



Field Guides Tour Report

**Trinidad & Tobago Feb. 2016**

Feb 12, 2016 to Feb 21, 2016

Eric Hynes & Doug Gochfeld (Mahase Ramlal & Gladwyn James)

*For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).*



*The fact that Scarlet Ibis tied for favorite species of the tour was not surprising. These breathtaking beauties poured into the roost in Caroni Swamp bathed in golden late-day light. It is truly a sight every birder needs to behold. (Photo by guide Eric Hynes)*

Thanks everyone for choosing Field Guides for your Trinidad and Tobago adventure. We shared a lot of laughs, some great weather, uneventful travel, tons of cool sightings, lucked into some rarities, worked with some wonderful local guides, and got along famously. I am hopeful I will have the chance to bird and sip rum punch with all of you again someday.

Our first full day together was spent primarily at Asa Wright Nature Centre (AWNC). Waking up to the bird frenzy just beyond arm's reach on the veranda is truly special and a challenge to describe. We had hummingbirds, tanagers, honeycreepers, euphonias, flycatchers, thrushes, and more buzzing all around us. Our first walk after breakfast was down the Discovery Trail highlighted by a feeding Double-toothed Kite and the incredible cacophony of Bearded Bellbirds. Be sure to click on the audio clip and crank up the volume to relive the experience. We retraced our steps after lunch and soaked in the White-bearded Manakins at their lek. Later in the afternoon we descended out of the mountains and headed over to what used to be Waller Field and is now Intech Park. We picked up a fleeting Epaulet Oriole, Fork-tailed Palm-Swifts, and Sulphury Flycatchers before our night birding in Aripo Livestock Station. Our efforts after dark started with a bang as an indifferent Tropical Screech-Owl sat motionless for us at pointblank range. We went on to see numerous nightjars and several potoos.

The next morning we headed up the road to explore the Northern Range via the Blanchisseuse Road. We dipped on the previously reported Trinidad Piping-Guan but found plenty of other exciting species. Eventually we descended the north slope to the communities of Brasso Seco and Morne La Croix where we found Blue-headed Parrots and a bustling colony of Yellow-rumped Caciques.

First order of business on day three was back up into the Northern Range for another shot at the Trinidad Piping-Guan. Hope was fading and we were about to load back into the vans and head out... when the almost mythical beast started whistling! Mahase finally spied it up in the canopy and we scored one of the rarest birds in the world. The rest of the morning we explored the Aripo Savannah. Highlights from this open country were nesting Pearl Kites and a cooperative Striped Cuckoo before our picnic lunch in the Arena Forest Reserve. Later that day we hiked down to the gorge known as Dunston Cave and spent some quality time with the bizarre Oilbirds.

Day four was a long one as we cleaned up some species at Aripo Livestock Station before making our way over to the east coast. After lunch at Manzanilla Beach, we traveled to Nariva Swamp. Cantaloupe Hill at the end was a great turn around point after picking up Red-bellied Macaws, Giant Cowbirds, Yellow-crowned Parrots, and a locally rare Aplomado Falcon.

Our last full day on Trinidad was spent on the west coast of the island. We twitched Yellow-hooded Blackbird at Trincity sewage ponds, Long-winged Harrier in the Caroni rice fields, and ended up at the Waterloo Fish Depot, which was crawling with shorebirds, larids, and waders. Orange Valley added to the list. Carli Bay was our picnic lunch location where we tallied Saffron Finch, Common Tern, Bicolored Conebill, and Greater Ani. The grand finale on Trinidad is the boat cruise into Caroni Swamp National Park to watch all the Scarlet Ibis returning to roost. We found a Straight-billed Woodcreeper and a Green-throated Mango before boarding, an obstructed view of a Boat-billed Heron and a Silky Anteater on the way in, and a locally rare American Wigeon while waiting for the crimson spectacle to begin. Doug's careful estimate was just over 5500 Scarlet Ibis!

Gladwyn James, our local guide on Tobago, was waiting with his big smile and hearty laugh at the Crown Point airport. We birded the Bon Accord

sewage ponds and Grafton Caledonia Wildlife Sanctuary before heading into Tobago Plantations. Finding a Masked Duck was a real bonus and the splendid buffet lunch was a delight at Magdalena Grand. Our afternoon was spent driving up to the northeast corner of the island to Speyside and the tranquil Blue Waters Inn.

Gilpin Trace was the focus of our birding in the Main Ridge Forest Reserve the next day. We did well with a number of island specific targets like: Yellow-legged Thrush, White-tailed Sabrewing, Olivaceous Woodcreeper, Blue-backed Manakin, and Scrub Greenlet. Finally seeing Trinidad Motmot was a relief and more looks at Rufous-tailed Jacamar and Common Potoo were welcomed.

Red is the theme when it comes to grand finales in T&T. Our last morning of birding was spent at the seabird colony overlook on Little Tobago Island with local guide Zolani studying the marvelous Red-billed Tropicbirds and Red-footed Boobies. Before hopping a brief flight back to Trinidad, we successfully chased a Black-headed Gull and picked up three more species.

While not exactly as much fun as the adventure we shared, I hope the following report brings back many fond memories. Thanks again for choosing Field Guides and I hope our birding paths cross again someday.

Sincerely,

Eric a.k.a. Eagle

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## KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: \* = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

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## BIRDS

### Tinamidae (Tinamous)

**LITTLE TINAMOU** (*Crypturellus soui*) – The mournful tremolo of the this forest skulker was heard at dusk and dawn a couple days at AWNC but we never even got a glimpse. [\*]

### Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

**BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK** (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – Our first flock was along that stretch of highway south of our picnic at Manzanilla Beach. We also saw an individual during both visits to the sewage treatment facility at Bon Accord on Tobago.

**AMERICAN WIGEON** (*Anas americana*) – Sharp-eyed Doug somehow managed to pry his eyes away from the Scarlet Ibis and notice this nondescript female way across the mudflat. It is apparently the first record for Trinidad in a number of years.

**BLUE-WINGED TEAL** (*Anas discors*) – We saw some distant birds in Caroni Swamp.

**WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL** (*Anas bahamensis*) – We were pleasantly surprised to pick up this bird at the Bon Accord sewage treatment facility.

**MASKED DUCK** (*Nomonyx dominicus*) – Catching up to a Masked Duck is never easy but the drake we studied on Tobago couldn't have been more cooperative.

### Cracidae (Guans, Chachalacas, and Curassows)

**RUFOUS-VENTED CHACHALACA** (*Ortalis ruficauda*) – A noisy beast; it was fun to watch them work their way through the trees on Tobago gobbling fruit.

**TRINIDAD PIPING-GUAN** (*Pipile pipile*) – This ultra rare/endangered endemic was worth the extra effort. Thank goodness it spoke up just before we began to load back into the van and drive away. It took some maneuvering but we all scored some great views in the end. Some estimates put their entire population at less than 200 individuals.

### Podicipedidae (Grebes)

**LEAST GREBE** (*Tachybaptus dominicus*) – A pair at the Bon Accord sewage ponds had four stripy kids in tow.

### Procellariidae (Shearwaters and Petrels)

**AUDUBON'S SHEARWATER** (*Puffinus lherminieri*) – We can count an egg right? Z showed us a nest behind a log with an egg in it that has been active on Little Tobago. [N]

### Phaethontidae (Tropicbirds)

**RED-BILLED TROPICBIRD** (*Phaethon aethereus*) – Simply WOW. They are such gorgeous birds and to be able to study their dynamic flight so intimately was very special. [N]

### Fregatidae (Frigatebirds)

**MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD** (*Fregata magnificens*) – These masters of soaring put on a particularly impressive show while we stood at the overlook on Little Tobago Island. Z was really cheering them on.

### Sulidae (Boobies and Gannets)

**BROWN BOOBY** (*Sula leucogaster*) – Excellent scope views from the overlook on Little Tobago Island

**RED-FOOTED BOOBY** (*Sula sula*) – It was a treat to be able to study their various morphs from the overlook on Little Tobago Island

### Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

**NEOTROPIC CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – Just a few

### Anhingidae (Anhingas)

**ANHINGA** (*Anhinga anhinga*) – Good looks at Tobago Plantations

### Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

**BROWN PELICAN** (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) – Every day during the second half of the tour; many roosting on the boats along Trinidad's west coast but

the best looks were during our lunch break at Manzanilla Beach

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

**GREAT BLUE HERON** (*Ardea herodias*) – Not many

**GREAT EGRET** (*Ardea alba*) – Seen well

**SNOWY EGRET** (*Egretta thula*) – Some great looks at Waterloo and Orange Valley; plus all the birds roosting with the Scarlet Ibis in Caroni Swamp

**LITTLE BLUE HERON** (*Egretta caerulea*) – Lots headed to the roost in Caroni Swamp; plus some close looks at birds foraging during the boat ride in

**TRICOLORED HERON** (*Egretta tricolor*) – This species seemed to be the last to return to the roost in Caroni Swamp

**CATTLE EGRET** (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Abundant

**GREEN HERON** (*Butorides virescens*) – Easily encountered on Tobago

**STRIATED HERON** (*Butorides striata*) – We had a few on Trinidad

**BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – We heard and observed some leaving their diurnal roost sites at dusk just as we were getting back to the dock at Caroni Swamp

**YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** (*Nyctanassa violacea*) – Both islands

**BOAT-BILLED HERON** (*Cochlearius cochlearius*) – No way we would have ever found this bird without the tip from the other boat. It took some maneuvering to even get glimpses of this bird.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

**SCARLET IBIS** (*Eudocimus ruber*) – Doug carefully tallied over 5000 individuals returning to the roost in Caroni Swamp.

**GLOSSY IBIS** (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – This was an unexpected pick-up at the Bon Accord sewage ponds.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

**BLACK VULTURE** (*Coragyps atratus*) – The huge crowd on the ground as we entered Intech Park was curious.

**TURKEY VULTURE** (*Cathartes aura*) – An everyday bird until we got over to vulture free Tobago

Pandionidae (Osprey)

**OSPREY** (*Pandion haliaetus*) – We saw them on the west side of Trinidad and multiple locations on Tobago.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

**PEARL KITE** (*Gampsonyx swainsonii*) – This has been a missable bird in recent years so I was delighted to find out Mahase had a nest staked out. The pair interacting with a prey delivery was thrilling.

**GRAY-HEADED KITE** (*Leptodon cayanensis*) – Early in the trip overhead

**BLACK HAWK-EAGLE** (*Spizaetus tyrannus*) – We had a couple fleeting looks of birds overhead

**DOUBLE-TOOTHED KITE** (*Harpagus bidentatus*) – We watched a handsome adult consume some large, fuzzy insect prey overhead the first morning on the Discovery Trail.

**LONG-WINGED HARRIER** (*Circus buffoni*) – We saw this gorgeous raptor over the caroni rice fields but not well.

**COMMON BLACK HAWK** (*Buteogallus anthracinus*) – Good looks overhead at AWCN

**SAVANNA HAWK** (*Buteogallus meridionalis*) – We had some great views of this handsome raptor at Aripo Livestock Station.

**GREAT BLACK HAWK** (*Buteogallus urubitinga*) – An adult soared right over us as we completed our walk at Gilpin Trace

**WHITE HAWK** (*Pseudastur albicollis*) – Overhead at AWCN

**GRAY-LINED HAWK** (*Buteo nitidus*) – A few here and there on Trinidad

**BROAD-WINGED HAWK** (*Buteo platypterus*) – Mahase picked out a perched raptor while driving that turned out to be a dark morph Broad-winged Hawk. We were informed that this might be the first photo-documentation of this plumage on Trinidad!

**SHORT-TAILED HAWK** (*Buteo brachyurus*) – We enjoyed several good looks

**ZONE-TAILED HAWK** (*Buteo albonotatus*) – This Turkey Vulture mimic teetered over us in several locations.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

**PURPLE GALLINULE** (*Porphyrio martinicus*) – Seen well on Tobago

**COMMON GALLINULE** (*Gallinula galeata*) – Both islands but our best views were on Tobago

**AMERICAN COOT** (*Fulica americana*) – We scored this write-in at the Bon Accord sewage ponds.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

**BLACK-NECKED STILT** (*Himantopus mexicanus*) – These lanky but elegant shorebirds were a write-in rarity. We found more than half a dozen standing cooperatively close at the Waterloo Fish Depot.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

**BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER** (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – Roosting on some pilings way out at Waterloo Fish Depot

**SOUTHERN LAPWING** (*Vanellus chilensis*) – This impressive shorebird species clearly grows accustomed to human presence easily.

**SEMPALMATED PLOVER** (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) – Many at the Waterloo Fish Depot

Jacaniidae (Jacanas)

**WATTLED JACANA** (*Jacana jacana*) – More days than not

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

**SPOTTED SANDPIPER** (*Actitis macularius*) – There was an impressive concentration in Caroni Swamp

**SOLITARY SANDPIPER** (*Tringa solitaria*) – We studied this *Tringa* at close range on Tobago.

**GREATER YELLOWLEGS** (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – Great comparisons to Lesser on Tobago

**WILLET** (*Tringa semipalmata*) – We saw dozens well at Waterloo Fish Depot and those that we scrutinized had the structure and plumage of "Westerns."

**LESSER YELLOWLEGS** (*Tringa flavipes*) – Great comparisons with Greater on Tobago

**WHIMBREL** (*Numenius phaeopus*) – A few stood on pilings way off at Waterloo Fish Depot but we enjoyed a close individual in a roadside ditch on Tobago.

**RUDDY TURNSTONE** (*Arenaria interpres*) – An everyday bird during the second half of the tour; they were literally underfoot at Blue Waters Inn

**LEAST SANDPIPER** (*Calidris minutilla*) – Our closest encounter was at the Aripo Livestock Station

**SEMPALMATED SANDPIPER** (*Calidris pusilla*) – These guys were greatly outnumbered by Western Sandpipers at Waterloo Fish Depot.

**WESTERN SANDPIPER** (*Calidris mauri*) – Hundreds crowded together to roost on the mudflats at Waterloo Fish Depot

**SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER** (*Limnodromus griseus*) – Seen at Orange Valley on the west coast of Trinidad

**WILSON'S SNIPE** (*Gallinago delicata*) – Everyone finally got on a bird that thought it was out of sight in the ditch at Bon Accord.

#### Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

**BLACK-HEADED GULL** (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) – We decided to take advantage of the "extra hour" we gained with the early drop-off on Tobago and pursued this reported rarity. Sure enough, Doug picked it out among all the Laughing Gulls in Crown Point. This species was a lifer for Gladwyn.

**LAUGHING GULL** (*Leucophaeus atricilla*) – It is pretty interesting how we didn't see a single one on the east coast of Trinidad and then thousands on the west coast at our first stop.

**LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (GRAELLSII)** (*Larus fuscus graellsii*) – These guys looked hefty standing among all the Laughing Gulls at Waterloo Fish Depot.

**COMMON TERN** (*Sterna hirundo*) – We had five of these unexpected terns roosting on a breakwater at Carli Bay.

**ROYAL TERN** (*Thalasseus maximus*) – More readily seen on Tobago

**SANDWICH TERN** (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) – One of the last species we picked up on this adventure; there was a roosting bird on a breakwater with Royal Terns and Laughing Gulls near the airport on Tobago.

**BLACK SKIMMER (CINERASCENS)** (*Rynchops niger cinerascens*) – Wonderful looks at these proportionally odd but beautiful seabirds

#### Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

**ROCK PIGEON** (*Columba livia*) – Yep [I]

**PALE-VENTED PIGEON** (*Patagioenas cayennensis*) – Good looks on Tobago

**SCALED PIGEON** (*Patagioenas speciosa*) – Scoped from the veranda at AWNC

**SCALY-NAPED PIGEON** (*Patagioenas squamosa*) – A rarity -- a small colony seems to be established on Little Tobago Island

**RUDDY GROUND-DOVE** (*Columbina talpacoti*) – Nearly an everyday bird

**WHITE-TIPPED DOVE** (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – Another Tobago bird

**GRAY-FRONTED DOVE** (*Leptotila rufaxilla*) – We heard this forest skulker daily on Trinidad and a couple of times an individual walked out into the open for quick views below the veranda at AWNC.

**EARED DOVE** (*Zenaida auriculata*) – Great looks on Tobago

#### Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

**SQUIRREL CUCKOO** (*Piaya cayana*) – We had to crouch down to look up from the veranda at AWNC to see our first working the treetops

**STRIPED CUCKOO** (*Tapera naevia*) – We scored a very cooperative bird in the Aripo Savannah.

**GREATER ANI** (*Crotophaga major*) – Some of us saw one briefly during our short walk after lunch at Carli Bay

**SMOOTH-BILLED ANI** (*Crotophaga ani*) – Plenty

#### Strigidae (Owls)

**TROPICAL SCREECH-OWL** (*Megascops choliba*) – You could ask for a better look but you aren't going to get it -- that was awesome

**SPECTACLED OWL** (*Pulsatrix perspicillata*) – If you stayed up late or were an early riser, there was one and sometimes a pair calling each night at AWNC. We also bumped one off a roadside perch one evening as we climbed the mountain road returning to AWNC.

**FERRUGINOUS PYGMY-OWL** (*Glaucidium brasilianum*) – It's remarkable how often we heard one before we finally lucked into that individual in the canopy off the veranda

#### Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

**COMMON PAURAUQUE** (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) – Many on our night drive

**WHITE-TAILED NIGHTJAR** (*Hydropsalis cayennensis*) – Lucky for us, that youngster didn't seem to know enough to fly away

**RUFOUS NIGHTJAR** (*Antrostomus rufus*) – This was a bonus bird during our night drive

#### Nyctibiidae (Potoos)

**COMMON POTOO** (*Nyctibius griseus*) – We enjoyed several during our night drive and then Gladwyn showed us a roosting bird on Tobago

#### Steatornithidae (Oilbird)

**OILBIRD** (*Steatornis caripensis*) – What a bizarre/amazing creature

#### Apodidae (Swifts)

**SHORT-TAILED SWIFT** (*Chaetura brachyura*) – Just a couple times overhead

**BAND-RUMPED SWIFT** (*Chaetura spinicaudus*) – You pretty much had to wait until evening when they started coming in low and close to the veranda to tell them apart from the next species.

**GRAY-RUMPED SWIFT** (*Chaetura cinereiventris*) – This was sort of the default small swift

**FORK-TAILED PALM-SWIFT** (*Tachornis squamata*) – Such a cool bird with their distinctive structure and acrobatic flight

#### Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

**WHITE-NECKED JACOBIN** (*Florisuga mellivora*) – What a clean, crisp, striking hummingbird

**RUFOUS-BREASTED HERMIT** (*Glaucis hirsutus*) – It was so fun having one come right up to the feeders at the veranda while we were standing so close to it.

**GREEN HERMIT** (*Phaethornis guy*) – Not a constant presence around the veranda but plenty of good looks  
**LITTLE HERMIT** (*Phaethornis longuemareus*) – We saw a couple on our day exploring the Northern Range  
**WHITE-TAILED GOLDENTHROAT** (*Polytmus guainumbi*) – One foraging bird missing most of its tail took us a moment to recognize what we were looking at near one of the livestock buildings at the research station.  
**RUBY-TOPAZ HUMMINGBIRD** (*Chrysolampis mosquitus*) – The adult male that was so loyal to the flowering plants below the veranda at AWCN was a glowing gem when you caught the light just right.  
**GREEN-THROATED MANGO** (*Anthracothorax viridigula*) – Only in the mangroves at Caroni Swamp; thankfully one perched motionless for long studies in the scope before we got in the boat  
**BLACK-THROATED MANGO** (*Anthracothorax nigricollis*) – A stunning male perched consistently in the open just off the veranda at AWCN. We also got to see several nests.  
**TUFTED COQUETTE** (*Lophornis ornatus*) – These charismatic, tiny wonders were in good numbers this year feeding on the Verbena below the veranda at AWCN.  
**LONG-BILLED STARTHROAT** (*Heliomaster longirostris*) – What got some great looks at AWCN this year  
**BLUE-CHINNED SAPPHIRE** (*Chlorestes notata*) – It takes just the right angle of light to see the blue chin on this otherwise emerald bird.  
**WHITE-TAILED SABREWING** (*Campylopterus ensipennis*) – We saw this bird well along Gilpin Trace. The only other place you can see this species besides Tobago are the mountains of northeast Venezuela.  
**WHITE-CHESTED EMERALD** (*Amazilia brevirostris*) – Common at AWCN  
**COPPER-RUMPED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Amazilia tobaci*) – Good looks at this species on both islands

#### Trogonidae (Trogons)

**GREEN-BACKED TROGON** (*Trogon viridis*) – This was the larger one with the palish blue eyering; it used to be called White-tailed Trogon.  
**GUIANAN TROGON** (*Trogon violaceus*) – This was the smaller one with the yellow eyering and the barred undertail  
**COLLARED TROGON** (*Trogon collaris*) – The red-bellied trogon; found on both islands

#### Momotidae (Motmots)

**TRINIDAD MOTMOT** (*Momotus bahamensis*) – We joked that the name should be Tobago Motmot since we didn't see one until we got to Tobago. This and the Piping-Guan are the only endemics for T&T

#### Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

**RINGED KINGFISHER** (*Megaceryle torquata*) – This large kingfisher flew over while we were birding the backwaters of the Nariva River.  
**GREEN KINGFISHER** (*Chloroceryle americana*) – We savored fantastic views of this very small kingfisher

#### Galbulidae (Jacamars)

**RUFOUS-TAILED JACAMAR** (*Galbula ruficauda*) – Sure, hummingbirds are known for their iridescence but when we got these guys in the correct light... it was all oohs and aahs. So is it the iridescence or the structure that inspires the local name: King Hummingbird? -- Probably the combination.

#### Ramphastidae (Toucans)

**CHANNEL-BILLED TOUCAN** (*Ramphastos vitellinus*) – We were close to several but the only clear views we enjoyed were through the scope from the veranda at AWCN

#### Picidae (Woodpeckers)

**RED-CROWNED WOODPECKER** (*Melanerpes rubricapillus*) – We had to get over to Tobago to see this species but once we were there we saw plenty  
**GOLDEN-OLIVE WOODPECKER** (*Colaptes rubiginosus*) – We had fun waiting to see who was making the tapping sounds in the cavity. Clearly, that bird was getting ready to nest.  
**LINEATED WOODPECKER** (*Dryocopus lineatus*) – This was the big one, reminiscent of Pileated Woodpecker

#### Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

**YELLOW-HEADED CARACARA** (*Milvago chimachima*) – We had wonderful views along the drive down the east coast of Trinidad  
**MERLIN** (*Falco columbarius*) – Several individuals were zipping back and forth over the canopy at sunset in Caroni Swamp.  
**APLOMADO FALCON** (*Falco femoralis*) – A highlight bird for sure; we enjoyed good scope views on the hill at the end of the road at Nariva Swamp while sipping rum punch.  
**PEREGRINE FALCON** (*Falco peregrinus*) – Doug was playing "Where's Waldo" among the hundreds of Black Vultures overhead and picked out this guy way up while we were standing at Aripo Livestock Station.

#### Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots)

**BLUE-HEADED PARROT** (*Pionus menstruus*) – We enjoyed excellent views in Morne La Croix. Their deeper wingbeats and smaller size were readily apparent compared to the ubiquitous Orange-winged Parrots.  
**YELLOW-CROWNED PARROT** (*Amazona ochrocephala*) – Our first bird was mostly likely a pet but we definitely caught up to some wild birds at Nariva Swamp.  
**ORANGE-WINGED PARROT** (*Amazona amazonica*) – These abundant birds seemed like that had to call to say airborne.  
**GREEN-RUMPED PARROTLET** (*Forpus passerinus*) – These were the parrots that got hit by a shrink ray.  
**RED-BELLIED MACAW** (*Orthopsittaca manilatus*) – Our scope view really strained the eyes but it was exciting to watch the flocks flying to the roost.  
**BLUE-AND-YELLOW MACAW** (*Ara ararauna*) – Wow -- this species was totally unexpected -- what a tremendous bird! Mahase shared a natural nest cavity with us and thankfully one of the adults was home at the time. This species was extirpated from Trinidad in the 1960s due to habitat loss and illegal trapping for the pet trade. In 1999, the government embarked on an reintroduction program with wild birds from Guyana. No doubt the bird we observed was part of this ongoing effort.

#### Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)

**GREAT ANTSHRIKE** (*Taraba major*) – Our best experience with this species was on our walk back from Dunston Cave at AWCN.

**BLACK-CRESTED ANTSHRIKE** (*Sakesphorus canadensis*) – We heard them in several locations but never got bins on one unfortunately. [\*]  
**BARRED ANTSHRIKE** (*Thamnophilus doliiatus*) – Their distinctive call was heard frequently and we even got to watch one while we were enjoying breakfast at AWCN.  
**PLAIN ANTVIREO** (*Dysithamnus mentalis*) – A pretty cool bird despite the name  
**WHITE-FLANKED ANTWREN** (*Myrmotherula axillaris*) – This bird was seen the day of our arrival by a few but as a group we only heard this bird. [\*]  
**WHITE-FRINGED ANTWREN** (*Formicivora grisea*) – This antwren species proved much more confiding. We saw them well over on Tobago.  
**WHITE-BELLIED ANTBIRD** (*Myrmeciza longipes*) – This bird seems incapable of getting off the ground or out in the open. We worked a couple individuals pretty hard but not everyone could get on it.

*Formicariidae (Antthrushes)*

**BLACK-FACED ANTTHRUSH** (*Formicarius analis*) – This deep forest dweller has a well-earned reputation as a skulker. We heard their diagnostic whistles easily and on multiple occasions but we just couldn't tease one into view. [\*]

*Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)*

**GRAY-THROATED LEAFTOSSER** (*Sclerurus albigularis*) – Thanks to a good tip from Mahase, we were in the right place, at the right time when a pair visited a potential nest burrow at sunrise. We even got to hear it sing.  
**OLIVACEOUS WOODCREEPER** (*Sittasomus griseicapillus*) – Seen well on Tobago  
**PLAIN-BROWN WOODCREEPER** (*Dendrocincla fuliginosa*) – One came in nice and close when we were working a White-bellied Antbird along the Blanchisseuse Road.  
**COCOA WOODCREEPER** (*Xiphorhynchus susurrans*) – Heard way more than seen but we had some good looks too  
**STRAIGHT-BILLED WOODCREEPER** (*Dendroplex picus*) – These guys like the mangroves  
**STREAKED XENOPS** (*Xenops rutilans*) – This curious little bird seems like a hybrid of a couple different species.  
**YELLOW-CHINNED SPINETAIL** (*Certhiaxis cinnamomeus*) – Some of us first spotted this species at Aripo Livestock Station and then we cleaned it up for the group at Nariva Swamp after considerable effort for a species that is usually much more obliging.  
**STRIPE-BREASTED SPINETAIL** (*Synallaxis cinnamomea*) – Their distinctive "keep going" call was part of the regular soundtrack as we hiked along the Gilpin Trace on Tobago. We scored some great looks on the return. Be sure to click on the audio clip to take you back there.

*Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)*

**SOUTHERN BEARDLESS-TYRANULET** (*Camptostoma obsoletum*) – This diminutive flycatcher lacking rictal bristles turned up in the Aripo Savannah.  
**YELLOW-BELLIED ELAENIA** (*Elaenia flavogaster*) – Our best looks were at Nariva Swamp  
**OCHRE-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** (*Mionectes oleagineus*) – I strongly associate this small flycatcher with Trema trees.  
**YELLOW-BREASTED FLYCATCHER** (*Tolmomyias flaviventris*) – We did really well with this species this tour -- lots of great looks on both islands  
**EULER'S FLYCATCHER** (*Lathrotriccus euleri*) – Seen well on the Blanchisseuse Road  
**OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER** (*Contopus cooperi*) – Mahase did a remarkable job of spotting one teed up way above on the ridgeline along the Blanchisseuse Road.  
**TROPICAL PEWEE** (*Contopus cinereus*) – Another Blanchisseuse Road bird  
**FUSCOUS FLYCATCHER** (*Cnemotriccus fuscatus*) – We had great looks over on Tobago but some of you were not too impressed with this subtle beauty.  
**PIED WATER-TYRANT** (*Fluvicola pica*) – Bold in plumage and behavior  
**WHITE-HEADED MARSH TYRANT** (*Arundinicola leucocephala*) – The males of this species look like a black bird that dipped his head in white paint.  
**BRIGHT-RUMPED ATTLA** (*Attila spadiceus*) – We heard this bird's distinctive call usually close to sunrise but we never had any luck spotting one.  
**VENEZUELAN FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus venezuelensis*) – One sang at the start of Gilpin Trace but surprisingly we never laid eyes on one [\*]  
**BROWN-CRESTED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus tyrannulus*) – Conspicuous on Little Tobago  
**GREAT KISKADEE** (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) – Boisterous and beautiful  
**BOAT-BILLED FLYCATCHER** (*Megarynchus pitangua*) – we enjoyed our best looks on the return drive from Morne La Croix  
**PIRATIC FLYCATCHER** (*Legatus leucophaeus*) – One was frequently calling around the car park at AWCN  
**SULPHURY FLYCATCHER** (*Tyrannopsis sulphurea*) – This is one of the species strongly associated with Moriche Palms  
**TROPICAL KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – TKs are all over the place on Trinidad  
**GRAY KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus dominicensis*) – Our best looks occurred as we ascended the Roxborough - Parlatuvier Road to access Tobago's Main Ridge Forest Reserve.

*Cotingidae (Cotingas)*

**BEARDED BELLBIRD** (*Procnias averano*) – This species was a favorite for more than a few of us. Be sure to crank up the volume on the embedded audio clip to enjoy the full effect.

*Pipridae (Manakins)*

**BLUE-BACKED MANAKIN** (*Chiroxiphia pareola*) – A chorus of oohs and aahs could be heard when that male sat in the open at eye level when we were at the visitor center for Tobago's Main Ridge Forest Reserve.  
**WHITE-BEARDED MANAKIN** (*Manacus manacus*) – To hear and see some of the males at the lek was definitely worth another trip down the Discovery Trail.  
**GOLDEN-HEADED MANAKIN** (*Ceratopipra erythrocephala*) – The males are some serious eye candy.

*Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)*

**RED-EYED VIREO (RESIDENT CHIVI)** (*Vireo olivaceus tobagensis*) – The resident "Chivi" Vireo on Tobago is an endemic subspecies

**SCRUB GREENLET** (*Hylophilus flavipes*) – One of their calls on Tobago reminds me of a car alarm.

**GOLDEN-FRONTED GREENLET** (*Pachysylvia aurantiifrons*) – Seen well along the Blanchisseuse Road

**RUFOUS-BROWED PEPPERSHRIKE** (*Cyclarhis gujanensis*) – It's hard not to hear this incessant singer but we actually had good looks at one in the Aripo Savannah

*Hirundinidae (Swallows)*

**SOUTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW** (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) – A couple times a few perched in the open just below the veranda at AWNC.

**CARIBBEAN MARTIN** (*Progne dominicensis*) – The martin on Tobago

**GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN** (*Progne chalybea*) – The martin on Trinidad

**WHITE-WINGED SWALLOW** (*Tachycineta albiventer*) – More days than not on Trinidad

**BARN SWALLOW** (*Hirundo rustica*) – A few were flying above the Bon Accord sewage ponds

*Troglodytidae (Wrens)*

**HOUSE WREN (SOUTHERN)** (*Troglodytes aedon clarus*) – I wish I could have silenced the individual that loved to start singing outside my window at 0230 each day.

**RUFOUS-BREASTED WREN** (*Pheugopedius rutilus rutilus*) – This is the more widespread subspecies that occurs on Trinidad

**RUFOUS-BREASTED WREN** (*Pheugopedius rutilus tobagensis*) – This subspecies only occurs on Tobago. Turn the volume all the way up and listen for its melodic song in the background of the audio clip labeled Stripe-breasted Spinetail.

*Poliopitidae (Gnatcatchers)*

**LONG-BILLED GNATWREN** (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) – We lured in this odd little bird in the Aripo Savannah.

*Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)*

**YELLOW-LEGGED THRUSH** (*Turdus flavipes*) – For the most part, birders are a kind and cooperative bunch. We dipped on this bird uncharacteristically during our walk at Gilpin Trace. However, thanks to a generous tip from another local guide on Tobago, we drove right up to a tree full of them gorging on some fruit.

**COCOA THRUSH** (*Turdus fumigatus*) – Easy to see at AWNC

**SPECTACLED THRUSH** (*Turdus nudigenis*) – They come into the fruit platforms at AWNC

**WHITE-NECKED THRUSH** (*Turdus albicollis*) – We were able to look down on this bird from the visitor center up in the Main Ridge Forest Reserve on Tobago.

*Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)*

**TROPICAL MOCKINGBIRD** (*Mimus gilvus*) – Not numerous but plenty of good looks

*Parulidae (New World Warblers)*

**NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH** (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – More days than not but sometimes just heard

**AMERICAN REDSTART** (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – A few wintering birds

**YELLOW WARBLER** (*Setophaga petechia*) – An everyday bird on Trinidad

**BLACKPOLL WARBLER** (*Setophaga striata*) – Doug found this unexpected migrant foraging in the canopy on our drive up into the Main Ridge Forest Reserve on Tobago.

*Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)*

**MASKED CARDINAL** (*Paroaria nigrogenis*) – Clearly we benefited from the woman working in the gate house at Caroni Swamp.

**WHITE-SHOULDERED TANAGER** (*Tachyphonus luctuosus*) – A few of us on an afternoon walk along the entrance road at AWNC enjoyed watching a pair foraging in the understory.

**WHITE-LINED TANAGER** (*Tachyphonus rufus*) – This species exhibits strong sexual dimorphism and is conspicuous at the feeders at AWNC.

**SILVER-BEAKED TANAGER** (*Ramphocelus carbo*)

**BLUE-GRAY TANAGER (BLUE-GRAY)** (*Thraupis episcopus nesophila*) – This is the beautiful but paler subspecies that occurs on Trinidad

**BLUE-GRAY TANAGER (BLUE-GRAY)** (*Thraupis episcopus berlepschi*) – This is the more intensely blue version restricted to Tobago

**PALM TANAGER** (*Thraupis palmarum*) – These guys are all over the place, making olive a sexy color

**SPECKLED TANAGER** (*Tangara guttata*) – Only up at Morne Bleu

**TURQUOISE TANAGER** (*Tangara mexicana*) – There are lots of good looking members of the *Tangara* genus but this has to be right up there

**BAY-HEADED TANAGER** (*Tangara gyrola*) – This is another species that seems particularly fond of the *Trema* trees when they are fruiting.

**BLUE DACNIS** (*Dacnis cayana*) – We spotted these beauties most often in the canopy of flame trees.

**PURPLE HONEYCREEPER** (*Cyanerpes caeruleus*) – The one wearing "yellow Wellies"

**RED-LEGGED HONEYCREEPER** (*Cyanerpes cyaneus*) – We never tired of seeing this beauty

**GREEN HONEYCREEPER** (*Chlorophanes spiza*) – One of the most common species coming to the feeders at AWNC

**BICOLORED CONEBILL** (*Conirostrum bicolor*) – We caught up to these nondescript little guys at Carli Bay.

**SAFFRON FINCH** (*Sicalis flaveola*) – The term "berm" has an expanding audience thanks to this bright yellow bird.

**GRASSLAND YELLOW-FINCH** (*Sicalis luteola*) – We chased these guys around for a bit at Aripo Livestock Station before nailing down good looks at the corner.

**BLUE-BLACK GRASSQUIT** (*Volatinia jacarina*) – Johnny Jump Up

**BANANAQUIT** (*Coereba flaveola*) – BQs are everywhere

**BLACK-FACED GRASSQUIT** (*Tiaris bicolor*) – We had to hop over to Tobago to catch up to this little bird

*Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)*

**RED-CROWNED ANT-TANAGER** (*Habia rubica*) – We had this species a couple times on the grounds of AWNC but never a good view

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

**RED-BREASTED MEADOWLARK** (*Sturnella militaris*) – The teed up male on our way out of Aripo Livestock Station was vibrant.

**CARIB GRACKLE** (*Quiscalus lugubris*) – The ones at Manzanilla Beach seemed anxious to help us clean up our picnic.

**YELLOW-HOODED BLACKBIRD** (*Chrysomus icterocephalus*) – The Trincity sewage ponds seems to be the only reliable place you can still see this species on our tour route.

**SHINY COWBIRD** (*Molothrus bonariensis*) – A few here and there

**GIANT COWBIRD** (*Molothrus oryzivorus*) – We saw these crow-sized birds at Nariva Swamp and on Tobago.

**EPAULET ORIOLE (MORICHE)** (*Icterus cayanensis chrysocephalus*) – You had to be quick out of the van to catch up to this bird. We drove up to a spot where a pair was nest building (thanks Mahase!) and had an individual singing in the open upon arrival. Unfortunately, it wasn't interested in an audience and we never saw it again.

**YELLOW ORIOLE** (*Icterus nigrogularis*) – What a gorgeous bird

**YELLOW-RUMPED CACIQUE** (*Cacicus cela*) – Standing under the colony in Morne La Croix was a real treat.

**CRESTED OROPENDOLA** (*Psarocolius decumanus*) – Their bubbly calls are as much fun as their pendant nests.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

**TRINIDAD EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia trinitatis*) – Mahase knew just where to stop along the road below Verdant Vale. The male seemed like it must have been on the take as it held its perch in the wide open for repeated scope views.

**VIOLACEOUS EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia violacea*) – All over the feeders at AWNC

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**MAMMALS**

**PALLAS'S LONG-TONGUED BAT** (*Glossophaga soricina*) – We saw these guys at dusk and dawn daily at AWNC. These amazing creatures are reported to have the highest metabolic rate among mammals. Check out Doug's slow motion video!

**SILKY ANTEATER** (*Cyclopes didactylus*) – Our Caroni Swamp guide steered the boat right underneath one sleeping the day away.

**RED-TAILED SQUIRREL** (*Sciurus granatensis*) – Our best look was up at Gilpin Trace

**RED-RUMPED AGOUTI** (*Dasyprocta agouti*) – Lots under the feeders at AWNC this year

Herps

**GREEN IGUANA** (*Iguana iguana*) – One descended the tree adjacent to the veranda as if it wanted its picture taken

**GIANT AMEIVA** (*Ameiva ameiva*) – The pattern of this common lizard is highly variable with age and gender.

**GOLDEN TEGU** (*Tupinambis teguixin*) – These boldly patterned lizards are formidable predators.

**TREE BOA** (*Corallus ruschenbergerii*) – The local guides are really tuned into spotting these constrictors all curled up in the trees at Caroni Swamp.

**SPECTACLED CAIMAN** (*Caiman crocodilus*) – Some good looks at Tobago Plantations

**CANE TOAD** (*Rhinella marina*) – A couple real whoppers at Aripo Livestock Station during our night drive

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**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

Harlequin Beetle (*Acrocinus longimanus*): This was the spectacularly large and colorful beetle that clung to the wall of the gazebo at AWNC.

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**Totals for the tour: 225 bird taxa and 4 mammal taxa**