b> <i>Crotophaga major</i>	5+ Caroni Swamp
<b>Smooth-billed Ani</b> <i>Crotophaga ani</i> (4)	Numerous in cultivated or grassy areas
<b>Tropical Screech Owl</b> <i>Otus choliba</i>	One seen Wallerfield ARS & 2 Caroni
<b>Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl</b> <i>Glaucidium brasilianum</i>	Heard most nights at AWC & seen on one occasion along Blanchisseuse road
<b>Common Potoo</b> <i>Nyctibius griseus</i>	One during Night Birding ARS & one roosting Bon Accord
<b>Oilbird</b> <i>Steatornis caripensis</i>	Dunstan Cave colony viewed during stay at AWC (30+ seen but cave count is of over 170)
<b>Common Pauraque</b> <i>Nyctidromus albicollis</i>	Seen during night-birding at Wallerfield
<b>White-tailed Nightjar</b> <i>Caprimulgus cayennensis</i>	Several at Wallerfield during night-birding
<b>Short-tailed Swift</b> <i>Chaetura brachyura</i> (3)	Only seen Tobago
<b>Band-rumped Swift</b> <i>Chaetura. spinicauda</i> (3)	Several identified among commoner Grey-rumped at AWC & Arima Valley
<b>Grey-rumped Swift</b> <i>Chaetura. cinereiventris</i> (9)	Commonest swift Trinidad and also Tobago Rain Forest
<b>Fork-tailed Palm Swift</b> <i>Reinarda squamata</i>	Wallerfield
<b>Rufous-breasted Hermit</b> <i>Glaucis hirsuta</i> (7)	Seen most days AWC & along Blanchisseuse Road but also seen Tobago Rain Forest (nest)
<b>Green Hermit</b> <i>Phaethornis guy</i>	Singles at AWC on three days
<b>Little Hermit</b> <i>Phaethornis. Longuenareus</i>	Seen several times at AWC & also Aripo
<b>White-tailed Sabrewing</b> <i>Campylopterus ensipennis.</i>	Tobago Rain Forest
<b>Brown Violetear</b> <i>Calibri delphinae</i>	One on two days at AWC
<b>White-necked Jacobin</b> <i>Florisuga melivora</i> (9)	A very common resident at AWC

<b>Green-throated Mango</b> <i>Anthracothorax viridigula</i>	One Caroni Swamp
<b>Black-throated Mango</b> <i>Anthracothorax. nigricollis</i> (10)	A few daily at AWC and a few sightings elsewhere also seen daily Tobago (2 nests)
<b>Ruby Topaz</b> <i>Chrysolampis mosquitus</i> (7)	Seen most days at AWC, also seen daily Tobago where one of the more regularly seen hummers
<b>Tufted Coquette</b> <i>Lophornis ornata</i> (7)	Female(s) seen daily at AWC & male on regular occasions – Rather plentiful this year reflecting growth of vervain bushes below verandah
<b>Blue-chinned Sapphire</b> <i>Chlorestes notatus</i> (7)	One or two sporadically at AWC
<b>White-chested Emerald</b> <i>Amazilia chionopectus</i> (8).	Small numbers at AWC, some noted elsewhere (Wallerfield)
<b>Copper-rumped Hummingbird</b> <i>Amazilla. tobaci</i> (10)	Seen regularly on both islands
<b>Long-billed Starthroat</b> <i>Heliomaster longirostris</i>	Male AWC on five days
<b>Green-backed Trogon</b> <i>Trogon( viridis)</i>	Singles Blanchisseuse Road, & Arena
<b>Guianan Trogon</b> <i>Trogon( violaceus)</i> (4)	AWC & Blanchisseuse Road
<b>Collared Trogon</b> <i>Trogon collaris</i>	Blanchisseuse Road, Arena and Tobago Rain Forest
<b>Trinidad Motmot</b> <i>Momotus momota</i> (7)	Only a few sightings at AWC but seen daily Tobago at Blue Waters, Rainforest etc.
<b>Ringed Kingfisher</b> <i>Megaceryle torquata</i>	One Trincity Ponds
<b>Green Kingfisher</b> <i>Chloroceryle americana</i>	Pair en route to Nariva
<b>American Pygmy Kingfisher</b> <i>Chloroceryle aenea</i>	One briefly en route Nariva
<b>Rufous-tailed Jacamar</b> <i>Balbula ruficauda</i> (5)	One or two Trinidad but more seen Tobago Rain Forest, Blue Waters & roadside in Tobago
<b>Channel-billed Toucan</b> <i>Ramphastos vitellinus</i> (6)	Occasional sightings from AWC and one Lower Arima Valley
<b>Red-crowned Woodpecker</b> <i>Melanerpes rubricapillus</i>	Surprisingly one record only Tobago
<b>Red-rumped Woodpecker</b> <i>Veniliornis kirkii</i>	One Trinidad near Morne Bleu
<b>Golden-olive Woodpecker</b> <i>Piculus rubiginosus</i> (5)	Several AWC & Tobago Rain Forest
<b>Lineated Woodpecker</b> <i>Dryocopus lineatus</i> (3)	Seen several days at AWC & also Aripo area
<b>Crimson-crested Woodpecker</b> <i>Campephilus melanoleucus</i>	One en route Nariva
<b>Pale-breasted Spinetail</b> <i>Synallaxis albescens</i>	One near Cress-beds Aripo
<b>Stripe-breasted Spinetail</b> <i>Synallaxis cinnamomea</i>	Heard AWC then several Tobago Rain Forest
<b>Yellow-chinned Spinetail</b> <i>Certhiaxis cinnamomeus</i>	Wallerfield ARS
<b>Plain Brown Woodcreeper</b> <i>Dendrocincla fuliginosa</i> (3)	Several AWC and also one Tobago
<b>Cocoa Woodcreeper</b> ( <i>Xiphorhynchus susurrans</i> ) (5)	Heard more than seen on both islands
<b>Great Ant-Shrike</b> <i>Taraba major</i> (3)	A few sightings AWC but heard more than seen
<b>Black-crested Ant-Shrike</b> <i>Sakesphorus canadensis</i> (3)	Seen on way to Nariva & at Wallerfield
<b>Barred Ant-Shrike</b> <i>Thamnophilus doliatus</i> (9)	Daily at AWC and 1-2 Aripo Several Tobago esp. Blue Waters area

<b>Plain Ant-Vireo</b> <i>Dysithamnus mentalis</i>	Blanchisseuse Road& Tobago Rain Forest
<b>White-fringed Ant-Wren</b> <i>Formicivora grisea</i> (3)	Several birds Tobago ( Blue Waters)
<b>White-bellied Antbird</b> <i>Myrmeciza longipes</i>	Heard several times and one seen very well Arena
<b>Black-faced Antthrush</b> <i>Formicarius analis</i>	Hear AWC and seen beside Blanchisseuse Road
<b>Bearded Bellbird</b> <i>Procnias averano</i>	Heard daily at AWC and seen very well
<b>White-bearded Manakin</b> <i>Manacus manacus</i>	Seen most days at AWC but small numbers
<b>Blue-backed Manakin</b> <i>Chiroxiphia pareola</i>	Nice views Tobago Rain Forest where common
<b>Golden-headed Manakin</b> <i>Pipra erythrocephala</i>	Seen well AWC but fairly scarce
<b>Forest Elaenia</b> <i>Myiopagis gaimardii</i>	Two sightingsAWC
<b>Yellow-bellied Elaenia</b> <i>Elaenia flavogaster</i>	Several Aripo/Wallerfield; heard daily Tobago mostly around Blue Waters
<b>Slaty-capped Flycatcher</b> <i>Leptopogon superciliaris</i>	One AWC
<b>Ochre-bellied Flycatcher</b> <i>Mionectes oleaginous</i>	1-2 AWC & two singles Tobago
<b>Northern Scrub Flycatcher</b> <i>Sublegatus arenarum</i>	One in Mangroves en route to Nariva
<b>Yellow-olive Flycatcher</b> <i>Tolmomyes sulphurens</i>	One beside Discovery Trail AWC
<b>Yellow-breasted Flycatcher</b> <i>Tolmomyias flaviventris</i>	Two singles Trinidad
<b>Euler's Flycatcher</b> <i>Lathroticcus euleri</i>	Two singles Trinidad
<b>Olive-sided Flycatcher</b> <i>Contopus cooperi</i>	One AWC
<b>Tropical Pewee</b> <i>Contopus cinereus</i>	Two singles Trinidad
<b>Pied Water-Tyrant</b> <i>Fluvicola pica</i>	Seen in Trinidad lowlands near water
<b>White-headed Marsh-Tyrant</b> <i>Arundinicola leucocephala</i> ditto	
<b>Piratic Flycatcher</b> <i>Legatus leucophalus</i>	One Trinidad
<b>Brown-crested Flycatcher</b> <i>Myiarchus tyrannulus</i>	Single Trinidad; 4-5+ Tobago
<b>Venezuelan Flycatcher</b> <i>Myiarchus venezuelensis</i>	Single Tobago Rain Forest
<b>Great Kiskadee</b> <i>Pitangus sulphuratus</i> (8)	Common AWC & widespread Trinidad
<b>Boat-billed Flycatcher</b> <i>Megarhynchus pitangua</i>	AWC
<b>Streaked Flycatcher</b> <i>Myiodynastes maculatus</i> (2)	Seen AWC & Tobago Rainforest
<b>Sulphury Flycatcher</b> <i>Tyrannopsis sulphurea</i>	3-4 seen very well Wallerfield
<b>Tropical Kingbird</b> <i>Tyrannus melancholicus</i> (9)	Locally numerous Trinidad, 4-5 Tobago
<b>Grey Kingbird</b> <i>Tyrannus. dominicensis</i> )	Single Nariva, several Tobago
<b>Golden-fronted Greenlet</b> <i>Hylophilus aurantifrons</i>	Seen a few times at AWC & Aripo
<b>Scrub Greenlet</b> <i>Hylophilus flavipes</i>	Blue Waters Tobago
<b>Chivi Vireo</b> <i>Vireo chivi</i>	Little Tobago & Tobago Rainforest
<b>Caribbean Martin</b> <i>Progne dominicensis</i>	Numerous Tobago

<b>Grey-breasted Martin</b> <i>Progne. chalybea</i> (5)	Fairly numerous lowland Trinidad & Northern Hills
<b>White-winged Swallow</b> <i>Tachycineta albiventer</i> (4)	A few in lowland Trinidad especially Wallerfield
<b>Southern Rough-Wing Swallow</b> <i>Stelgidopteryx ruficollis</i> (6)	Seen AWC, Arima Valley & Aripo
<b>Rufous-breasted Wren</b> <i>Thryothorus rutilus</i>	Frustrating on Trinidad but two seen well Tobago Rain Forest
<b>Northern House Wren</b> <i>Troglodytes aedon</i> (4)	Heard daily at AWC but elusive, a few Tobago
<b>Tropical Mockingbird</b> <i>Mimus gilvus</i> (11)	Fairly numerous both islands
<b>Yellow-legged Thrush</b> <i>Turdus flavipes</i>	Tobago Rain Forest
<b>Cocoa Thrush</b> <i>Turdus fumigatus</i> (7)	Seen most days AWC
<b>Spectacled Thrush</b> <i>Turdus. nudigenis</i> (10)	Fairly numerous AWC, small numbers Tobago
<b>Long-billed Gnatwren</b> <i>Ramphocaenus melanurus</i>	Heard several times but only seen AWC once
<b>White-necked Thrush</b> <i>Turdus albicollis</i> (5)	Several AWC/Blanchisseuse Road- fairly numerous Tobago Rain Forest
<b>Violaceous Euphonia</b> <i>Euphonia violacea</i> (7)	Fairly numerous AWC
<b>Trinidad Euphonia</b> <i>Euphonia trinitatis</i>	One Lower Arima Valley
<b>Tropical Parula</b> <i>Parula pitayumi</i>	One very briefly with Trinidad Euphonia
<b>Yellow Warbler</b> <i>Dendroica petechia</i>	One near Arima
<b>American Redstart</b> <i>Setophaga ruticilla</i>	One en route Nariva and one Caroni
<b>Northern Waterthrush</b> <i>Seiurus noveboracensis</i> (7)	Seen a few times AWC also Blanchisseuse Road, Caroni & Bon Accord Tobago
<b>Masked Yellowthroat</b> <i>Geothlypis aequinoctialis</i>	One singing Aripo
<b>Golden-crowned Warbler</b> <i>Basileuterus culicivorus</i>	One beside Blanchisseuse Road
<b>Bicoloured Conebill</b> <i>Conirostrum bicolor</i>	Only seen en route Nariva
<b>Masked Cardinal</b> <i>Paroaria gularis</i>	Three Caroni
<b>Bananaquit</b> <i>Coereba flaveola</i> (11)	Abundant-both islands
<b>White-lined Tanager</b> <i>Tachyphonus rufus</i> (11)	Numerous both islands
<b>Silver-beaked Tanager</b> <i>Ramphocelus carbo</i>	Common AWC
<b>Blue-Grey Tanager</b> <i>Thraupis episcopus</i> (11)	Small numbers AWC and on Tobago
<b>Palm Tanager</b> <i>Thraupis palmarum</i> (11)	Common both islands
<b>Turquoise Tanager</b> <i>Tangera mexicana</i>	Small numbers AWC & en route Nariva
<b>Bay-headed Tanager</b> <i>Tangera gyrola</i> (5)	Small numbers AWC
<b>Blue Dacnis</b> <i>Dacnis cayana</i>	A couple of sightings AWC & Aripo
<b>Green Honeycreeper</b> <i>Chlorophanes spiza</i> (8)	Seen daily at AWC
<b>Purple Honeycreeper</b> <i>Cyanerpes caeruleus</i> (8)	Numerous at AWC feeders
<b>Red-legged Honeycreeper</b> <i>Cyanerpes cyaneus</i>	A few AWC & Lower Arima Valley also small numbers Tobago Rain Forest

<b>Blue-Black Grassquit</b> <i>Volatinia jacarin</i> (4)	Locally small numbers Trinidad lowlands also Nariva & near Blue Waters Tobago
<b>Black-faced Grassquit</b> <i>Tiaris bicolor</i>	5-6 Tobago Bon Accord
<b>Grassland Yellow Finch</b> <i>Sicalis luteola</i>	A few ARS Wallerfield
<b>Saffron Finch</b> <i>Sicalis flaveola</i>	Three near Waterloo
<b>Red-crowned Ant-Tanager</b> <i>Habia rubica</i>	Seen AWC and along Oilbird trail- also beside Blanchisseuse Road
<b>Red-breasted Meadowlark</b> <i>Sturnella militaris</i>	10+ Wallerfield ARS
<b>Yellow-hooded Blackbird</b> <i>Agelaius icterocephalus</i>	Trincity Ponds & Nariva
<b>Carib Grackle</b> <i>Quiscalus lugubris</i> (5)	Numerous around Trinidad coast & south Tobago
<b>Shiny Cowbird</b> <i>Molothrus bonariensis</i> (4)	Locally in very small numbers both islands
<b>Giant Cowbird</b> <i>Molothrus oryzivorus</i>	10+ Nariva & 4-5 Tobago Rain Forest
<b>Moriche Oriole</b> <i>Icterus chryscephalus</i>	One in flowering tree Wallerfield
<b>Yellow Oriole</b> <i>Icterus nigrogularis</i> (5)	Seen most days AWC - also a few other sightings Trinidad
<b>Yellow-rumped Cacique</b> <i>Cacicus cela</i>	Colony along Blanchisseuse Road
<b>Crested Oropendola</b> <i>Psarocolius decumanus</i> (10)	Numerous AWC, seen elsewhere in Trinidad & in small numbers Tobago Rain Forest & Little Tobago

### Non Avian Sightings

Red-rumped Agouti	Red-tailed (Trinidad) Squirrel	White-lined Sac-wing Bat
Fruit Bat sp.	Golden Tegu Lizard	Common Ameiva
House Gecko	Ocellated Gecko	Variegated Gecko
Cook's Tree Boa	Spectacled Caiman	Cane Toad
Land Crab sp.	Fiddler Crab sp.	

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