

Trinidad and Tobago

Naturetrek Tour Report

6 – 19 March 2016



Trinidad Piping Guan



White-necked Jacobin



Common Long-tongued Bat



Oilbird

Report & images compiled by Ed Drewitt



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

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

E: info@naturetrek.co.uk

W: www.naturetrek.co.uk

Tour Participants: Ed Drewitt (leader) with 11 Naturetrek clients

Local Guides	Dave Ramlal	Trinidad
	Roodal Ramlal	Trinidad
	Gladwyn James	Tobago
	Zolani 'Z' Frank	Little Tobago Island

Introduction

Leaving late winter behind in the UK, a group of 11 spent two glorious weeks in hot sunshine, exploring the rainforests of Trinidad and Tobago and other habitats, such as grassland savannah, coastal bays, mud flats and Tobago Island. We saw and heard 239 species of bird complemented by a range of butterflies, bats and fascinating invertebrates, from tarantulas and leaf-cutting ants to velvet worms and harvestmen. We had mouth-watering views of 11 species of hummingbird at the Asa Wright Centre, Trinidad, as they, along with all manner of tanagers, oropendolas and bats, visited the sugar water feeders each day. An early morning visit revealed the rare and endemic Trinidad Piping Guan, a stunning, tree-living bird. And other endemics included the Trinidad Euphonia and the Trinidad Motmot, the latter especially common on Tobago, despite its name. We finished the tour enjoying tame Turnstones and chachalacas just a step outside our beach rooms and savouring the island delights of Little Tobago where Red-billed Tropicbirds were nesting feet away and frigatebirds drifted close overhead.

Day 1

Sunday 6th March

In flight to Trinidad via St Lucia

Wet on arrival but humid and very warm. After the UK's warmest winter, and, despite northern parts of the UK still with snow, 10 of us (including Ed) arrived at Gatwick airport to a beautiful frosty morning and sunshine. John and Anne were already at our first destination. Once on board, we had a nine-hour flight to St Lucia first, heading west over southern England and south-west across the Atlantic, over the Azores, and on to the Caribbean, arriving on a sunny, tropical afternoon. We stopped for an hour or so to let some passengers off and others on - outside it was sunny and 30°C. There was little birdlife around in the heat of the day but, as we taxied out on the runway, over a dozen Cattle Egrets were feeding amongst the taller grasses off the runway. Ahead of schedule, we continued on our 40-minute flight to Trinidad south. Along the 218-mile flight, we passed over the mountainous volcanic island of St. Vincent and across the Grenadines where the shallow coral reefs of the small islands glistened blue beneath the water.

Suddenly the sea disappeared under blanket cloud and, as we came into Trinidad, it was raining - the rain clouds had come in late morning. We flew low over the mangroves and agricultural fields before coming in to land at Piarco International Airport, 24km east of the Port of Spain, Trinidad's most urbanised area and capital of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. At 5pm there was over an hour of light left and, as we exited the plane, the humid heat hit us. At a latitude of 10 degrees north of the Earth's equator, the climate is hot and steamy, though a little cooler in the mountains.

After getting through security and being reunited with our luggage, we met our top guides on the island, Dave and his father Roodal. They greeted us at arrivals and, once we were in their maxi taxis with our luggage, we were

on our 45-minute transfer to the world famous Asa Wright Centre. Being a Sunday, most people were at home or at church - we passed through the relatively quiet urban areas near the airport and the town of Arima before heading into the mountains seven miles (11km) north of the town. At 1200 feet (366m) above sea level, we arrived at the Asa Wright Centre and were greeted with rum punches and a happy welcome. Ann, the lodge manager, came to say hello as our keys were given out. Her calm and smiley nature helps make the centre so relaxing. The Asa Wright Centre was established as a non-profit-making trust in 1967 after Asa Wright, an Icelandic woman, sold it with the condition it became a nature reserve. Prior to this, Asa and her husband nurtured the site as a plantation for coffee, cocoa and fruits such as oranges – however, despite its historical use as a plantation, environmental conditions meant that cocoa pods particularly didn't thrive very well for Asa. Now the 1500-acre site is an important nature reserve with many areas off limits to people to benefit wildlife and plants. However, there are established trails – in particular the Discovery Trail, which we were able to make full use of during our visit.

Along the way to the Asa Wright Centre there was plenty of birdlife still active, especially after the recent rain. At arrivals a Palm Tanager was perched in a nearby palm with another calling nearby. Just as we left the airport, Dave pointed out two Limpkins, an uncommon bird to see - they were feeding in a grassy ditch and one had a big snail in its beak. These ibis-like birds tend to come out more when it rains. Tropical Mockingbirds, Great Kiskadees and a few Tropical Kingbirds perched along the telegraph wires. Grey-breasted Martins flew overhead feeding and one White-winged Swallow with a white rump flew close to the road. A few Cattle Egrets fed by the roadside and a pair of Blue-black Grassquits appeared out of a grassy river channel. As the light faded fast flying bats began to fill the cloudy sky. As we headed into the mountains, the sky darkened and Trinidad Stream Frogs began to call. It began to rain more - close to the Centre the rat-like tail of a Common Opossum disappeared off the road into the undergrowth.

After our rum punches on arrival, we were taken to our rooms; we quickly freshened up before dinner at 7.30pm - a buffet of rice, fish, beef stew followed by a chocolate mousse with softened dried sultanas. We also met up with Anne and John who had arrived a few days earlier. After dessert and coffee, many of us headed for an early night to get some rest and sleep before a busy day the next morning on the veranda looking for hummingbirds.

Day 2

Monday 7th March

Asa Wright Centre - Discovery Trail

Overnight some rain, comfortable temperature and humid. During the night, the air was filled with the sounds of crickets and cicadas, with different ones singing at different periods. The occasional Ferruginous Pygmy Owl could be heard too - a short succession of quiet hoots.

The famous Asa Wright Centre veranda would be our stopping point for birding before breakfast. Hummingbird nectar feeders, fruit such as watermelon, and bread (for the agoutis) are put out each morning. At dawn, while it was still pretty dark, a Cocoa Thrush was singing - it's song was Mistle Thrush-like and very repetitive. A Short-tailed Nighthawk was calling along with a Ferruginous Pygmy Owl and Grey-fronted Dove. A Red-rumped Agouti came to investigate in the twilight and gradually birds began to appear around the feeders and fruit.

The first hummingbirds were White-necked Jacobins, together with Palm Tanagers. The white necks of the jacobins were very clear in the low light. Over 50 Orange-winged Parrots came out of roost flying over in small

groups or pairs. Many White-chested Emerald Hummingbirds started to feed from the veranda along with Copper-rumped Hummingbirds and a pair of tiny Tufted Coquettes. A Black-throated Mango also made an appearance. A Barred Antshrike called in the background. As it got light, Bananaquits became very apparent amongst the feeders and fruit followed by Green Honeycreepers and Purple Honeycreepers. The latter had remarkable yellow legs and feet contrasting with their bright purple-blue plumage. Stunning male yellow and blue Violaceous Euphonias also came down to the fruit in small numbers. White-billed and White-lined Tanagers were commonly visiting the bushes and fruit. The female White-lined Tanagers were rich orange-brown in colour like ginger biscuits. A Blue-grey Tanager perched at the top of a tree while a stunning Yellow Oriole visited the lower bushes. A few Band-rumped Swifts also flew across the cloudy sky and Cocoa Thrushes and a Spectacled Thrush made an appearance. Crow-size Crested Oropendolas came down to the fruit in twos or threes and dominated for the short while they stayed.

The breakfast bell rang at 7.30am and we left the colourful performance of birds momentarily to enjoy made-to-order omelettes and a mixed breakfast buffet. A Rufous-breasted Hermit came to feed on the flowers of a *Sanchezia* plant. Martyn Kenefick gave a briefing at 8.15am - Martyn is originally from the UK and his home is now Trinidad where he is on the board of directors at the Asa Wright Centre. Dave, our guide, then gave an overview of our plans for the next week. We had a short time to change before our morning's walk down the Discovery Trail. A Lineated Woodpecker, a Scaled Pigeon, a Turkey Vulture and a pair of Great Kiskadees were seen from the veranda before we left. The kiskadees were displaying - one raised its normally hidden, bright orange crest feathers. Just as we were about to leave, a pair of Boat-billed Flycatchers appeared - differing from the kiskadees with an olive-coloured back, less extensive eye stripe and a large bill.

Dave pointed out the flowering *Mimosa* tree known as 'Powder Puff', the Purple Verbena shrubs, the Jade Vine with blue-green claw-shaped flowers, and *Sanchezia*, which are all popular with the hummingbirds - their flowers provide lots of nectar. The trees were full of epiphytes, plants that grow on the tree branches including mistletoe, orchids and a purple coloured plant called Wandering Jew or *Tradescantia*. A bright red and black Postman butterfly also flew amongst the trees. At the top of a nearby tree a mockingbird was attacking a pygmy owl which remained out of sight.

Our first birds on the walk were a pair of Channel-billed Toucans that landed in some bamboo along with a pair of Orange-winged Amazons. A Trinidad Motmot fed nearby. Along this part of the walk we were surrounded by a few familiar named plants - a Clove Tree, a Guava Tree, a Bay Tree, a Candlestick Tree (good for euphonias) and Hawaiian Torch Lily (*Etilingera*) with impressive red flower heads. As we walked with along the main track, a Little Hermit hummingbird flew away from bright red flower of the Blackstick plant (*Pachystachys*). A little further along a Squirrel Cuckoo called and finally after some time of searching revealed itself in the trees - like many of the birds here, it had a bright orange-brown back and tail. A Ferruginous Pygmy Owl and a Euler's Flycatcher were also calling. Beneath our feet, Jane spotted leaf-cutting ants and their neat, tidy trail through the forest - only a few ants were out. Nearby, we could see their huge mound with little entrances that has been made over a long period. Nearby plants have been reduced down to their leaf skeletons where the ants have been out collecting fodder - they develop a fungus garden with the leaves back down in their underground nest. Down the path an agouti was wandering across. A vocal Golden Olive Woodpecker made its presence known and, like the cuckoo, took some finding up in the tree branches. We later saw it or another fly to a nest hole and poke its head out. As a huge Blue Morpho butterfly flew past with heavy wing beats, we tried to spot a pair of Great Antshrikes. With some persistence, the glimpses and calls turned into slightly better views as the pair moved to a

stand of bamboo. Nearby, Dave attracted a stunning male White-flanked Antwren - his wings were patterned with two lines white spots like train tracks. During our persistent search for the antshrikes, a Red-tailed Squirrel climbed through a nearby tree. Before we heading on a male Green-backed Trogon was spotted - his bright green-blue back, almost iridescent, was facing us. He flew closer facing us revealing his yellow chest, white tail panel and pale grey bill and eye rings.

Moving along the path, a Greater White-lined Bat was foraging and flying up and down in front of us. Nearby, two female and a male Red-crowned Ant Tanagers were feeding amongst the tree branches. A large Cocoa Woodcreeper was also foraging like a woodpecker. On our right two striking male White-bearded Manakins were resting on branches in their lek - the arena where they come together to dance and compete like rutting deer and to impress a watching female or two.

A little further along, we stopped to listen and see Bearded Bellbirds. We heard at least three but, as a short heavy shower came in, they went quiet. One started up again but remained elusive even though it sounded close. Their tin-like and dead-bell-like songs were very loud and distinctive. Dave managed to find one that some of the group saw and, back at the veranda, others were able to see a distant male perched at the top of a tree. As we headed back, another heavy shower came down soaking many of the group - but we stopped to see a pair of White-bellied Antbirds. They were walking along the forest floor turning over leaves looking for food. Both had orange-brown backs; the male had a black breast.

We arrived back just in time for lunch - a delicious buffet of rice, lentils, vegetables and cubes of pork in a delicious gravy. Just before we sat down, a few Bay-headed Tanagers were coming down to the bushes and a Guianan Trogon was perched with a large fruit in its mouth. It had bright yellow eye rings and a stripy tail (underside). A Ruby-topaz Hummingbird and a Long-billed Starthroat Hummingbird also made brief appearances.

During the afternoon everyone had free time to relax and acclimatise to the temperature, birdlife and time zone. The feeders were busy with most species we had seen during the morning plus Green Hermit hummingbirds, a few Turquoise Tanagers that avoid the feeders and a few more Blue-grey Tanagers. The White-necked Jacobins were particularly striking in flight, when their white underparts and tail became obvious. Yellow Oriole, Turquoise Tanagers, Bearded Bellbird and Spectacled Thrush were also seen. Towards tea-and-cake-time at 4pm, a large Golden Tegu, a type of lizard, came marching slowly up the garden steps - it had distinctive black stripes along its back. A Barred Antshrike, the size of a Song Thrush but slimmer, was foraging at the back of the gardens - it was stripy black and white all over.

At 4.20pm Caleb, one of the centre's guides, took some of us up to the upper car park a few minutes walk away where we spent an hour looking for birds. As we arrived, a Great Kiskadee and a Tropical Kingbird were perched nearby. The sky above was busy with Band-rumped or Grey-rumped Swifts. A Long-billed Gnatwren called in the background and a Rufous-browed Peppershrike sang loudly. A Piratical Flycatcher perched up high and was seen several times with its masked head and streaky back. As its name suggests, this tyrant flycatcher takes over the nests of other birds such as flycatcher, orioles and oropendolas. Talking of which - close by a colony of Crested Oropendolas were busy breeding and visiting their 20 nests. Chicks could be heard begging as they went in to their long, weaved nests. Overhead a Plumbeous Kite was soaring and later a Short-tailed Hawk and a White Hawk - the latter with a distinctive white outer tail band and dark wing tips. Another hawk glided

fast overhead but remained unidentified. The odd Turkey Vulture also drifted over along with a Magnificent Frigatebird.

The trees were busy with Palm Tanagers, Bananaquits and other small birds including a male American Redstart, three Turquoise Tanagers and a Swallow Tanager, a scarce breeding bird found here in the Northern Range. It was a male and its flank feathers were striped blue and black, a little like a Jay's wing.

We met again on the veranda for rum punches at 6pm and chatted together until the bell rang for dinner at 7pm. Meanwhile, we enjoyed watching over half a dozen Common Long-tongued Bats coming to drink from the nectar feeders, stopping just briefly to get a taste. Occasionally a bat would fly into the building, circle round and fly back out again. Pete even had one in his room last night flying round.

Dinner was a delicious mix of fried fish, lamp cutlets, cheese potato and delicious mixed vegetables - mid-flow we had a power cut and had some fun eating our food under torch light before the generator came on. As the fun continued, some of us left to go on a short night walk with Caleb. The highlight was a velvet worm - this is only the second Caleb has seen in seven years. They are strange organisms - a cross between a mollusc such as a slug and a segmented worm. This one had slimed a centipede and was devouring it with its sucker-like mouth. It was the size of a medium-sized earthworm, with very fine segments, a pair of antennae, compound eyes and caterpillar-like legs.

We headed back for 8.15pm to do the checklist and then retire to bed, ready for an early start on the veranda and our field trip out into the rainforest.

Day 3

Tuesday 8th March

Northern Range. Blanchisseuse Road Rain Forest

Bright day with hot sunshine. At 5.45am a few of us were on the veranda listening to a Cocoa Thrush singing. A few Common Long-tongued Bats were having their last drink at the feeders. Against the pink sky, the distinctive shape of an Oilbird flew past while a Short-tailed Nighthawk called in-between the song of the thrush. The thrush went quiet after 6am as Palm Tanagers, Great Kiskadees and Grey-fronted Dove began to call. In the half-light the first hummingbirds appeared, namely the Copper-rumped Emeralds and then the jacobins. A Spectacled Thrush was next to appear and gradually all the hummingbirds and tanagers came to the feeders and fruit - Anne had just put out bananas. The agoutis slowly came out of their beds too. The first parrots appeared at 6.10am and the majority of parrots came out of their roost ten minutes later. The highlight of this pre-breakfast watch was a bird of prey found by Pete in the canopy of a distant tree. The bird was an Ornate Hawk-Eagle - we could see just the head with its crest, brownish crown, white streaks above the eyes and white neck. This was an impressive immature bird - most people got their eye in on it before it tucked its head back down.

Just before breakfast, we also admired a male Blue-chinned Sapphire hummingbird feeding and chasing off another male. In the right light, his chin shone blue like the dazzling iridescence of a kingfisher. Nearby, a male Tufted Coquette also fed.

The bell went at 7.30am breakfast and we headed down for omelettes, fried eggs, cereal or a local dish of gently cooked/fried mackerel with some fine vegetables.

Our morning target was to explore the Arima-Blanchisseuse Road which cuts through the cooler Northern Range – we stopped at Brasso Seco village, the name meaning ‘dry branch’ and refers to a branch of the nearby river that only ever gets wet during the heaviest parts of the wet season.

We set off at 8.30am, passing a Grey-fronted Dove on the road, a sac-winged bat, a Red-tailed Squirrel and the nest of a Yellow-olive Flycatcher along the main drive. A little further along, we stopped on some forest edge in the sunshine. A Lineated Woodpecker was minding its own business on a dead tree. The canopies of other trees were full of small birds - Forest Elaenia, Tropical Pewee, Bananaquits, a few Yellow-crowned Warblers, two Squirrel Cuckoos, a Cocoa Woodcreeper, a Red-legged Honeycreeper, a Guianan Trogon and two Green-fronted Greenlets. A Black-faced Antthrush was singing nearby but remained elusive. Back near the buses a Scarlet Peacock butterfly was sunning itself and the woodpecker was pecking on a bamboo stem. A Turkey Vulture and three Plumbeous Kites circled overhead. A little further up the road a Collared Trogon was heard so we pulled up by the roadside and walked back to see it. It was elusive at first but showed well a little later - unlike the other trogons it has a bright red chest. A Tropical Parula, a colourful yellow-breasted warbler with a grey back, was calling and foraging in the trees above. Overhead a Zone-tailed Hawk flew across - it was mimicking the behaviour of a Turkey Vulture. This species hones in on groups of Turkey Vultures, mixes amongst them and snatches up smaller prey that would not usually see vultures as a threat. Back by the buses, a few Rufous-breasted Wrens were singing - one was feeding a chick.

We continued on our journey through the forest and stopped along a track where a young woman was sweeping the leaves away. We were looking for Black-faced Antthrush and could hear one below down the slope. But it was staying put. We walked on and found a pair of Chestnut Woodpeckers - a large woodpecker with yellow-brown plumage. Further up in the canopy, we had views of a distant Golden-headed Manakin - his yellow head, pale cream eyes and bill distinct against its dark body. As we headed back, Broad-winged Hawk and Common Black Hawk soared overhead. Harmonia Tiger-wing butterfly and Blue Morpho butterfly often flew past and two Hermes Satyr butterflies were circling together.

We spent some time trying to see the antthrush again but to no avail - but we heard its song very well. A Euler's Flycatcher called and later was perched above flicking its wings nervously - a key character of this bird. A Greater White-lined Bat was also flying around.

We continued on in the maxi taxis and stopped for a delicious lunch by a junction on the Paria Morne Bleu Road - a chicken rice dish with vegetables and salad followed by very sweet watermelon. Two Speckled Tanagers were feeding in a tree along with a female Green Honeycreeper. Butterflies around the stream and vegetation included Agnosia Clearwing (Blue Transparent), Orange Mapwing, Blue Morpho, Orcus Chequered Skipper, Harmonia Tiger-wing and Penelope Satyr. As we left, a Grey-rumped Swift was flying low along the road, catching insects.

A little down the road, we stopped to watch a pair of Streaked Flycatchers chasing each other and mating. A Pygmy Owl began calling amid squeaks of other birds making its presence known. A Dusty-capped Flycatcher stood proud on a stick of a bamboo. In the bushes the owl, which flew lower down but out of view, was being mobbed by Cocoa Thrushes. Two female Golden-headed Manakins were also perched in a thicket. Another highlight was a hand-size Trinidad Chevron Tarantula coerced out by Dave with a stick. Its home was a hole in the rock lined with delicate silk.

Back in the vehicles and down the road through a local village, we stopped to see a Broad-winged Hawk perched on the overhead wires. A few Tropical Kingbirds and a flock of Grey-breasted Martins were also seen on wires.

We stopped in the village of Brasso Seco for a comfort break and the chance to watch a colony of Yellow-rumped Caciques and a colony of Crested Oropendola. Both were side by side in adjacent trees. The caciques' nests are smaller and more round. A pair of Giant Cowbirds was investigating the oropendola nests while the adults were away. They remove the eggs and lay their own - just like cuckoos. In the verge, Caribbean Cabbage White, Scarlet Peacock and Plain Longtail Skipper butterflies were feeding. On the nearby wires a pair of Ruddy Ground Doves were snug together preening in the hot sunshine while a few male Carib Grackles were perching and flying around. After stopping at the bar for a few beers for some, we headed a little up the road. We stopped with a view looking out across the forest and towards the Caribbean Sea. A local cedar tree (not the coniferous type) was home to a pair of Variegated Flycatchers - a rare migrant passing through. One was very vocal stood out on a branch. They are a little like Piratic Flycatchers but bigger with more obvious wing bars. Nearby, we watched for a few Rufous-breasted Wrens. The flycatcher tree was also busy with a female Black-throated Mango hummingbird, a Blue-chinned Sapphire hummingbird, Turquoise Tanagers, Bay-headed Tanagers and Golden-fronted Greenlets. Two Common Black Hawks soared high in the sky overhead. A dead land crab was also spotted - a road kill victim.

Another stop revealed an Olive-sided Flycatcher perched out on a branch with the forest valley as a backdrop. A Tropical Kingbird was fly catching nearby.

Our next stop was with a mixed flock of small birds. A busy tree had two Streaked Xenops with two bright white streaks on their heads, a Long-billed Gnatwren with a long tail, Golden-fronted Greenlet, Purple Honeycreeper, White-flanked Antwren and Copper-rumped Hummingbird.

Near Morne La Croix, we stopped for 20 minutes by some freshly trimmed gardens to spot Blue-headed Parrots. At least ten were perched at the top of a mango tree and by our stopping point a few were in nearer trees. Three flew in and disappeared in the tree - they have the ultimate camouflage plumage. Through the scope, their blue heads could be made out. In the nearby trees a pair of Rufous-tailed Jacamas were feeding. The male, with a white throat, was particularly cooperative and sat on a branch, occasionally alternating the direction he was facing and flying out to catch an insect. Reg photographed a Barred Antshrike that was foraging nearby. Out on the grassy areas, a small group of Carib Grackles was having a disagreement while a Southern Rough-winged Swallow sat on wires above.

At 4.15pm we began to make our journey back to the Asa Wright Centre, in glorious afternoon sunshine and warm, humid heat. We passed familiar places from this morning and arrived back at 4.50pm in good time to freshen up, relax and enjoy rum punches at 6pm. Hummingbirds were as busy as ever around the feeders. And near our rooms a Cocoa Thrush was singing away while various tanagers foraged amongst the plants. A tame Red-rumped Agouti was also at home, wandering around near our rooms. Between 6pm and 7pm we met together on the veranda, enjoying our rum punches and watching the birdlife filter away as it got darker. To our surprise, one and then two Short-tailed Nighthawks began hunting for insects right in front of us. They were flying around the gardens and open forest, competing for food with the bats. With the warmer, dryer temperatures more insect life was out compared to last night. With the nighthawks, at least 20 bats could be seen at any one time flying in the sky - and the Common Long-tongued Bats were coming to the nectar feeders.

We enjoyed dinner together at 7pm - tonight's choice was a buffet with macaroni cheese, chilli prawns, chicken in a delicious sticky sauce and tasty vegetables. The checklist, with many new birds and butterflies to add, followed. We then headed for bed at 8pm to prepare for an early breakfast and field trip ahead. Some heard Ferruginous Pygmy Owl and Spectacled Owl during the night.

Day 4

Wednesday 9th March

The Aripo savannah/forest and Arima forest

Hot and sunny; some cloud on the higher ground. We met for breakfast at 6am and headed out at 6.30am down the valley to the open grasslands. Here it is much hotter and we wanted to catch the early morning coolness before the birds went too quiet.

We began by stopping every so often down the Arima Valley - before we left the main entrance of Asa Wright Centre we stopped for a pair of Grey-throated Leaf-tossers. They were below us on the logs and branches calling. Wren-like in shape, these Nuthatch-size birds were flicking their wings. The grey throat was obvious and in the right light we could make out the reddish breast.

A little further down the road a Streaked Xenops was singing - a squeaky song. A bellbird was also calling sounding a little crow or Raven like. While trying for spintail (which never appeared), a huge Migrant Locust flew across the road and was spotted by June. As it flew it had bright red wings but was incredibly cryptic once on a log or amongst the leaves.

A short distance down the road again, two Red-rumped Woodpeckers appeared briefly before flying off as quickly as they appeared. The top of a tree was very busy with birds - a few hummingbirds, Tropical Parula, a pair of Blue Dacnis, Red-breasted Wren and a Euler's Flycatcher.

Further along, we stopped overlooking the valley and towards a large Immortal Tree - it was filled with Palm Tanagers, two Yellow Orioles, Green Honeycreeper, Piratic Flycatcher, Purple Honeycreeper, Bay-headed Tanagers, a Boat-billed Flycatcher and Blue Dacnis.

As we headed further down the valley, two Grey-lined Hawks drifted down. We stopped at the bottom of a valley in some grassland off the Ariva by-pass, designated to be turned into housing. Fortunately building has not happened and the dry vegetation was busy with Blue-black Grassquits. In some bamboo by a stream a Masked Yellowthroat was singing. And Southern Rough-winged Swallows were flying overhead. We drove over to some bamboo, looking up towards trees where a Merlin alighted. A small group of Smooth-billed Anis was busy foraging and seeing what we were up to; bamboo stands in front of us were busy with birds, including four Yellow Orioles, a pair of grassquits, a Barred Antshrike and a Bran-coloured Flycatcher. After hearing a Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, it moved into a visible place in the bamboo where we were able to admire it calling, in the shade. The white patches on the back of its head that mimic eyes to avoid predation were also visible. After some searching, Trinidad Euphonias made an appearance - they look like the Violaceous but have a dark bib instead of yellow. After some searching and hearing their calls, we finally saw two in some dead trees behind the stands of bamboo. The grassy areas were busy with Orcus Chequered Skippers, a Venusta Yellow and

dragonflies. Overhead, 30+ Black Vultures were soaring and, as we left, Short-tailed Swifts flew past. A Grey-lined Hawk and a Zone-tailed Hawk also soared overhead.

We stopped at the Valencia Visitor Centre for a comfort break; some rescued animals were on display such as a Red Howler Monkey, Ocelot and parrots. The flowers were busy with Scarlet Peacocks, a Bordered Patch and a Bubastis Scrub Hairstreak.

As we came off the main road in the Aripo Savannah, and headed along a quieter road through the grassland and scrub, our first birds were a Tropical Kingbird and a Grey Kingbird on the wires. We stopped to pick out a Yellow-bellied Elaenia which flew to and fro between the trees on either side of the road. When viewed well it was displaying its crest. We then had a stunning Black-crested Antshrike singing - his black crest was obvious. His black tail was studded with white spots at the top and he had a rich brown back. When he flew across to another tree, he typically flicked his tail. As we headed out of this area of grassland, we stopped to watch a Pearl Kite feeding its chick. The kite was a little larger than a kestrel and, after feeding, sat over the nest to shelter its chick from the intense heat.

We headed on to another area and, on the way, stopped briefly to see a Crimson-crested Woodpecker fly across the road and land in a tree. We pulled over to watch it fly away. Following it down a track, we tried to see it again, but to no avail - but we did meet some barking dogs protecting their owner's house.

At 11.10am, we stopped at the Arana Forest entrance for lunch, pausing under roofed cover to enjoy another chicken rice and lentil dish with a delicious pak choi and onion mix and salad. Two Southern Rough-winged Swallows laid on the road sunbathing. And a male Blue-black Grassquit performed a jumping display on his favourite perch on the other side of the road - their local name is 'Jolly Jumpers'. A few Smooth-billed Anis were hanging out close by. After eating, we wandered down to a dilapidated building where Greater White-lined Bats were roosting - we saw half a dozen in total and they were mainly flying around in circles inside. A few were hanging upside down and one came and landed on the outside wall in front of June and Ed. A few White Peacock butterflies were flying around flowers in the adjacent grassy areas.

We headed back at 12pm, stopping briefly along the road where a male Golden-headed Manakin perched very close. On the way back, we saw many more soaring Black Vultures, a Short-tailed Hawk and a perched Savannah Hawk that dropped down to the ground. Some Green-rumped Parrotlets were calling from some bushes but didn't show. As we arrived into the entrance of the Asa Wright Centre, the front maxi taxi watched a dark brown Tayra, a type of mustelid related to weasels and badgers, walk down the slope and off into the trees.

We arrived back at 1.30pm and had the afternoon to rest, relax and enjoy the wildlife before tea and cakes at 4pm, rum punches at 6pm, checklist and then dinner. The usual birds were visiting the feeders and, in the garden, a pair of Barred Antshrikes was foraging - they behave very much like the Wryneck in Europe. A distant toucan was perched at the top of a tree showing off its red rump and bluish tones around its eye and bill.

After dinner, half the group joined guide Mukesh for a night walk at 8pm, for an hour. Mukesh has been a guide here for 28 years and knows the forest incredibly well. We started the walk off well when June almost trod on the venomous Common or Trinidad Coral Snake, a beautiful red, black and creamy-yellow banded snake that looks

like a beaded necklace. It remained motionless before heading for the edge of the road. Mukesh then introduced us to a harvestman, a type of spider with a round spiny body and flimsy, thin legs. We saw several along the walk.

Next up, was a pretty male Variegated Gecko with beautiful, colourful markings - he was staying put on the shallow wall by the roadside. There was then an impressive seven- or eight-inch-long flatworm on the Tarmac. It was a yellow-cream colour with two darker lines running down its length. It is sticky too and had a leaf stuck to its body. Other invertebrates might stick to the flatworm and provide a ready meal for it. We then admired an extravagant moth with tails that had markings like eyes. Next up, we had some Mountain Crabs - relatively small individuals just sitting outside of their burrows in a shallow stream. Another was in its hole in the embankment by the road. On a bamboo stem, a cryptic Trinidad Chevron Tarantula was staying still and posing in the torchlight. Other night creatures included brown slugs grazing on moss, a whip scorpion with mean-looking spiny pedipalps, a wolf spider, a cockroach, leaf-cutting ants, Yellow-banded Millipede, a paper wasp nest, and we heard the bizarre, striking and tapping calls of cicadas. A wonderful array of night creatures under a brilliantly starry sky.

Day 5

Thursday 10th March

Oilbirds and Night Birding

Hot and humid; heavy rain later evening. Some of us met again early, at 5.45am, ready for the sun to rise and the forest to reveal itself. Before breakfast, we watched the expected birdlife, including parrots perched in trees close by. A Spectacled Thrush gave good views on the fruit tables and a Guianan Trogon showed in a tree before flying across to the bamboo. The bellbird was in his usual spot, showing off his dangling wattles.

After breakfast, we met again at 8.30am and met with Barry who gave a briefing about Oilbirds and the walk we were about to do. As we left, a Black-tailed Tityra was perched, preening itself in a tree and showing off its white body, red face, black tail and black primaries - very similar to a bellbird. Before we turned off the path towards the caves, we paused to catch up with a Great Antshrike - a female was calling nearby and gradually came into view showing off her white belly, rich brown back and head and red eye. The 40-minute walk to the caves was a mix of climbing up and down steps through thick forest. We passed a tree where Barry pointed out the musty smell of a Brazilian Tree Porcupine. As we began to head down towards the cave, the forest opened up a little. A Plain-brown Woodcreeper was foraging on a dead tree. A White-necked Thrush was dashing between vegetation. And a superb Harlequin Beetle was resting on a rotting log. What an insect - if sat on your hand it would fill the space with its long, thin twig-like legs and oval shaped body with wing cases that were black, yellow and red, patterned in camouflage fashion. When it took off, it looked like a drone in flight.

As we got close to the cave, Trinidad Stream Frogs could be heard calling. We split into three groups and Barry led the first group down to the cave entrance to look for the Oilbirds. A Common Black Hawk flew up from the entrance in front of us, showing off its banded tail. Across a little stream and into the darkness a metre or two, Barry shone a torch up towards ten Oilbirds sitting on the cave ledges. Sometimes they hissed and their eyes, reflecting red, shone like LEDs. Each group had the opportunity to photograph the birds using a high ISO and low aperture but no flash. We saw 10 of the 180 birds they have here - the only nocturnal fruit-eating bird in the world. We could see their whiskers or rictal bristles for feeling their way round in the dark. They also use echolocation to find their way around. They are big birds too - the size of a large Carrion Crow. These birds are counted monthly and visits are carefully managed to ensure the birds are not disturbed. On the floor of the cave,

we could see the palm fruit seeds deposited from the birds' faeces. There are eight caves like this documented on the island, and the species is protected from hunting or disturbance. Their name is derived from the times when their slow-growing chicks grew very fat, perhaps twice as heavy as their parents, and were killed and used for lighting such as candles and cooking fat. During the 1960s, Roodal, one of our guides, had helped support the Oilbirds. With other key ornithologists such as Richard French, they made some new ledges in the caves out of cement to give the Oilbirds more opportunities for nesting. This, alongside their legal protection, seems to have been a success as numbers have been rising ever since.

We headed back up all the steps in very humid conditions - it then began to rain, although most of the rain stayed up in the canopy, leaving the forest floor dry. We arrived back just after 10.30am to cool off and relax. Some of the group popped down to the White-bearded Manakin lek to see some male birds - Graham photographed a male displaying and flaring up his throat feathers looking like a beard. A few bellbirds were showing well too.

After lunch and a restful afternoon, we headed back out at 4pm - a pair of Orange-winged Amazons was feeding on cocoa pods above the maxi taxis, along with a Red-tailed Squirrel. A male White-bearded Manakin was nearby.

We headed for Waller Field Airfield, a former American airbase now in Trinidad's hands. A part of it is being built as a university; other parts are used by fast cars/drag racing and the rest is left for nature. We drove through security and headed down one of the roads, the landscape now overgrown with trees and other vegetation. Over 200 Black Vultures were resting in trees and on the ground sunning their wings - the silvery white edges to their outer primaries were clearly visible. On the runway, a Merlin was perched in a tree - a passage migrant at this time of the year. We took a road off the runway where Moriche Palm trees formed a long corridor. Despite the background sound of a racing car, we picked up three Sulphury Flycatchers and heard a toucan. June and Jackie spotted a Red-bellied Macaw briefly fly over. As we enjoyed some rum punch and pastries, another six (mainly in pairs) macaws flew over and into the palms. Roodal and Pete found one in the scope but it was incredibly cryptic and hard to see unless it moved. Fork-tailed Palm Swifts and a few Short-tailed Swifts fed overhead. Roodal checked the drooping brown palm fronds for bats: half a dozen Common Tent-making Bats flew out of one. They deliberately nibble the frond so it dies and hangs downwards. As we left the airfield, two Pale-vented Doves were sitting on electricity wires. A few in the front vehicle caught sight of a Northern Waterthrush that flew across the road and a Little Cuckoo that flew into a copse.

Next stop was the Aripo Livestock Research Station where we stopped for the dinner that we had brought - it was breaded fish, carrots and sultanas, tomato pasta and salad. A friendly dog sat with us as a variety of bats began to fly around in the evening light. Here at this site, Asian Water Buffalo are bred with Brahman cows to produce Buffalypso cattle which are then sold as meat and produce good milk. They were in cowsheds down the lane.

Meanwhile, Pete had found a Peregrine perched on a mini pylon. As the light dropped away, we admired Jupiter and four of its moons lined up in a diagonal line through the scope. Fireflies were twinkling all across a large field like fairy lights. Gladiator Frogs called from a nearby pool and Southern Lapwings gave alarm calls from the sheep fields - we passed a small flock of distinctive Barbados Blackbelly Sheep. We headed along the farm tracks for just over an hour, spotting many White-tailed Nightjars and Pauraques flying over the fields or alighting on

the warm Tarmac track. The White-tailed Nightjars had a more fluttery flight than the Pauraques and, on the track with a good-enough view, showed their white tails. We stopped by some sheep barns to watch a Common Potoo sitting at the end of a branch, frequently flying out to catch an insect or two before returning back. And a Pauraque was sitting on a fence post, allowing scope views for everyone. A large hawk-moth was also found on the ground and photographed before we continued along the tracks. We continued seeing and hearing many of both species before turning back. At one stopping point, a distant Western Barn Owl could be heard calling by a few. A few Marine or Cane Toads by the road and an opossum disappearing into a field were also spotted. As we headed back along the track, the rain came down heavily and stopped any nightjar-watching. But half a dozen Southern Lapwings were suddenly in the road.

We drove back in heavy rain – this has become a more common occurrence in the dry season over the past five years as the climate and weather patterns are changing. Arriving back at 9pm, we headed for our beds ready for a full day tomorrow.

Day 6

Friday 11th March

Nariva Swamp and Waller Field

Hot and humid; a few showers. After viewing from the veranda and a delicious breakfast, we headed out at 8.30am back to Waller Field and the Aripo Livestock Research Station where we were last night. Stephen had already had a close encounter with a hummingbird - he picked one up that was presumably stunned on the ground. It gave a peck and then flew off.

With the heat already setting in, we explored the fields and marshy streams. A few Wattled Jacanas were in a marshy pool by the entrance. Vibrant and unmistakable Red-breasted Meadowlarks were frequent, and one male gave a distinctive flight display. Grey-breasted Martins, a large type of swallow, were perched on the wires. A Striped Cuckoo called in the distance but remained elusive while Shiny Cowbirds and Tropical Mockingbirds were frequently in the trees and on the fence posts.

We walked along the track and looked out across some marshy land where an immature male White-headed Marsh Tyrant was perched. There was lots of other bird activity too, with a female Ruby-topaz Hummingbird feeding amongst the plants and Wilson's Snipe lurking amongst the grassy tussocks, appearing occasionally. A female Yellow-chinned Spinetail was busy visiting and building a nest - we saw several more along the walk. Through the scope, the tail tips, reduced to the quill and forming an arrow shape or spinetail, were visible. A female jacana was guiding her two chicks along the bank. A mix of Asian Buffalo and Buffalypso cattle were inquisitive and coming close to the fence. Out across their field, a Savannah Hawk was sitting watching for prey from a dead tree. Its long, thin legs are ideal for walking amongst the grassland. Another was later seen on the field itself. Over 100 Black Vultures were soaring and making their way up into the sky.

We paused for a while at a stream and water-drinking area for the cattle. We watched Pied Water Tyrant and White-headed Marsh Tyrant together. The Pied is very white with a black patch on the back of its head. The White-headed is black with a white head. Tens of Red Skimmer dragonflies were busy hawking over the water, along with a few Great Pondhawk dragonflies and some Band-winged Dragonlets, with black wing tips that resemble Banded Demoiselles. Nearby three very tame Southern Lapwings were feeding in a grassy field, allowing for very close views. The bushes also revealed a rare female Ruddy-breasted Seedeater and Grassland

Yellow Finch. Pied-winged Swallows swooped low over the field and, further back, a Great Egret and more jacana were feeding. A herd of Buffalypso attracted over a dozen Cattle Egrets that were following them around. After a water stop, we headed back out, stopping by the entrance to watch at least four brightly coloured Green-rumped Parrotlets - they were calling away and pecking around a tree, perhaps looking for a nest site.

We stopped in a nearby bar, with eighties music, for a cool drink and toilet stop before travelling south and east through the market town of Sangre Grande and onwards for 45 minutes to Manzanilla beach, a long curving sandy beach looking out towards the Atlantic. We stopped at a recreational eating area planted with lots of palm trees for cover. We prepared lunch - shepherd's pie with vegetables and salad - and everyone had a chance to look out to sea and enjoy the views. Pete spotted a few Brown Pelicans out over the sea and, closer to the beach, piratic Magnificent Frigatebirds drifted low overhead. As we were leaving, Black Vultures glided down to the beach to feed on fish offal left by someone who had just caught a string of fish. A small number of Carib Grackles were also feeding near the tables in hope of some titbits to eat.

As we headed on, we passed hundreds of coconut palms that provide most of the coconuts for the country – they line the coast side of the road between Manzanilla and Mayaro, an area known as Cocal. On the other side of the road was Nariva Swamp. We stopped briefly by a pool where five Black-bellied Whistling Ducks sat together in a tree - their pink legs, red bills and black bellies visible, even at a distance. A few jacanas and a White-headed Marsh Tyrant were also seen. A Limpkin flew past as we carried on and a Grey-lined Hawk flew into a coconut tree.

At our next stop by mangroves and the Nariva River. A bush was full of Small Blue Grecian butterflies. A little open area revealed a Green Kingfisher and an active Striated Heron with lovely yellow edges to its feathers. In the drier woodland, an immature or female American Redstart was lurking, and a House Wren was singing. Beneath our feet, there were lots of holes made by the Blue Crabs - a shack opposite had some for sale in a large tub of water. A female Bicoloured Conebill, looking like a Willow Warbler, came within a metre or two in the trees. Over time, we also saw a Yellow-breasted Flycatcher, a Northern Scrub Flycatcher, Blue Dacnis, and heard a Silvered Antbird. Looking into the mangroves, a Spotted Sandpiper was quietly foraging. And then a Pygmy Kingfisher came close and perched for a short while. As we headed back, Dave's vehicle had a tyre puncture so, while he changed tyres, we went back to a bridge to watch the Pygmy Kingfisher. A male Crested Antshrike also moved through the vegetation nearby. Overhead Short-tailed Swifts flew past - they looked as though they had their tails snipped off. Just as we headed back to the cars, Ed and June admired a Molpe Metalmark butterfly.

Continuing on past the coastline, we stopped briefly to watch a perched a Brown Pelican and a feeding Snowy Egret. We turned off into Kernahan Road, past fields of ripe watermelons where the front group spotted an Osprey. Small groups of Smooth-billed Anis were flying away from the roadside. A group of 20 Carib Grackles also contained a Yellow-hooded Blackbird. Egrets were more present, with the odd Great Egret and a small group of resting Cattle Egrets on the top of some bushes. We drove close to a pair of Wattled Jacanas - the skin around their bill is a mauve-red colour and, when they open their wings, they reveal a lovely green-yellow colour. As the rain came in, not one but two beautiful Pinnated Bitterns appeared in the marshland. One showed particularly well and we were able to admire its stunning markings that keep it so well hidden. Another bittern-like bird by the roadside in a boggy ditch was misidentified as a bittern. However, after the holiday, it was kindly re-identified by Martyn Kenfick as a juvenile Rufescent Tiger Heron – in his words, ‘much, much rarer (than the bittern) in Trinidad’. As we left, another Yellow-hooded Blackbird and a Yellow-bellied Elaenia were seen by a

few. Despite being a Ramsar site, a wetland of international importance, it was clear that the balance between the needs of the local farmers and nature is a tricky one. Small-scale rice farming still chips away at the remaining marshland and hunting, fires and pollution cause difficulties for conservation. However, the expanse of marshland, particularly during the wet season still provides an important refuge and habitat for wildlife, particularly birds and their prey.

Back along the coast road, Stephen spotted a Yellow-head Caracara land in a palm. Back by the coastal inlet, seven Snowy Egrets, a Cocoi Heron and two Brown Pelicans were present, along with half a dozen Portuguese Man O' War cnidarians. The egrets were busy together, looking for and catching things coming in on the tide. The pelicans were busy preening their breast feathers and wings with their long bills. After we had continued on a quarter of a mile, we quickly did a U-turn as a rare Rufous Crab Hawk was seen – globally it is a near-threatened species. As we stopped by a crab bar, the bird was perched in a tree - its warm cream-brown plumage just visible in rainy light. Further along the road, we stopped to view three Crested Caracaras - one very close on a post. They are very localised in Trinidad so these were good sightings. A Savannah Hawk was nearby, splaying its wings in the rain.

On the way back we stopped at a tyre shop for Dave to get his tyre properly fixed and then headed back via the research station, for our rum punches. While stopped, some parrotlets were calling from the trees and a few male Yellow Warblers were feeding in the foliage, like Chiffchaffs. One final bird before we arrived back at The Asa Wright Centre was a Jackdaw-sized Ringed Kingfisher on wires by a bridge – it was huge. We could only stop briefly as we had lots of traffic behind us. We got back at 6.15pm, in time to refresh ready for dinner at 7pm and then do the checklist.

Day 7

Saturday 12th March

Free Day - early extra trip to look for Trinidad Piping Guan

Hot and humid. Six of the group and Ed met Roodal at 5.30am for an extra trip for a small fee each. We headed 15 minutes' drive away up the Blanchisseuse Road to look for the critically endangered Trinidad Piping Guan. We stopped at the Morne Bleu Radio Station where a little mist was forming around the mast. The bright lights had attracted tens of moths including an impressive range of hawk-moths. A Cocoa Woodcreeper was attempting to swallow a large cicada. At least two Scaled Pigeons were calling and showing together on electricity wires. Tanagers and Bananaquits were all over the mast, looking for such insects as an easy breakfast. We wandered down the lane into the woods a little, where a woodpecker was drumming and Bananaquits were squealing. As time closed towards 6.30am, we came back out of the trees and, as we began to wander up the lane, Roodal called out - an impressive, vulture-size piping guan had just flown onto a Bois Canot tree out in the open. We watched him for 36 minutes to be precise (with the help of Pete's GPS), his plumage shining in the morning sunshine. He quietly sang - a delicate whistle. What a bird - a shiny black bill tip with blue skin covering the rest, white facial skin and slicked-back white feathers on the crown that looked as though they had been combed back with gel. His wing coverts were white with black dots and, through the scope, we could even see the contact between his older browner wing and tail feathers and his brand new black ones. He also had red legs to suit. After looking out across his territory, he flew over our heads revealing his long finger-like primary feathers. He perched above in another tree before flying five minutes later into the forest. Just as we left a House Wren was singing from a light.

We couldn't believe our luck. As we headed back up the vehicle, we took another look at the moths, the lichen-clad fencing, a Harlequin Beetle and a Hercules Beetle. Nearby a Squirrel Cuckoo was sunning itself in a tree - through the scope we could see all its detail including, as accurately described by Pete, as current-red eyes.

We arrived back at 8am and joined the others for breakfast. For the rest of the day, everyone was able to relax, enjoy their own walks and watch the birds from the veranda. Hummingbirds, bellbirds, manakins, toucan, antshrikes and much more were enjoyed throughout the day. Reg even managed to photograph a female rice rat or climbing rat picking her tiny baby up from the road and taking it to safety. We took advantage of the tea and cake at 4pm; followed by rum punches at 6pm and then the checklist and dinner at 7pm. Just after the checklist at 6.15pm, bats and nighthawks began foraging. By 6.30pm, up to half a dozen nighthawks were flying right in front of us, manoeuvring to catch insects amongst tens of bats. Occasionally they called: a whimpering sound. A large, bright green flatid leaf bug joined in the fun and joined us on the veranda - they resemble in a leaf in shape and texture.

At 8pm, we did one final night walk with Elsa, and found lots again including a male Variegated Gecko, three land crabs, two Trinidad Chevron Tarantulas (one down a pipe and another on bamboo), harvestmen, crickets, a bush cricket, a velvet worm and four flat worms. Elsa also pointed out the calls of a Lesser Antillean Rubber Frog.

Day 8

Sunday 13th March

Waterloo and Caroni

Very hot. Like in the UK, there is a definite structure to the dawn chorus from around 5.30am onwards. The Ferruginous Pygmy Owl usually kicks it off (perhaps even from 5am) followed by the Cocoa Thrush, nighthawk and, today, the Spectacled Owl. As the light increases the odd Tropical Kingbird may start calling followed by the oropendola. And by 6am the squeaky Bananaquits and some of the tanagers are singing away. The occasional whirr of wings announces the presence of the first hummingbirds. The Orange-winged Amazons then begin to come out of roost and squawk overhead as they fly to their feeding grounds for the day. Within 40 minutes, the outdoors has gone from being relatively quiet, aside from some insects and frogs, to a cacophony of birdsong and calls.

This morning, after the dawn chorus and some birding on the veranda, we had breakfast at 7.30am and met Dave and our driver Mohan. The veranda bird watching revealed the usual selection of birdlife, including the bellbird in his usual perch, plus a Black-tailed Tityra and an Olive-backed Woodpecker. Headed down the lane, we stopped half way to try for the Black-faced Antthrush that we had missed on Tuesday. As we walked along, Dave pointed out a pair of Olive-sided Flycatchers that were building a nest hanging from a branch over the road. With some persistence and walking just into the trees, we finally saw a male - he wasn't easy to see but every so often walked into an opening. Although completely unrelated, he looked and walked around like a rail, singing as he went, with a dark face, russet bottom and dipper-like profile. As we continued on down the road towards Arima, we stopped to watch a beautiful White Hawk drifting over - despite their name they have dark wings and tail. Another was perched, giving lovely views - the white head is delicately streaked grey and the black wings are flecked with white dots and lines. Through the scope you could see that the secondary feathers are not jet-black but banded black and very dark grey.

On the way to Waterloo, we stopped at some extensive fields with some marshland. This area, part of the Caroni Plains, used to be former sugar plantations until the industry declined. Three Striated Herons, a jacana and a pair of White-headed Marsh Tyrants were nesting. A stunning light-phase male Long-winged Harrier flew towards us and straight over heading towards a female in the longer reedy grasses. Another dark-phase male was sitting at the back of the closest field. Cattle Egrets were busy foraging and panting in the heat by the side of the road and an Osprey flew overhead near the airport.

Waterloo Mud flats and Brickfield Fishing Centre

We parked up by the small fishing port and walked across some mounds of clay to look across the mud flats. Thousands (3,000) of Laughing Gulls were calling, sounding like laughter. Amongst them were a few flocks of up to 200 Black Skimmers and one single Lesser Black-backed Gull. At least four Royal Terns were also resting on a mud spit with gulls. Out on the mud and amongst the mangroves was a plethora of waders and egrets including Grey Plover (4+), Southern Lapwings, Whimbrel (6+), Willet (6+), Western Sandpipers (100+), Semipalmated Plover, Greater Yellowlegs (6+), a Black-necked Stilt, Tricoloured Heron (3+), tens of Little Blue Herons (both white and blue phases), two Yellow-crowned Night Herons, Snowy Egrets, a few Great Egrets, a Great Blue Heron dwarfing everything else and Neotropical Cormorants (3+). In the distance we could see Large-billed Terns perched on wooden posts so we drove round to the Waterloo Temple to see them closer - at least ten were flying around with contrasting white and grey wings like a Sabine's Gull. Here we had five Ruddy Turnstones and continued views of the waders and egrets. Meanwhile, a Hindu funeral was taking place and the coffin being placed into a wooden structure for cremation. The Waterloo Temple is an octagonal Hindu temple surrounded by the Gulf of Paria at high tide. It is used for weddings, funerals and *puja* ceremonies - prayers for blessing. June also found us various sizes of Four-eyed Fish swimming in the shallows at the first site.

We stopped for lunch at Carli Bay, a grassy picnic area with trees by the coast. Tuna bake was the dish of the day with delicious steamed pak choi and carrots plus salad. Two Rufous-browed Peppershrikes were singing - one was seen by a few but gave others the slip. But as we left, we had nice views of this red-masked bird. A flock of Brown Pelicans was sitting on the sea too. As we moved to a different part of the site, June spotted a Yellow Warbler. Across the way, we stopped by the river where two Spotted Sandpipers flew past and a Stripe-headed Woodcreeper came close by. It was a hot humid day - some of us continued back to where we lunch to see two Saffron finches while at least two Ospreys flew overhead. Some that stayed by the maxi taxis spotted a Brown-crested Flycatcher that Dave had heard earlier. As we left, a few Green-rumped Parrotlets were flying into the bushes and at least 20 Ruddy Ground Doves were feeding on the ground amongst ornamental plants.

We travelled on for half an hour or more to Caroni Swamp, stopping briefly on the highway to see over 20 Black-necked Stilts resting on a pool - these would be passing through on migration. Six Neotropical Cormorants flew overhead.

Caroni Swamp

A little further along we turned off to Caroni Swamp - at 3pm it was still very hot and sunny. We had some time to watch a small group of immature Masked Cardinals - a few with red heads. A male Green-throated Mango was also perched, hopping between a few favorite branches, allowing for prolonged views. We were on the edge

of the 40 square kilometers of mangroves and marshes that border the Gulf of Paria. Water flows down to the sea through the Caroni and Madame Espagnole rivers.

At 3.30pm, we drove back down to the road to the jetty for our boat trip through the mangroves to see Scarlet Ibises, the national bird of Trinidad. We met our skipper, Lester, whose father and grandfather set up the boat business and originally oversaw the Scarlet Ibis becoming protected here. The area was protected as the Caroni Swamp Wildlife Sanctuary in 1936.

We spent almost three hours on our trip, spotting the crabs, oysters and mussels amongst the roots of the Red and Black Mangroves. White Mangroves are also here but further inland. The Red Mangroves have lots of roots growing out and down from the trees. The Black Mangroves, on the other hand, have lots of roots pointing up and help to desalinate the water. Along the first part of our journey, Four-eyed Fish were swimming.

Throughout our journey, through the mangroves overhanging the channels, we saw over 50 Spotted Sandpipers, some developing their breeding plumage of spots. A group of 20 of these were together at roost. About 30 - 40 Short-tailed Swifts were feeding overhead. As we sailed along, we saw a very cryptic, nocturnal Boat-billed Heron, a few American Redstarts (and others heard), heard several Yellow-bellied Flycatchers and Northern Waterthrushes, and watched a Straight-billed Woodpecker - this is much larger than the Streak-headed, with russet-brown plumage and distinctive scale-like markings around its head and neck. Up in the trees, Lester spotted four Trinidad Tree Boas and Stephen spotted another. The first two were close to each other and you could just make out their heads entwined with their tails. Another mammal highlight was a furry ball of Silky Anteater, asleep in a tree.

Over 30 Little Blue Herons were seen in ones and twos along the way, together with small numbers of Scarlet Ibises. At one point, 20 ibises flew up from within the mangroves. We came into a large, open, shallow expanse of water - some blue herons were on the edge. Three Greater Anis flew across the pool - a target species for today. Two Greater Yellowlegs flew across also, and seven Orange-winged Amazons flew overhead.

We entered into the main lake where thousands of egrets come to roost each night. An Anhinga dropped out of the trees and dived straight into the water. We headed round to our stopping position looking out across to a mangrove island where the egrets and ibises come. At 5.20pm, we stopped for rum and cake and then, as Lester had suggested, the first ibises appeared. The evening sunshine was perfect, illuminating these bright pink wonders as they flew across the landscape with the Northern Range and a rainbow as a backdrop. Flocks containing tens or hundreds of birds flew across and into the island's trees. Occasionally, just single bird flew across. At the same time, small flocks of Snowy Egrets and Tricoloured Egrets flew towards the island and disappeared into the trees. Most of the ibises stayed on the outer branches - the trees looked like holly bushes! Amongst the flocks, darker, greyer birds were flying - these were juvenile birds. The pink of the adults was spectacular and dazzling - the colour is derived from beta-carotene which the birds get from feeding on crabs and shrimps around the mangroves and mud flats. By 6pm, we had witnessed over 1000 ibises coming in to roost, now spread all around the island. We headed off while it was still light, spotting a Yellow-crowned Night Heron overhead, and entered back into the mangrove channels. Lester put a spotlight on two Proboscis Bats clinging to a tree looking downwards. Another three were on another tree. As the light began to fade, tens of bats were flying low over the water - these were a new species for us: the Lesser White-lined Bats. It was almost

dark by the time we got back to the maxi taxis and we headed back to the Asa Wright Centre just in time for dinner, after a long but memorable day.

Day 9

Monday 14th March

Transfer to Tobago

Very hot. We had breakfast from 5.45 - 6am and, with our luggage boarded, we headed with Dave and Roodal to the airport at 6.30am after a vote of thanks by Graham. Two Yellow-headed Caracaras were perched on a lamp-post as we entered the airport grounds. Lots of Carib Grackles and Tropical Kingbirds were seen on the way. We arrived at 7.15am and had plenty of time to check in and do the checklist. We were 10 minutes ahead of schedule and flew in a twin-propeller plane over the Northern Range, across the sea and down into Tobago. Gladwyn, our guide, met us in his bus once we were through arrivals, and we headed straight to the beach, Swallows Beach. We were looking out to a beautiful tropical sandy beach, some people swimming nearby. In front of us, two or three Cayenne Terns were flying round and diving for fish in the shallows. On a moored boat, there was a mix of Laughing Gulls and Cabot's Terns. Various Brown Pelicans were perched on boats, or flying low over the sea before twisting and diving for fish, usually accompanied by a few Laughing Gulls trying to grab an easy takeaway. A little further along the road we stopped again - beyond the fishermen preparing fish outdoors we looked along the beach seeing a few hundred Laughing Gulls and 20 Ruddy Turnstones running amongst them. As the turnstones rested up, four Sanderlings joined them. In a few months' time both species will be breeding in Greenland or Alaska. There was also one gull rare for here - an adult Black-headed Gull in summer plumage. Moored boats were covered in gulls and pelicans. There was a good chance to compare the adult and juvenile pelicans - the adults with more contrasting yellow, white and black plumage. There were lots of opportunities to watch them foraging, holding their bill close as they let the water out before swallowing their prey. Before we left, Gladwyn pointed out a female Red-crowned Woodpecker poking her head out of a hole in a palm tree. Her head was a plain sandy colour.

We headed on to the suburbs of Bon Accord which back onto Black Mangroves of Bon Accord Lagoon. Caribbean Martins were perched on the electricity wires and a very obliging Tropical Kingbird allowed very close photos. Gladwyn pointed out the large caterpillars of the Frangipani Hawk-moth - they had stripped the Frangipani bushes in people's gardens. We headed to the edge of the mangrove swamp; looking through the trees, we could just about see through to an open-water channel where four Blue-winged Teal were either on a log or on the water, and a pair of White-cheeked Pintail sailed past but were more difficult to see. A Tegu Lizard was also seen. Heading back along the road in the bus, a Common Ground Lizard, a Monarch Butterfly and Black-faced Grassquits were seen.

We stopped by the sewage ponds, green vegetated pools at the end of the suburban road. Here there was a plethora of birdlife including a Great Blue Heron, a Great Egret, a Cattle Egret and a Little Egret all together by the first pool. Three Anhingas were resting on the bank while a Spotted Sandpiper and a resting Lesser Yellowlegs were on the concrete division. The next pool was full of lilies and grasses, and revealed a mix of Common Gallinules, the odd Purple Gallinule, a secretive American Coot, a Glossy Ibis, two Least Sandpipers and two Least Grebes. Two Black-bellied Whistling Ducks and a White-cheeked Pintail were also hiding in the grasses. Overhead a few Short-tailed Swifts were flying while Barn Swallows swooped low over the pool. We continued on and drove slowly along country lanes adjacent to watery ditches. One ditch revealed two separate Wilson's Snipes, a Great Egret and an incredibly tame juvenile Green Heron looking for food amongst the

rubbish. From here, we could see into another lily pool with Common Gallinule, Wattled Jacana and Purple Gallinule, all in line with each other. In the bush, a pair of Brown-crested Flycatchers and a Scrub Greenlet allowed close views. The next set of ditches revealed three Lesser Yellowlegs, including one with a Greater Yellowlegs allowing excellent comparison of size and colour. The Greater was more like a Greenshank, with a longer bill, and the Lesser more like a Redshank, with a shorter, thinner bill. There were also a few Spotted Sandpipers, a few Solitary Sandpipers and a Short-billed Dowitcher. One of each species was together at one occasion, allowing for close comparison. Southern Lapwings, a Yellow-crowned Night Heron, a Tricoloured Egret, a few Little Blue Egrets and a Grey Kingbird were also seen. Before we left the wilder parts of this expanding town, we stopped by some trees. Gladwyn showed us a bird that took him some time to find on his days off - a sleeping Common Potoo that looked like an extension of the dead trees broken branch. Occasionally it moved its head. Its eyes were closed and its cryptic plumage was remarkable. From below you could see its bristly feathers surrounding its beak and throat.

We stopped for some lunch and drinks at Store Bay Beach facilities where Carib Grackles, Eared Doves, White-tipped Doves and a Spectacled Thrush were seen. On a moored boat, Sandwich Terns, a Cayenne Tern and a few Laughing Gulls were resting up. Some of us tried chicken and dumplings, while a few had crab and dumplings.

Before we set off towards the other end of the island and our hotel, we stopped for 20 minutes at the Magdalena Grand Hotel (formerly the Hilton) and the Tobago Plantation. We looked out across an open lake and mowed lawns. With some time, we saw a few Anhingas, a Great Egret, a small number of Snowy Egrets, a few Small Blue Herons, a Black-crowned Night Heron, Green Heron, Common Gallinules, Neotropical Cormorants, a Belted Kingfisher and an Osprey. We were also on a roll with reptiles, with four Spectacled Caimans - three in the water showing their heads and one under trees on the bank. Gladwyn also found a large male Green Iguana, sunning itself on the island where the cormorants and some egrets were hanging out.

We spent the next hour following the scenic coastline, looking across bays and the sea in one direction and the forested mountains in the other. We stopped briefly at one beach where lots of Laughing Gulls were on the sand with a Spotted Sandpiper, while on a jetty a dozen Royal Terns and the odd pelican were resting up.

As we came into Speyside, on the east side of Tobago, Gladwyn pointed out the two islands, the smaller Goat Island and the larger Little Tobago island both covered in trees. We arrived at the Blue Waters Inn at 4.15pm and were taken to our rooms - we had a few hours to relax before dinner at 7pm. Our rooms looked out onto the Caribbean beach, with the waves lapping only 15 metres away.

Day 10

Tuesday 15th March

Tobago Rain Forest, Gilpin Trace

Pleasantly warm in the mountains - one heavy shower. The Rufous-vented Chachalacas started calling at 5.45am, reinforcing their Greek-derived name which means pullet or domestic hen. We had a buffet breakfast at 7.30am, ranging from breads to rolled smoked salmon and a choice of cooked eggs. We met Gladwyn at 8.30am, after a little delay, and headed up to 1200 feet into the Northern Ridge Rainforest Reserve via Roxborough. We stopped on one hill looking into the trees and watched a Yellow-bellied Elaenia making a nest. A Red-tailed Squirrel was climbing down a tree and various other birds including chachalacas, Tropical Kingbirds, Shiny Cowbirds and

Blue-grey Tanagers were seen. Meanwhile, a Black-throated Mango was sitting on her nest of young which was superbly camouflaged on a tree branch: it just looked part of it, where a branch had broken off and weathered. A pair of Rufous-tailed Jacamars was resting on branches allowing for a nice contrast between the two sexes. Brown-crested Flycatcher and a Gold-Rim Swallowtail also showed.

A little further up the road, we stopped by mature trees where a Trinidad Motmot, a female Collared Trogon and a jacamar were all nearby. Some trees were fruiting with little red berries and, as we drive further and came out into the open, we were looking down onto some fruiting trees. An olive-morph Fuscous Flycatcher was resting down low. With a little time and looking through the gaps, we managed to see a male Blue-backed Manakin, at least three Yellow-legged Thrushes, at least two White-necked Thrushes and Tropical Kingbirds. The Yellow-legged Thrushes look exactly like a Blackbird but have yellow legs and have a very different call and song. Two Broad-winged Hawks flew overhead. Around the corner, three Giant Cowbirds were foraging and near an oropendola colony, no doubt staking out nests into which they would lay their eggs.

We stopped at the facilities at the Bloody Bay lookout where Brothers Rocks and, further out, Sisters Rocks were providing scenic views - some saw a brief Streaked Flycatcher. We then headed back down the road and spent the rest of the morning walking along the famous Gilpin Trace, a forest walk that runs alongside a stream and mature tropical rainforest. This is part of the Tobago Rainforest Reserve, part of the Crown Reserve since 1776.

As we began to enter the trace (local word for road or street that is a dirt track, in this case a forest walk), a Yellow-legged Thrush was feeding in another fruiting tree. A Stripe-breasted Spinetail was calling 'keep going' but remained elusive. A White-necked Thrush was singing its repetitive song with Blackbird tones throughout our walk. A Plain-brown Woodcreeper, a bird some had missed in Trinidad, flew to a tree with nest material before perching vertically on a young sapling. As we went round the corner, Gladwyn quietly showed us a female White-tailed Sabrewing, an uncommon resident hummingbird and globally near-threatened. Her shiny, iridescent green head was sticking out of the delicate nest. A Rufous-breasted Wren was singing nearby and, a little further along, two were foraging amongst the leaves and ground shrubbery. Gladwyn then showed us the nest of a Rufous-breasted Hermit - it was hanging from a palm frond and looked more like a cone-shaped mass of webbing and debris, no doubt to fool predators. The female's tail and wings could be seen sticking out. Nearby, a female sabrewing was sunning herself, spreading her head and wings at funny angles to catch the heat. As we continued on, both Cocoa and Olivaceous Woodcreepers were calling, and another Plain-brown Woodcreeper perched in the sunshine, showing off its rich red-brown tail. Another female sabrewing was bathing in the stream, hovering and then dipping every few seconds before perching nearby to preen. Two Yellow-legged Thrushes sang in the background. We stopped to watch a Grey-throated Leaf-tosser visiting a nest with a moth or butterfly before perching in the shadows. Two more species of hummingbirds' nests were found - that of a Copper-rumped with no-one in residence, and another of a White-necked Jacobin with the female sitting on her nest. It was lovely to see these birds away from feeders and in the forest carrying on with their breeding behaviour. As we turned back and retraced our steps, a Stripe-breasted Spinetail was spotted amongst the leaf litter. With rufous shoulders and a dark body it resembled the leaves. The large nest of this type of ovenbird was also pointed out. At least three others were heard, along with a Scrub Greenlet and a Blue-backed Manakin (whose call resembles beach pebbles being hit together). A female sabrewing was attacking a motmot which eventually flew across the stream - motmots will eat the eggs and chicks of the sabrewing. As we left the forest, a Barred Antshrike was also calling and we had a close view of a Yellow-legged Thrush that looked even more like a male Blackbird!

We left the site at 12.45pm, and headed back to the facilities at Bloody Bay lookout where we had our packed sandwiches, fruit and yogurts. As we got off the bus, there were very close Southern Lapwings - Reg pointed out the Spurs on each wing. As we travelled back down hill, a Golden-olive Woodpecker and two Venezuelan Flycatchers were also briefly seen. Other birds included White-vented Pigeon, Eared Dove, cowbirds, oropendolas and the odd motmot and jacamar.

Before getting back to the hotel, we stopped at a viewpoint in Speyside, looking out across Tyrrel's Bay towards Goat Island and Little Tobago Island. A beautiful Great Black Hawk flew across in the sunshine showing its yellow cere, round the beak, and yellow talons, black body and white tail band. A few Green-rumped Parrotlets flew past and three Smooth-billed Anis were in nearby shrubs.

We arrived back at 3pm, giving everyone the opportunity to relax, swim, snooze and enjoy the afternoon. Chachalacas were in the nearby trees and often came down to the paths outside our rooms. Turnstones and a Spotted Sandpiper were feeding on the beach finding food amongst the Sargassum Weed.

After the checklist and dinner at 7pm, we headed for bed ready for another day in the forest.

Day 11

Wednesday 16th March

Northern Ridge Forest, Spring Trace

More overcast; breezy; very warm. We set out today at 8.15am back up into the forest mountains; it was a sunny day but cloudier than it had been. On our way up to the Bloody Bay lookout, we saw a pair of Streaked Flycatchers, two different Brown-crested Flycatcher, three Yellow-bellied Elaenias (two were a pair from yesterday, building a nest), four jacamas and a Golden-olive Woodpecker. At one stop, two high-flying Broad-winged Hawks soared overhead. A third came and landed in a tree not too far away and we got lovely views of this Common Buzzard-like bird. A Great Black Hawk also flew high overhead. Another didn't escape so easily and was being harassed by a Peregrine. The Peregrine then chased some Orange-winged Amazons but missed catching any! Nicky spotted our first manakin of the day. At the fruiting tree site from yesterday, at least two Blue-backed Manakins were busy picking berries. They perched for longer moments giving better views compared to yesterday. Others were heard in the same trees. They are stunning jet-black birds with a bright red crown, a bright blue back and yellow legs.

After a toilet stop at the Bloody Bay lookout, we headed back down to begin our walk along the Spring Trace at 10.30. We spent a few hours walking slowly through the forest. It was very quiet at first but, in the second half, birds became more active. Two Golden-olive Woodpeckers were feeding on ripe fruit in a tree known as Parrot Apples - the fruit open up segments revealing a tasty snack inside for birds. A Cocoa Woodcreeper, a leaf-tosser, a motmot and a jacamar were all seen briefly, while Red-eyed Vireo, Ochre-bellied Flycatcher, Red-rumped Woodpecker, Olivaceous Woodcreeper, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher and Red-legged Honeycreeper were all heard. It turned out to be a manakin day, and a lot of the walk involved hearing or seeing Blue-backed Manakins, usually fleetingly but enough to see their colours. We heard many but occasionally a male came close and flitted between the trees. We then heard the frog-like squeaks of males lekking - jumping around each other like rutting deer. Although difficult to see, we did happen upon a lek as three males descended to the forest floor and began lekking - between the trees and under-storey, we could just make out what was happening. Occasionally, a green female with orange-pink legs was also on the edge of the walkway, looking for a potential mate. The bright

colours of the males, the red crown and the bright blue back, appear brighter to other males and on-looking females in the shadows of the forest floor – this is all part of visual trickery and how birds (and humans) perceive contrasts. The bright colours probably help show females how healthy a male bird is and who might be the better individual to mate with.

Continuing on, we saw Fuscous Flycatcher, a pair of Plain Antvireos (the female caught a caterpillar and hit it many times against a branch) and a male Collared Trogon. A female White-tailed Sabrewing sat on a branch, allowing for prolonged views, and another was seen in flight. More birds were calling, including Yellow-legged Thrush, White-necked Thrush, Golden-olive Woodpecker and Venezuelan Flycatcher. As we came out of the forest, a Copper-rumped Hummingbird was perched and, further down the road towards the bus, a male Ruby-topaz Hummingbird was sitting out.

We stopped for lunch at 1pm, back at the facilities overlooking Bloody Bay; a male Blue-backed Manakin was in the adjacent trees. Pete had earlier found a male Yellow-legged Thrush that had been hit by a car. Up close, we could see it was smaller than a Blackbird and the yellow legs were striking.

At 1.30pm, we headed down the mountains, stopping for a short walk down the road amongst the trees seeing low-flying Grey-rumped Swifts, a motmot, oropendolas and a pair of Violaceous Euphonias. Feeling tired and snoozy, we headed back down further and arrived back at the hotel for 2.45pm, in time for some sunbathing, beers and a well-earned rest. The warm easterly wind was bringing lots of Sargassum Weed onto the beach - no doubt bringing welcome food for the Turnstones. The chachalacas were hanging around outside the beach rooms hoping for some titbits.

We met again for the checklist and a buffet dinner at 7pm - a mixed curry-style buffet but with milder dishes for those less partial to spicy foods.

Day 12

Thursday 17th March

Little Tobago Island

Very hot and sunny; cloudier later on. The first House Wren and Bananaquits began singing at 4.15am, stimulated by the hotel's outside lights. We met for breakfast at 7.30am before meeting our wildlife guide Zolania or 'Z' at 8.30am and boarded Frank's Glass-bottomed Boat, his father's boat and business. A small film crew also joined us - they were filming pieces to camera and links for a local current affairs programme, 'Let's Talk Tobago', and included us birdwatching in the background.

As we headed out, we could see underwater through the glass bottom, enjoying the sandy sea bottom, the reefs and the fishes. Brown Boobies flew past low and we stopped to view a few adults and juveniles sitting on the rocks.

We left the boat and Z introduced the island and its background to us. The island is one mile long and we were heading up to 230 feet (70m) above sea level to view the seabirds living here. The island is also known as the 'Bird of Paradise Island' after the ornithologist Sir William Ingram, who lived here, brought 24 Greater Birds-of-paradise from Aru Island in Papua New Guinea, to help with their conservation after numbers were declining due to their use in fashion (the feathers were used in hats and other wear). Eventually, after his death and the

island being handed back to the country as a reserve after his son took care of it for a few years, the birds-of-paradise died out, no thanks to Hurricane Flora in 1963. The devastating destruction saw the death of lots of the birds; the last few survived until 1970. The island continues to be an uninhabited bird reserve with large numbers of seabirds nesting here, from boobies to shearwaters.

We climbed up the steps, seeing a few Red-eyed Vireos along the way - these are known as Chivy Vireos here as they are a specific subspecies with a dark eye rather than red. Mockingbirds and Blue-grey Tanagers were both common. A rather special bird was a Scaly-naped Pigeon, more usually seen on the Greater and Lesser Antillean Islands. A few have been living on the island and mainland for the past ten years. White-vented Pigeons and White-tipped Doves were also seen. Along the walk, thick bamboo stems had been converted into water troughs for the birds, attracting them down from the trees – Stephen topped a few up on the way back. Yellow-bellied Eleanias, Shiny Cowbird and Brown-crested Flycatcher were also seen along the way. The views from the island looked out towards our hotel and the highlands above, in particular Pigeon Peak at 1870 feet (576m). Z also showed us a few plants including an orchid with a flower that, at the right angle, looks like Virgin Mary at the Altar (and it does!). He also showed us the Bird's Nest Anthurium, an epiphytic plant that wraps its roots right round the trees harmoniously, and cotton shrubs that remain from the former cotton plantation days here.

We made it to the main viewing point where we looked out towards the sea, vegetated cliffs of Starwood and, in the distance, St Giles Islands. In front of us, Red-billed Tropicbirds flew around, some soaring close to the viewpoint. Further away (scope views) on two separate tree-covered cliffs/rocky areas, Red-footed Boobies were nesting, both the white-tailed and white morph - their young were quite large but still white and fluffy, only just growing their main body feathers. These boobies make nests in the trees on the cliffs while Brown Boobies, fewer in number, were nesting on more exposed cliff areas. Overhead an Osprey was flying with a large fish - we watched it tackling the fish and pecking down to it. Meanwhile, lots of Magnificent Frigatebirds were hawking the skies and we watched a few together, chasing and grounding a tropicbird on to the sea quite brutally, as they tossed the bird upside down to force it to regurgitate its food - behaviour known as kleptoparasitism. Meanwhile, feet away, an eight-week old tropicbird chick, now a fully feathered juvenile, had shuffled from its nearby nest and headed towards us. As it shuffled around further, it became clear the bird wanted to fledge but couldn't due to the vegetation being too thick (and spiny). With a little helping hand from Z, the bird was released into the air and made its first maiden flight out to sea - we watched it fly away into the distance. Z had been watching this bird for its whole life and had noticed its parents hadn't visited yesterday - no doubt forcing the bird to leave its nest and forage for itself. Down a little walkway away from the viewpoint, we were shown a week-old, fluffy baby tropicbird in the nest with one of its parents - we were able to watch them both only five or six metres away.

We left the birds and headed up and then down a walkway, looking for nightjars but none were found so we headed back down the paths back to the boat, passing a few Audubon Shearwater nests with tell-tale white droppings outside. Parents or chicks may be inside and visiting adults return after dark. Z has been involved with some research on the shearwaters – a number were tagged with GPS tags a few years ago. Sadly, many of most of the tags failed in this instance, but it is thought the shearwaters winter out in the middle of the Atlantic between the Caribbean and Africa.

We sailed back in a different glass-bottomed boat over the edge of the Japanese Gardens coral reef, spotting all sorts of fishes from Blue Tangs to parrotfish alongside fan coral, brain coral and yellow tube sponge.

Arriving back at 12.15pm, we had delicious lunches at 1pm - many opted for the scrumptious, fresh salads which really were good: crunchy and tasty. And then everyone had a free afternoon to relax. Some went snorkeling or viewing a reef by boat, close to Goat Island. Alongside the corals and sponges, lots more life was seen, including the exquisite Queen Angelfish and Princess Parrotfish, alongside butterflyfishes, Caribbean Reef Squids, Trumpetfish, Smooth Trunkfish, various species of stripy grunts and much more. Above, water tropicbirds were flying past, some visiting nests on Goat Island. And frigatebirds drifted overhead, sometimes coming very close - especially when Ed threw some small pieces of chicken to attract them closer. Meanwhile, back on the beach eight Turnstones were providing very close entertainment as they found food amongst the washed up Sargassum Seaweed within feet of people, and fed on tiny bits of bread (or smoked salmon!) out of the hand.

We met again for our last evening meal together at 7pm and headed for bed; it's a casual morning ahead.

Day 13

Friday 18th March

Caribbean side of the island; evening departure via Antigua

Overcast with wind and rain; very warm and humid. After a windy night, we awoke to a casual morning of breakfast, packing, swimming and relaxing. It was a cloudy and windy day, perhaps getting us back into the swing of the British weather. But it was still very warm. Lots of frigatebirds were drifting overhead and the usual nine Ruddy Turnstones were on the beach at breakfast and came onto the wall outside the beach rooms as people came out, in hope of some food. They were just feet away. The usual Spotted Sandpiper was feeding on the beach and, further round the corner, a Belted Kingfisher was spending the morning fishing. The wind got stronger as the morning went on and led to a very heavy rain shower across the bay.

We checked out at 11.30am, and met Gladwyn at midday to pack the bus and head down the road to Jemma's Treehouse restaurant for lunch. The rain had stopped for now and the sun was shining hot. We enjoyed a selection of local accompanying dishes with our chicken or fish, from green lentils to cassava bake with a delicious, crisp cheese topping. Out of the windows, we could see a juvenile Brown Pelican resting on a boat with a few Laughing Gulls, while a Tropical Mockingbird came to greet us at the tables. Outside, two Grey Kingbirds and a few Carib Grackles were calling.

After lunch, we spent the afternoon exploring the northern Caribbean coastline road. This north-east side of the island is covered in forest and is more sparsely populated. Another huge weather front came in from the east and meant our drive into the Tobago Forest Reserve was rather wet and misty but atmospheric. We passed familiar sites we had visited earlier in the week across the Roxborough-Parlatuvier Road, and continued on into new territory. We stopped to look out across various picturesque bays with white, coral sand and palm trees, including Parlatuvier Bay, the beautiful, remote beach of Englishman's Bay and drove on through the fishing village of Castara before crossing back towards Scarborough and on to the airport, arriving around 4pm. Looking down towards the bays, we spotted the odd Brown Pelican, Laughing Gulls, a Royal Tern and White-winged Swallows. In Castara Bay, a few fishermen were arriving back in their boats, known as pirogues. Along the journey, we encountered a couple of groups of Smooth-billed Anis and two groups of three and eight Giant Cowbirds respectively. Other birds included a Yellow-headed Caracara, Orange-winged Amazons, many Tropical Mockingbirds, Ruddy Ground Dove, Eared Doves, White-vented Pigeons, and frigatebirds drifting over land and the main road.

We passed through security in good time, with a thorough check of all our camera kit and optics, and watched our BA flight arrive and unload. We left around 7pm, 15 minutes early, on the 672-mile journey to Antigua which took about an hour. We passed over St Lucia, Martinique, Guadeloupe and into Antigua, arriving at 8pm.

Day 14

Saturday 19th March

Arrival at Gatwick

We picked up many more passengers at Antigua, filling up the plane, before heading onto Gatwick at 9.45pm, arriving the next morning at 9.45am UK time. It was overcast and cold but, with a quick arrival at the gate and luggage arriving at baggage retrieval, we said our goodbyes and were soon on our way to different parts of the UK and home.

Receive our e-newsletter

Join the Naturetrek e-mailing list and be the first to hear about new tours, additional departures and new dates, tour reports and special offers. Visit www.naturetrek.co.uk to sign up.

Naturetrek Facebook

We are delighted to launch the Naturetrek Facebook page so that participants of Naturetrek tours can remain in touch after the holiday and share photos, comments and future travel plans.

Setting up a personal profile at www.facebook.com is quick, free and easy. The [Naturetrek Facebook page](#) is now live; do please pay us a visit!



Purple Honeycreeper



Greater White-lined Sac-wing Bat

Species Lists

Birds (✓ = recorded but not counted; H = heard only)

	Common name	Scientific name	March														
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
1	Little Tinamou	<i>Crypturellus soui</i>					H					H					
2	Black-bellied Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna autumnalis</i>							5			2					
3	White-cheeked Pintail	<i>Anas bahamensis</i>										3					
4	Blue-winged Teal	<i>Anas discors</i>										4					
5	Least Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus dominicus</i>										2					
6	Red-billed Tropicbird	<i>Phaethon aethereus</i>											50	50	50		
7	Brown Pelican	<i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>							2		50	30		1	2		
8	Red-footed Booby	<i>Sula sula</i>												50	50		
9	Brown Booby	<i>Sula leucogaster</i>											1	6	20		
10	Neotropic Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax brasilianus</i>										9	3				
11	Anhinga	<i>Anhinga anhinga</i>										3	6				
12	Magnificent Frigatebird	<i>Fregata magnificens</i>		1		1			5			1	15	20	20	30	50
13	Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>										1	1				
14	Cocoi Heron	<i>Ardea cocoi</i>							1								
15	Great White Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>							6			8	4				
16	Tricoloured Heron	<i>Egretta tricolor</i>										50	1				
17	Little Blue Heron	<i>Egretta caerulea</i>										30	6				
18	Snowy Egret	<i>Egretta thula</i>							7			50	10				
19	Western Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	15			1	10	40				80	15				
20	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>											1				
21	Green Heron	<i>Butorides virescens</i>											8				
22	Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>							2			4					
23	Yellow-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nyctanassa violacea</i>										2	1				
24	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>											1				
25	Rufescent Tiger Heron	<i>Tigrisoma lineatum</i>							1								
26	Pinnated Bittern	<i>Botaurus pinnatus</i>							2			1					
27	Scarlet Ibis	<i>Eudocimus ruber</i>										1000					
28	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>											1				
29	Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>		✓	✓	✓	2	2	✓	✓							

	Common name	Scientific name	March													
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
30	Black Vulture	<i>Coragyps atratus</i>		1	3	100	200	100	✓	✓	✓					
31	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>						1		3	1			1		
32	Pearl Kite	<i>Gampsonyx swainsonii</i>				2										
33	Plumbeous Kite	<i>Ictinia plumbea</i>		2	3					4						
34	Long-winged Harrier	<i>Circus buffoni</i>									3					
35	White Hawk	<i>Leucopternis albicollis</i>		1				1		2						
36	Common Black Hawk	<i>Buteogallus anthracinus</i>			4		1		1	1						
37	Great Black Hawk	<i>Buteogallus urubitinga</i>										1	2			
38	Savanna Hawk	<i>Buteogallus meridionalis</i>				1		3								
39	Grey-lined Hawk	<i>Buteo nitidus</i>				2	2	2								
40	Broad-winged Hawk	<i>Buteo platypterus</i>			2							3				
41	Short-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo brachyurus</i>				1										
42	Zone-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo albonotatus</i>			1	1		1								
43	Rufous Crab Hawk	<i>Buteogallus aequinoctialis</i>						1								
44	Black Hawk-Eagle	<i>Spizaetus tyrannus</i>			1											
45	Ornate Hawk-Eagle	<i>Spizaetus ornatus</i>			1											
46	Yellow-headed Caracara	<i>Milvago chimachima</i>				1		1		1	2				1	
47	Crested Caracara	<i>Caracara cheriway</i>						3								
48	Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>				1	1									
49	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>					1						2			
50	Rufous-vented Chachalaca	<i>Ortalis ruficauda</i>									10	6	10	6		
51	Trinidad Piping Guan	<i>Pipile pipile</i>								1						
52	Limpkin	<i>Aramus guarauna</i>	2					1								
53	American Purple Gallinule	<i>Porphyrio martinica</i>									2					
54	Common Gallinule	<i>Gallinula galeata</i>									20					
55	Wattled Jacana	<i>Jacana jacana</i>						12		1	6					
56	Black-necked Stilt	<i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>								20+						
57	Southern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus chilensis</i>					6	8		10	6	1			2	
58	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>								6						
59	Semipalmated Plover	<i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>								1						
60	Wilson's Snipe	<i>Gallinago delicata</i>						1			2					
61	Short-billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus griseus</i>									1					

	Common name	Scientific name	March														
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
62	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>										6+	1				
63	Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularius</i>							1			50+	4	1	2	1	1
64	Solitary Sandpiper	<i>Tringa solitaria</i>											2				
65	Greater Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>										5+	2				
66	Willet	<i>Tringa semipalmata</i>										6+					
67	Lesser Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa flavipes</i>											5				
68	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>										5	25	5	9	8	9
69	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>											4				
70	Western Sandpiper	<i>Calidris mauri</i>										100+					
71	Least Sandpiper	<i>Calidris minutilla</i>											2				
72	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus graellsii</i>										1					
73	Laughing Gull	<i>Leucophaeus atricilla</i>										3000+	200		1	1	30
74	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>											1				
75	Cabot's Tern	<i>Thalasseus acutiflavus acutiflavus</i>											15				
	Cayenne Tern	<i>T. acutiflavus eurygnathus</i>											8				
76	Large-billed Tern	<i>Phaetusa simplex</i>										10+					
77	Roseate Tern	<i>Sterna dougallii</i>											1				
78	Royal Tern	<i>Thalasseus maximus</i>										4+	15				1
79	Black Skimmer	<i>Rynchops niger</i>										200+					
80	Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	20			15	✓	✓				✓	✓				
81	Scaled Pigeon	<i>Patagioenas speciosa</i>		2						2							
82	Pale-vented Pigeon	<i>Patagioenas cayennensis</i>						2					1	7	6	6	✓
83	Scaly-naped Pigeon	<i>Patagioenas squamosa</i>														1	
84	Eared Dove	<i>Zenaida auriculata</i>											6	2	2		✓
85	Ruddy Ground Dove	<i>Columbina talpacoti</i>			2	2	4	20				50+	6	2	2		1
86	White-tipped Dove	<i>Leptotila verreauxi</i>							1			1	2	6	H	2	1
87	Grey-fronted Dove	<i>Leptotila rufaxilla</i>		H	1	H	2	2	H								
88	Red-bellied Macaw	<i>Orthopsittaca manilata</i>					7										
89	Green-rumped Parrotlet	<i>Forpus passerinus</i>				H	4	4				2+	H	4			
90	Blue-headed Parrot	<i>Pionus menstruus</i>			15												
91	Orange-winged Amazon (Parrot)	<i>Amazona amazonica</i>		80	50	6	20	12	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8	✓		6
92	Little Cuckoo	<i>Coccyzua minuta</i>					1										

	Common name	Scientific name	March														
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
93	Squirrel Cuckoo	<i>Piaya cayana</i>		1	2						1						
94	Greater Ani	<i>Crotophaga major</i>										3					
95	Smooth-billed Ani	<i>Crotophaga ani</i>				10	6	30	1				3				
96	Striped Cuckoo	<i>Tapera naevia</i>							H								
97	Spectacled Owl	<i>Pulsatrix perspicillata trinitatis</i>			H					H	H						
98	Western Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba hellmayri</i>						H									
99	Ferruginous Pygmy Owl	<i>Glaucidium brasilianum</i>		H	H	1	H	H	H	H	H	H					
100	Oilbird	<i>Steatornis caripensis</i>			1			10		H							
101	Common Potoo	<i>Nyctibius griseus</i>						1					1				
102	Short-tailed Nighthawk	<i>Lurocalis semitorquatus</i>		H	2	H	H			6							
103	Pauraque	<i>Nyctidromus albicollis</i>						8									
104	White-tailed Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus cayennensis</i>						6							2		
105	Band-rumped Swift	<i>Chaetura spinicaudus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							
106	Grey-rumped Swift	<i>Chaetura cinereiventris</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					6		
107	Short-tailed Swift	<i>Chaetura brachyura</i>				2	2	4			30+	4					1
108	Fork-tailed Palm Swift	<i>Tachornis squamata</i>						8			✓						
109	Rufous-breasted Hermit	<i>Glaucis hirsutus</i>		1	1	1				1				1			
110	Green Hermit	<i>Phaethornis guy</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1				
111	Little Hermit	<i>Phaethornis longuemareus</i>		1				1		1							
112	White-tailed Sabrewing	<i>Campylopterus ensipennis</i>												5	2		
113	White-necked Jacobin	<i>Florisuga mellivora</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			1			
114	Green-throated Mango	<i>Anthracothorax viridigula</i>										2					
115	Black-throated Mango	<i>Anthracothorax nigricollis</i>		1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1			2			
116	Ruby-topaz Hummingbird	<i>Chrysolampis mosquitos</i>		1				1	1					1	1		
117	Tufted Coquette	<i>Lophornis ornatus</i>		3	2	2	3	2			2						
118	Blue-chinned Sapphire	<i>Chlorestes notata</i>		1	3					1							
119	White-chested Emerald	<i>Amazilia brevirostris</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
120	Copper-rumped Hummingbird	<i>Amazilia tobaci</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				2		
121	Long-billed Starthroat	<i>Heliomaster longirostris</i>		1	1	1				1							
122	Green-backed Trogon	<i>Trogon viridis</i>		1													
123	Guianan Trogon	<i>Trogon violaceus</i>		1	1			2									
124	Collared Trogon	<i>Trogon collaris</i>			1									1	1		

	Common name	Scientific name	March													
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
125	American Pygmy Kingfisher	<i>Chloroceryle aenea</i>							1							
126	Green Kingfisher	<i>Chloroceryle americana</i>							1							
127	Ringed Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle torquata</i>							1							
128	Belted Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle alcyon</i>									1				1	
129	Trinidad Motmot	<i>Momotus momota</i>		1							2	6	3	2		
130	Rufous-tailed Jacamar	<i>Galbula ruficauda</i>			2							4	6			
131	Channel-billed Toucan	<i>Ramphastos vitellinus</i>		2				H			1					
132	Red-crowned Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes rubricapillus</i>										1	1	2	1	
133	Red-rumped Woodpecker	<i>Veniliornis kirkii</i>				2								H		
134	Golden-olive Woodpecker	<i>Colaptes rubiginosus</i>		2	H						1			3		
135	Chestnut Woodpecker	<i>Celeus elegans</i>			2							1				
136	Lineated Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus lineatus</i>		1	1											
137	Crimson-crested Woodpecker	<i>Campephilus melanoleucos</i>				1										
138	Stripe-breasted Spinetail	<i>Synallaxis cinnamomea</i>										1				
139	Yellow-chinned Spinetail	<i>Certhiaxis cinnamomeus</i>							3							
140	Grey-throated Leaf-tosser	<i>Sclerurus albigularis</i>				2					1	1	1			
141	Streaked Xenops	<i>Xenops rutilans</i>			2	H										
142	Plain-brown Woodcreeper	<i>Dendrocincla fuliginosa</i>						1					2			
143	Olivaceous Woodcreeper	<i>Sittasomus griseicapillus</i>										H	H			
144	Cocoa Woodcreeper	<i>Xiphorhynchus susurrans</i>		1	1					1			H	1		
145	Straight-billed Woodcreeper	<i>Dendroplex picus</i>									1					
146	Streak-headed Woodcreeper	<i>Lepidocolaptes souleyetii</i>									1					
147	Great Antshrike	<i>Taraba major</i>		2		2	1									
148	Black-crested Antshrike	<i>Sakesphorus canadensis</i>		H		1		1								
149	Barred Antshrike	<i>Thamnophilus doliatus</i>		1	1	3	2	1	2	H	H	1	H	H		
150	Plain Antwren	<i>Dysithamnus mentalis</i>												2		
151	White-flanked Antwren	<i>Myrmotherula axillaris</i>		1	1											
152	White-fringed Antwren	<i>Formicivora grisea</i>										1			1	
153	Silvered Antbird	<i>Sclateria naevia</i>							H							
154	White-bellied Antbird	<i>Myrmeciza longipes</i>		2						2						
155	Black-faced Antthrush	<i>Formicarius analis</i>			1	H					1					
156	Bearded Bellbird	<i>Procnias averano</i>		2	1	1	2	1	2	1						

	Common name	Scientific name	March													
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
157	Golden-headed Manakin	<i>Pipra erythrocephala</i>			4	1				1						
158	Blue-backed Manakin	<i>Chiroxiphia pareola</i>										1	8			
159	White-bearded Manakin	<i>Manacus manacus</i>		3	2	1	3		6							
160	Black-tailed Tityra	<i>Tityra cayana</i>					1			1						
161	Forest Elaenia	<i>Myiopagis gaimardii</i>			1											
162	Yellow-bellied Elaenia	<i>Elaenia flavogaster</i>				1			1			2	2	2		
163	Southern Beardless Tyrannulet	<i>Camptostoma obsoletum</i>			1			1								
164	Ochre-bellied Flycatcher	<i>Mionectes oleagineus</i>												H		
165	Yellow-olive Flycatcher	<i>Tolmomyias sulphurescens</i>														
166	Yellow-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Tolmomyias flaviventris</i>						1		H				H		
167	Bran-coloured Flycatcher	<i>Myiophobus fasciatus</i>				1										
168	Euler's Flycatcher	<i>Lathrotriccus euleri</i>		H	1	1	H									
169	Fuscous Flycatcher	<i>Cnemotriccus fuscatus</i>										1	1			
170	Olive-sided Flycatcher	<i>Contopus cooperi</i>			1						2					
171	Tropical Pewee	<i>Contopus cinereus</i>			2											
172	Pied Water Tyrant	<i>Fluvicola pica</i>						3								
173	White-headed Marsh Tyrant	<i>Arundinicola leucocephala</i>						6		2						
174	Piratic Flycatcher	<i>Legatus leucophaeus</i>		1		1	1									
175	Great Kiskadee	<i>Pitangus sulphuratus</i>	4	2	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
176	Streaked Flycatcher	<i>Myiodynastes maculatus</i>			2							1	2			
177	Boat-billed Flycatcher	<i>Megarynchus pitangua</i>		2		1					2					
178	Sulphury Flycatcher	<i>Tyrannopsis sulphurea</i>					3									
179	Variegated Flycatcher	<i>Empidonomus varius</i>			1											
180	Tropical Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus melancholicus</i>	2	1	4	4	2	8	✓	✓	✓	8	6			✓
181	Grey Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus dominicensis</i>				2						1		1		3
182	Dusky-capped Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus tuberculifer</i>			1											
183	Venezuelan Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus venezuelensis</i>										2	H			
184	Brown-crested Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus tyrannulus</i>								2	2	1	2	2		
185	Northern Scrub Flycatcher	<i>Sublegatus arearum glaber</i>						1								
186	White-winged Swallow	<i>Tachycineta albiventer</i>	1					6		✓	✓					1
187	Caribbean Martin	<i>Progne dominicensis</i>									✓	6	12	6	2	
188	Grey-breasted Martin	<i>Progne chalybea</i>	✓		✓		6	✓	✓	✓						

	Common name	Scientific name	March													
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
189	Southern Rough-winged Swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx ruficollis</i>			2	✓	✓	✓								
190	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>									6					
191	Rufous-breasted Wren	<i>Thryothorus rutilus</i>			4	H	H		H			2				
192	Northern House Wren	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>			2	1	H	H	1	1		H	H	H	1	
193	Tropical Mockingbird	<i>Mimus gilvus</i>	4	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2	2	2	8	
194	White-necked Thrush	<i>Turdus albicollis</i>			5		1		1			3	1			
195	Cocoa Thrush	<i>Turdus fumigatus</i>		2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	H					
196	Spectacled Thrush	<i>Turdus nudigenis</i>		1	1	1	3	2	1	1	1		1	1	1	
197	Yellow-legged Thrush	<i>Turdus flavipes</i>										5	H	1		
198	Long-billed Gnatwren	<i>Ramphocaenus melanurus</i>		H	1											
199	Red-eyed Vireo	<i>Vireo olivaceus</i>											1	3		
200	Scrub Greenlet	<i>Hylophilus flavipes</i>									1	H				
201	Golden-fronted Greenlet	<i>Hylophilus aurantiifrons</i>			✓											
202	Rufous-browed Peppershrike	<i>Cyclarhis gujanensis</i>		H	H					1						
203	Trinidad Euphonia	<i>Euphonia trinitatis</i>				2										
204	Violaceous Euphonia	<i>Euphonia violacea</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		2	2			
205	Tropical Parula	<i>Parula pitayumi</i>			2	1										
206	Yellow Warbler	<i>Dendroica petechia</i>						1		1						
207	American Redstart	<i>Setophaga ruticilla</i>		1				1								
208	Northern Waterthrush	<i>Seiurus noveboracensis</i>					1	1	2	H						
209	Masked Yellowthroat	<i>Geothlypis aequinoctialis</i>				1										
210	Golden-crowned Warbler	<i>Basileuterus culicivorus</i>			2											
211	Bicoloured Conebill	<i>Conirostrum bicolor</i>						1								
212	Red-capped Cardinal	<i>Paroaria gularis</i>								6						
213	White-lined Tanager	<i>Tachyphonus rufus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1	1			
214	Silver-beaked Tanager	<i>Ramphocelus carbo</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
215	Blue-grey Tanager	<i>Thraupis episcopus</i>		2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6	2	8	2	
216	Palm Tanager	<i>Thraupis palmarum</i>	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6		6	2	
217	Turquoise Tanager	<i>Tangara mexicana</i>		2	3	1			2							
218	Speckled Tanager	<i>Tangara guttata</i>			2											
219	Bay-headed Tanager	<i>Tangara gyrola</i>		2	✓	✓										
220	Blue Dacnis	<i>Dacnis cayana</i>				3		1								

	Common name	Scientific name	March													
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
221	Green Honeycreeper	<i>Chlorophanes spiza</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
222	Purple Honeycreeper	<i>Cyanerpes caeruleus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
223	Red-legged Honeycreeper	<i>Cyanerpes cyaneus</i>		1	1									2		
224	Swallow Tanager	<i>Tersina viridis</i>		1	1											
225	Bananaquit	<i>Coereba flaveola</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
226	Black-faced Grassquit	<i>Tiaris bicolor</i>										4	2			
227	Blue-black Grassquit	<i>Volatinia jacarina</i>	2			3										
228	Ruddy-breasted Seedeater	<i>Sporophila minuta</i>							1							
229	Saffron Finch	<i>Sicalis flaveola</i>									2					
230	Grassland Yellow Finch	<i>Sicalis luteola</i>							2			H				
231	Red-crowned Ant Tanager	<i>Habia rubica</i>		3												
232	Yellow-hooded Blackbird	<i>Chrysomus icterocephalus</i>							2							
233	Red-breasted Meadowlark	<i>Sturnella militaris</i>							6							
234	Carib Grackle	<i>Quiscalus lugubris</i>	✓		6				40		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
235	Shiny Cowbird	<i>Molothrus bonariensis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1		8	6	1	1
236	Giant Cowbird	<i>Molothrus oryzivorus</i>			2								3	3		10
237	Yellow Oriole	<i>Icterus nigrogularis</i>		1	1		1	2	2							
238	Yellow-rumped Cacique	<i>Cacicus cela</i>			✓	1										
239	Crested Oropendola	<i>Psarocolius decumanus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Mammals

1	Red-rumped Agouti	<i>Dasyprocta leporina</i>		3	3	2	3	3	8	2	4				1	
2	Common Opossum	<i>Didelphis marsupialis</i>	1				1									
3	Red-tailed Squirrel	<i>Sciurus granatensis</i>		1	1		1			1						
4	Silky Anteater	<i>Cyclopes didactyla</i>								1		1	1			
5	Greater White-lined Bat	<i>Saccopteryx bilineata</i>		1	1	6			✓			1				
6	Lesser White-lined Bat	<i>Saccopteryx leptura</i>								20+						
7	Common Long-tongued Bat	<i>Glossophaga soricina</i>		6	20	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
8	Proboscis Bat	<i>Rhynchonycteris naso</i>								5						
9	Common Tent-making Bat	<i>Uroderma bibobatum</i>					6									
10	Tayra	<i>Eira barbara</i>				1			1							
11	Small Asian Mongoose	<i>Herpestes javanicus</i>								1						

	Common name	Scientific name	March														
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
12	Arboreal Rice Rat or Coues' Climbing Rat	<i>Oecomys trinitatis</i> or <i>Rhipidomys coues</i>									2						
13	Brazilian (Tree) Porcupine	<i>Coendou prehensilis</i>						Scent									

Reptiles

1	Tegu Lizard	<i>Tupinambis teguixin</i>		1		2	2	4	2		1		1				
2	Common Ameiva	<i>Ameiva ameiva</i>				1	1	1	4		1	1	1	6			
3	Green Iguana	<i>Iguana iguana</i>									1						
4	House Gecko	<i>Hemidactylus frenatus</i>		2	2	2	2	2	2	2							
5	Cook's Tree Boa	<i>Corallus cookii</i>									5						
6	Trinidad Coral Snake	<i>Micrurus circinalis</i>				1											
7	Spectacled Caiman	<i>Caiman crocodilus</i>										4					
8	Trinidad Stream Frog	<i>Mannophryne trinitatis</i>	H	H	H	H	H	H	H								
9	Giant Gladiator Frog	<i>Hypsiboas</i> sp.					H										
10	Cane Toad	<i>Bufo marinus</i>					2										

Butterflies and Moths (C = caterpillar)

1	Postman	<i>Heliconius melpomene</i>		1	2		1		1		1						
2	Monarch	<i>Danaus plexippus</i>															
3	Flambeau or Julia Butterfly	<i>Dryas julia</i>			1	2			1								
4	White Peacock	<i>Anartia jatrophae</i>				2		2									
5	Scarlet Peacock	<i>Anartia amathea</i>			2	2											
6	Blue Morpho	<i>Morpho peleides</i>		1	4	1			1	1		1					
7	Cabbage White	<i>Ascia monuste</i>			1	✓	✓	✓									
8	89 Butterfly	<i>Diaethria marchalii</i>			1												
9	Brown Longtail	<i>Urbanus procne</i>			1	2											
10	Cloudless Sulphur	<i>Phoebis sennae</i>		1	1	4	2	2		2	1	1	2				
11	Tiger-striped Butterfly	<i>Heliconius ismenius</i>			3	1											
12	Small Blue Grecian	<i>Heliconius sara</i>						30									
13	Blue Transparent	<i>Ithomia pellucida</i>			2												
14	Gold-Rim	<i>Battus polydamas</i>							1			1	1				
15	White-tailed Page	<i>Urania leilus</i>										2	2				
16	Renata Satyr	<i>Ypthimoides renata</i>					1		1							1	

	Common name	Scientific name	March													
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
17	Penelope Satyr	<i>Cissia penelope</i>				1										
18	Hermes Satyr	<i>Hermeuptychia hermes</i>			2											
19	Orange Mapwing	<i>Hypanartia lethe</i>			1											
20	Orcus Chequered Skipper	<i>Pyrgus orcus</i>			1	6										
21	Bubastis Scrub Hairstreak	<i>Strymon bubastis</i>				1										
22	Venusta Yellow	<i>Pyrisitia venusta</i>				2		2				1				
23	Bordered Patch	<i>Chlosyne lacinia</i>				1										
24	Ruby-spotted Swallowtail	<i>Parides anchisiades</i>			1	1										
25	False Giant Swallowtail	<i>Heraclides homothoas</i>				1										
26	Owl Butterfly	<i>Caligo illioneus</i>			1											
27	Owl Butterfly	<i>Caligo menon</i>									1					
28	Molpe Metalmark	<i>Juditha molpe</i>							1							
29	Doris Longwing	<i>Laparus doris</i>								1						
30	Various Hawk-moth species							1		✓		C				

Common Plants

Water Grass, *Commelina erecta*
 Copper Leaf, *Chrysothemis pulchella*
 Deer Meat, *Centropogon cornutus*
 Hotlips, *Psychotria peoppigiana*
 Candle Bush, *Piper sp.*
 Bois Canot, *Cecropia peltata*
 Virgin Mary Orchid, *Caularthron bicornutum*
 Wandering Jew, *Tradescantia sp.*

Star Flower, *Hippobroma longiflora*
 Star Grass, *Rhynchospora nervosa*
 Mangrove Vine, *Rhabdadenia biflora*
 Balisier, *Heliconia bihai*
 Immortelle, *Erythrina peoppigiana*
 Bird's Nest Anthurium, *Anthurium hookeri*
 Swiss Cheese Plant, *Monstera sp.*
 Jade Vine, *Strongylodon macrobotrys*

Ti Marie, *Mimosa pudica*
 Rabbit Meat, *Emilia fosbergii*
 Black Stick, *Pachystachys coccinea*
 Mimosa, *Calliandra haematocephala*
 Bronze Pagoda, *Calathea casupito*
 Yellow Poui, *Tabebuia serratifolia*
 Hawaiian Torch Lily, *Etilingera elatior*

Fish

Four-eyed Fish, *Anableps anableps*
 Queen Angelfish, *Holocanthus ciliaris*
 Smallmouth Grunt, *Haemulon chrysargyreum*
 Brown Chromis, *Chromis multilineata*

Banded Butterflyfish, *Chaetodon striatus*
 Blue Tang, *Acanthurus coeruleus*
 Bicolour Damselfish, *Stegastes partitus*
 Yellowtail Damselfish, *Microspathodon chrysurus*

Foureye Butterflyfish, *Chaetodon capistratus*
 Caesar Grunt, *Haemulon carbonarium*
 Sergeant Major, *Abudefduf saxatilis*
 Stoplight Parrotfish, *Sparisoma viride*

Princess Parrotfish, *Scarus taeniopterus*
Trumpetfish, *Aulostomus maculatus*
Whitespotted Filefish, *Cantherhines macrocerus*

Bluehead, *Thalassoma bifasciatum*
Spotted Trunkfish, *Lactophrys bicaudalis*

Yellowhead Wrasse, *Halichoeres garnoti*
Black Surge wrasse, *Melichthys niger*

Coral/Sponges/marinelife,

Finger Coral, *Porites porites*
Blade Fire Coral, *Millepora complanata*
Flamingo Tongue, *Cyphoma gibbosum*
Sargassum Seaweed, *Sargassum fluitans*

Yellow Pencil Coral, *Madracis mirabilis*
Common Sea Fan, *Gorgonia ventalina*
Caribbean Reef Squid, *Sepioteuthis sepioidea*

Boulder Brain Coral, *Colpophyllia natans*
Yellow Tube Sponge, *Aplysina fistularis*
Queen Conch, *Strombus gigas*



Harlequin Beetle



Red-billed Tropicbird



Copper-rumped Hummingbird