



Field Guides Tour Report

Trinidad & Tobago II 2017

Dec 29, 2017 to Jan 7, 2018

Megan Edwards Crewe with Mahase Ramlal & Jason Radix

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



Scarlet Ibises going to roost provided some avian "fireworks" on our last afternoon in Trinidad. Photo by participant Tony Quezon.

There's nothing like some tropical "fireworks" to welcome in the new year, particularly when it means relaxing amidst warmth and lush greenery while much of your home country is shoveling mountains of snow and shivering through yet another polar vortex -- multiplied by a "bomb cyclone"! The islands of Trinidad and Tobago treated us well, offering up a plethora of birds -- as well as some picturesque scenery, comfortable accommodations, some friendly locals and plenty of tasty food. We notched up most of the country's marquee species (though the endemic Trinidad Piping-Guan wasn't one of them), many of them seen very well indeed.

We started our tour on Trinidad, where we traversed much of the northern half of the island, from the steamy mangrove forests and vast rice fields of the west to the coconut plantations and freshwater swamplands of the east, and from the dry, scrubby savannas of the interior to the cool, foggy forests of the Northern Range. The brightly colored (and not so brightly colored) "fireworks" here are almost too numerous to name! Gaudy Purple and Green honeycreepers, Violaceous Euphonias and gangs of Bananaquits swarmed over Asa Wright's fruit feeders. Oilbirds peered from fruit paste nests in a shadowed cave. A Bearded Bellbird gave us an ear-splitting command performance from mere yards away, his bizarre throat wattles swinging. A multitude of hummingbirds, ranging from tiny Tufted Coquettes and White-chinned Emeralds to pugnacious White-necked Jacobins and glittering Blue-chinned Sapphires -- plus a single Brown Violetear and a single Long-billed Starthroat, both less common on the islands -- jostled over feeders and vervain flowers. A trio of Long-winged Harriers rocked over a rice field. A Pinnated Bittern poked its narrow head out of the reeds and froze there, eyeing us beadily for long minutes.

A huge-eyed Boat-billed Heron gazed from its leafy perch. A Bat Falcon rocketed past several times, then swooped up to a dead snag to dismember its prey. A Sooty Grassquit sang softly from a bamboo stand while a pair of Pale-breasted Spinetails cavorted below it. White-bearded Manakins snapped between dance poles. Tiny Green-rumped Parrotlets chattered from a leafy arbor. A pair of Mangrove Rails stepped deliberately among the mangrove roots. An intent Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl tooted challenges. A soggy young Rufous Crab-Hawk sat despondently right over our picnic shelter. And our final evening's experience in Caroni Swamp was a wonderful finale to our stay on the island -- watching skeins of brilliantly-hued Scarlet Ibis flash against the dark mangroves as they headed for their roost island.

The New Year "fireworks" continued on Tobago, where hordes of Rufous-vented Chachalacas scrambled along tree branches, a White-tailed Sabrewing danced along a flowered road edge, Yellow-legged and White-necked thrushes gobbled berries in a roadside tree, and a stunning pair of Trinidad Motmots ALMOST let us reach out and touch them. Male Blue-backed Manakins plucked fruits from a bush, hovering like giant, fat hummingbirds. Red-billed Tropicbirds soared past our lofty viewpoint, screaming in terror when the lurking Magnificent Frigatebirds launched their attack runs, and a fuzzy, alert tropicbird chick peered at us from the shelter of its parent's body. A Brown Booby stood imperiously on a rocky coast, watching our boat approach. A furtive, peachy-bellied Mangrove Cuckoo broke a 25-year jinx. And a busy mob of Ruddy Turnstones pattered through the hotel restaurant, taking morsels of our dinners from our fingertips.

Thanks for helping to make this trip such fun. Your easy camaraderie, flexibility in coping with lousy weather and changed plans, help in spotting birds (and other things!) and kind regard for each other really made this one a pleasure to lead. I hope to see you all again in the field somewhere soon. Meanwhile, best wishes for the new year!

-- Megan

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

BIRDS

Tinamidae (Tinamous)

LITTLE TINAMOU (*Crypturellus soui*) – We heard the quavering whistles of this secretive species on several days, both in the mountain forests of the Northern Range and in the flat lowlands of Waller Field. Unfortunately, we never came close to actually laying eyes on one! [*]

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – Several dozen wary birds kept an eye on us from the far end of one of the ponds at Tobago Plantations. Eventually, they decided we were okay and went back to some vigorous preening.

Cracidae (Guans, Chachalacas, and Curassows)

RUFIOUS-VENTED CHACHALACA (*Ortalis ruficauda*) – Abundant across much of Tobago, including several raucous pairs challenging each other at the Bon Accord sewage ponds, a dozen or so scuttling up along branches and flapping across the parking lot at Grafton Estates, and others serving as VERY early morning alarm clocks at Blue Waters Inn. This is Tobago's national bird.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

LEAST GREBE (*Tachybaptus dominicus*) – A single bird floated among the water hyacinth at the Bon Accord sewage ponds, and a pair did swim lazily along the edge of another sewage pond at Tobago Plantations. That golden eye in the dark gray face is quite striking!

Phaethontidae (Tropicbirds)

RED-BILLED TROPICBIRD (*Phaethon aethereus*) – Dozens sailed past us at the viewpoint on Little Tobago, and an adult brooded a fluffy, alert chick on a nest just a few meters down a steep path near the overlook -- unfortunately, a SLIMY steep path, no thanks to the rain! It was clear, from the number of approaches that some of the birds made, that landing is no mean feat for these aerially graceful birds.

Fregatidae (Frigatebirds)

MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD (*Fregata magnificens*) – Regular along the coast of both islands, with especially close views of a few of the thugs hanging over Little Tobago, waiting for passing tropicbirds to return with their catch. We saw a few aerial pursuits, including a few tag-team efforts, before the rain swept in.

Sulidae (Boobies and Gannets)

BROWN BOOBY (*Sula leucogaster*) – A fabulous, up-close-and-personal view of one sitting on a rocky headland near the boat dock on Little Tobago (thanks to our captain's fine boat handling), with others scoped from the island's viewpoint. It always seems somewhat incongruous to see these seabirds nesting in trees -- though they certainly appeared to have far less trouble landing than the tropicbirds did!

RED-FOOTED BOOBY (*Sula sula*) – By far the more common of the boobies on Little Tobago, with scores sprinkled in treetops all along the slopes and others winging past offshore. We saw all possible color morphs, and had plenty of good scope views of their distinctively red feet.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – We saw a sprinkling of them near our picnic spot in Carli Bay (including one fishing in the waters just offshore), with dozens of others winging past our boat in Caroni Swamp, headed for the big roost tree.

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

ANHINGA (*Anhinga anhinga*) – Our first was a female, which shared a downed snag at the Nariva River mouth with a Cocoli Heron. We saw others in (and above) the mangroves around the Bon Accord sewage ponds.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

BROWN PELICAN (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) – Common around Carli Bay, with some snoozing on the anchored boats and others flapping ponderously past in small groups.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

PINNATED BITTERN (*Botaurus pinnatus*) – Some great spotting by Mahase netted us scope views of the head and stripey neck of one amid the reeds at Nariva Swamp. They certainly blend in to their typical surroundings extraordinarily well!

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – One rested on a low concrete wall separating two ponds at the Bon Accord sewage works. This is a winter visitor to Tobago.

COCOI HERON (*Ardea cocoi*) – One rested atop a dead snag wedged in the sand at the Nariva River mouth, hunched against the rain, and we found a second flying among the mangroves in Caroni Swamp. This is a scarce non-breeding visitor to Trinidad (and, very occasionally, to Tobago).

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – Scattered birds at wetlands on both islands, with dozens on the mudflats at Brickfield. This is a common resident on both islands, with additional birds arriving from points north in the winter.

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*) – Like the previous species, this one was widespread in wet spots across both islands. Particularly thrilling was the mob we passed through on our way to the roost island in Caroni Swamp; a river of them approached from one side, swinging up and over our boat as we raced by.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*) – A few in Nariva Swamp and at the Bon Accord sewage ponds, but we found the biggest concentrations at Brickfield, where dozens patrolled the mudflats, and nearby Caroni Swamp, where they prowled among the mangroves.

TRICOLORED HERON (*Egretta tricolor*) – A few lurked among the zillions of Little Blue Herons on the mudflats at Brickfield, but they really came into their own in Caroni Swamp, where scores flapped low across the open waters, headed for the roost island. Unlike the showy Scarlet Ibis, these vanished into the mangroves right at the waterline.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Small groups of them padded around in the wet fields at Nariva Swamp and Tobago Plantations, and others foraged in the scruffy fields of the Aripo savanna or picked among the garbage and decaying fish at Carli Bay, Orange Valley and Brickfield. This species is a common resident of both islands.

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*) – One stood on a low concrete wall at the Bon Accord sewage ponds, focused intently on the water below, and several others flapped past there. We saw others at Tobago Plantations.

STRIATED HERON (*Butorides striata*) – Nice looks at several in the ditches at Nariva Swamp, with another hunting the water's edge at Carli Bay. The gray face and neck of this small heron separate it from the similar Green Heron.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – Some nice spotting by Debra netted us our first -- a spotty youngster lurking in the reeds at Nariva Swamp. We found a somewhat older immature bird (probably a one-year-old) in the mangroves at Bon Accord.

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nyctanassa violacea*) – One snoozed under some distant mangroves at Brickfield (visible in the scopes), and others shared their roost with the next species high in some mangroves en route to the Caroni Swamp roost.

BOAT-BILLED HERON (*Cochlearius cochlearius*) – One roosted with some Yellow-crowned Night-Herons in Caroni Swamp, gazing down at us with big, dark eyes from its perch high in the mangroves; it took some concerted effort, but we all eventually got a view of its huge, shovel-shaped bill. This is a rare resident of Trinidad.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

SCARLET IBIS (*Eudocimus ruber*) – WOW!! The spectacle of hundreds (thousands?) of these gorgeous birds headed to roost, streaming low across the water or appearing suddenly overhead like so many avian fireworks, was definitely a trip highlight -- and a fitting finale for our stay on Trinidad. This is Trinidad's national bird.

GLOSSY IBIS (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – A youngster foraged on the mudflats at Brickfield, conveniently close to a young Scarlet Ibis for comparison. This is a rare visitor to Trinidad, with only a handful of records in the past decade.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*) – Abundant on Trinidad, with hundreds seen circling in vast kettles over the flatlands, and drifting singles elsewhere.

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*) – Far less abundant than the previous species, but still common across Trinidad.

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – Reasonably common along the western coast of Trinidad, with some seen flapping over roadside ponds and lakes, a few perched on posts and trees, and at least one munching on a bloody fish.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

PEARL KITE (*Gampsonyx swainsonii*) – One perched on a utility wire in the middle of Port-of-Spain was a surprise; they're usually found in dry, open savanna. It gave us all great scope views before flapping off over the rooftops.

BLACK HAWK-EAGLE (*Spizaetus tyrannus*) – One soared high above the forest visible from the summit viewpoint on the Blanchisseuse road -- great spotting, Tony! Its flight profile -- huge, with a long, narrow tail and a "pinched-in" base to the wings -- is distinctive. Tony got nice pictures of another soaring over the buildings at Asa Wright before breakfast one morning.

LONG-WINGED HARRIER (*Circus buffoni*) – A trio -- a male and two females -- interacted over the rice fields edging the western highway on Trinidad, flashing their distinctive white rump patches as they coursed back and forth.

COMMON BLACK HAWK (*Buteogallus anthracinus*) – Common on Trinidad, where we had great views of them perched and flying. The calling pair circling over the Blanchisseuse road -- showing their huge, broad wings -- were particularly nice.

RUFIOUS CRAB HAWK (*Buteogallus aequinoctialis*) – A despondent youngster, hunched against the pouring rain, gave us the chance to study it from all sides at leisure when it perched in several trees near our picnic lunch spot (under an elevated house near Nariva Swamp). Its overall paleness helped to separate it from a young Common Black Hawk, and the length of its tail relative to its wings (short, so that the tail barely protruded past the wings), the yellow lores and eye-surround, and the lack of any pale bars on the tail feathers helped to separate it from an immature Gray-lined Hawk. This is a rare visitor to Trinidad, though there is growing evidence (like the presence of young birds) that suggests a small number may be resident.

SAVANNA HAWK (*Buteogallus meridionalis*) – Regular among the scattered trees on "Coconut Alley" (Trinidad's eastern "highway") with others over Nariva Swamp and the Aripo savanna. This long-legged species regularly hunts on the ground.

WHITE HAWK (*Pseudastur albicollis*) – One perched high in a tree along the road down to Brasso Seco gave us great opportunity for scope study; many of us saw another soaring over the road near our picnic lunch spot there -- sadly, while some were making use of the nearby facilities! The subspecies on the island (*albicollis*) is much darker overall than are the birds from Central America.

GRAY-LINED HAWK (*Buteo nitidus*) – Regular along Coconut Alley, where we saw mostly adults (and only a few youngsters) perched along roadside wires. We found others around Caroni Swamp. This is the common small Buteo of the lowlands.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (*Buteo platypterus*) – An adult perched over the Blanchisseuse road, in the Northern Range, was undoubtedly a migrant down from points north for the winter; the species is an uncommon visitor to Trinidad. We saw another along the Gilpin Trace; the resident subspecies "antillarum" is found on Tobago.

SHORT-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo brachyurus*) – Scattered birds seen on Trinidad: a quick late-day flyby at Waller Field during our picnic supper, a couple of more satisfying views over the Blanchisseuse road and the Aripo savanna, and a close bird soaring over Brickfield. All of the birds we saw were the light morph, which is far more common on Trinidad than the dark morph.

ZONE-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo albonotatus*) – Fabulous views of one soaring right over our heads on a quiet back road in the Aripo savanna.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

MANGROVE RAIL (ATLANTIC) (*Rallus longirostris pelodramus*) – A pair of noisy birds at Orange Valley scuttled through the mangroves practically to our boot tips!

GRAY-COWLED WOOD-RAIL (*Aramides cajaneus*) – One flashed across the road in front of our bus as we headed towards the boat dock for our trip through Caroni Swamp. Fortunately, for those who didn't happen to be looking in the right direction at the time, we found it (or another) at the start of our boat trip, and followed it as it rummaged along the edges of a tangled mangrove channel.

PURPLE GALLINULE (*Porphyrio martinica*) – A single shy bird at the Bon Accord sewage ponds was followed by a satisfying bevy of them among the reedy vegetation of the ponds at Tobago Plantations.

COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*) – Common around the Bon Accord and Tobago Plantations ponds, often in nice comparison with the previous species.

Aramidae (Limpkin)

LIMPKIN (*Aramus guarauna*) – Three birds along Coconut Alley, all perched up in small trees out in the more marshy areas.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-NECKED STILT (*Himantopus mexicanus*) – One strode around the mudflats at Brickfield on its long pink legs. This is an uncommon bird on Trinidad between November and February; most depart for the South American mainland during the non-breeding season.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

SOUTHERN LAPWING (*Vanellus chilensis*) – Small numbers in scattered open locations on both islands, including a quartet panting in the shade of a bush in Nariva Swamp, a group sheltering under the mangroves at the edge of the mudflats at Brickfield, and several pairs scurrying around the ponds at Tobago Plantations.

SEMPALMATED PLOVER (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) – Several dozen mixed with the peeps on the edges of the mudflats at Brickfield, occasionally trotting out from the shelter of the mangroves. This is a winter visitor to Trinidad and Tobago. [b]

Jacaniidae (Jacanas)

WATTLED JACANA (*Jacana jacana*) – Found in wet spots on both islands, especially in areas with vegetation floating on the surface of the water. We saw quite a few stripey-faced youngsters trailing along behind their parents, and got to see their extra long toes in action as they pattered across lily pads and water hyacinth leaves.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

WHIMBREL (*Numenius phaeopus*) – Best seen at Brickfield, where several stalked in the mudflats, probing for prey with their long, curved beaks. [b]

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*) – There are few things more endearing than seeing normally wary birds up close -- and the only way the turnstones in the bar at Blue Waters Inn could have been closer is if they had actually stood on someone! As it was, we had them taking tiny bits of cooked chicken from our fingers. [b]

SANDERLING (*Calidris alba*) – A group of 20 or so huddled on the beach at the Nariva River mouth, trying to avoid the worst of the squally winds. [b]

SEMPALMATED SANDPIPER (*Calidris pusilla*) – Dozens sheltered under the mangroves at Brickfield during the heat of the day, with some preening or poking desultorily in the mud. [b]

WESTERN SANDPIPER (*Calidris mauri*) – Many mingled with the previous species under the mangroves at Brickfield. Their longer, thin, slightly droopy-tipped bills helped to separate them. [b]

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*) – Singles in various wet spots on both islands, including numbers fluttering down the mangrove channels in front of our boat in Caroni Swamp, and one parading down a concrete dividing wall at the Bon Accord sewage ponds. [b]

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – A dozen or so picked along the edges of the mudflats at Brickfield, in nice comparison with the more robust next species. We saw another hunting in a channel beside the road at Bon Accord. [b]

WILLET (*Tringa semipalmata*) – Dozens foraged on the Brickfield mudflats or snoozed under nearby mangroves. The uniformly plain upperparts of this big species, and its plain gray beak and legs, help to separate it from the more patterned (and yellow-legged!) yellowlegs -- as does the fancy wing pattern several flashed for us as they shifted positions. [b]

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*) – Some of us had good scope views of one right beside a Greater Yellowlegs and a Willet on the mudflats at Brickfield (after many had retreated to the shade of the nearby bus). We had another, much closer bird in a roadside channel at Bon Accord. This is a far more delicate species than is the Greater Yellowlegs, with thinner legs and a smaller, more finely-tipped beak. [b]

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

LAUGHING GULL (*Leucophaeus atricilla*) – Surprisingly scarce this year (though that might have been due to the fact that the tide was so far out), with only distant views of a mob following an offshore fishing boat.

BLACK SKIMMER (CINERASCENS) (*Rynchops niger cinerascens*) – A big group roosted far out on the mudflats at Brickfield, and a scattered few scythed their way along the edges of the water. The birds here are non-breeding migrants, but from South, rather than North, America. [a]

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Common, particularly around cities and towns, on both islands. [I]

PALE-VENTED PIGEON (*Patagioenas cayennensis*) – Nice looks at several of these big pigeons in trees near the parking area at Grafton Estate. Though they're found on both islands, this species is far more common on Tobago.

SCALED PIGEON (*Patagioenas speciosa*) – A few of these big, dark pigeons flew past over the forest -- always singly -- as we birded along the northern side of the Northern Range. Unfortunately, we never found a perched bird to really get a look at.

RUDDY GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina talpacoti*) – Abundant in the lowlands of both islands, with especially nice views of some trundling around under the coconut trees on Trinidad's eastern side, and others sharing a leafy trellis with some Green-rumped Parrotlets.

WHITE-TIPPED DOVE (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – Though we spotted a few in flight along Trinidad's "Coconut Alley", our best views came on Tobago, where we saw some along the trail at Grafton Estate, and others on the Gilpin Trace.

GRAY-FRONTED DOVE (*Leptotila rufaxilla*) – One on a nest along the Guacharo trail (down to the Oilbird cave) let us get super scope studies -- and seemed completely unfazed by our presence. It's not often you get to look into a nest at eye level! [N]

EARED DOVE (*Zenaida auriculata*) – Quite common around the Bon Accord sewage works.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

SMOOTH-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga ani*) – Common on both islands, often in sizable groups. The soggy gangs trying to dry out (and feed) along the Kernaham road through Nariva Swamp were particularly entertaining.

SQUIRREL CUCKOO (*Piaya cayana*) – Our only sighting was one from the veranda one morning -- and, sadly, not everyone was there at the time! This species is named for its long tail, and its habit of bounding along branches rather like a squirrel might.

MANGROVE CUCKOO (*Coccyzus minor*) – The jinx is broken! We had splendid views of a peachy bird in the mangroves around one of the ponds at Tobago Plantations, capping TWENTY FIVE YEARS of searching by Tony and Suzanne.

Strigidae (Owls)

SPECTACLED OWL (*Pulsatrix perspicillata*) – We heard two calling from the trees down the hill from the Asa Wright veranda on several evenings, but couldn't locate the birds themselves. [*]

FERRUGINOUS PYGMY-OWL (*Glauucidium brasilianum*) – This little owl, on the other hand, proved far more cooperative! Thanks to some excellent spotting by Tony, we all had great scope views of one as it tooted away at the top of a very tall tree along the Guacharo trail. It sat, surrounded by an ever-moving halo of small, angry birds, for many long minutes.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

SHORT-TAILED NIGHTHAWK (*Lurocalis semitorquatus*) – Seen several days from the veranda at the Asa Wright Nature Centre, with quick, but nice, views of at least three or four making repeated forays over the cabin just downhill. They (and a host of bats) were there for 10 minutes or so; there must have been an insect hatch occurring!

COMMON PAURAUQUE (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) – Lovely views of several in the spotlight at Waller Field, including some that let us walk up quite close, and others examined in the scopes. We certainly all heard them calling -- repeatedly!

WHITE-TAILED NIGHTJAR (*Hydropsalis cayennensis*) – Less common than the previous species at Waller Field, but we did spot a few flying off the big runways into the darkness, and -- after much searching -- found one hunting on the short grassy edge of one of the roads. This species is considerably smaller than the previous one.

Nyctibiidae (Potoos)

COMMON POTOO (*Nyctibius griseus*) – Great scope views of a couple of these huge-eyed nocturnal hunters, perched on trees along the roads at Waller Field.

Steatornithidae (Oilbird)

OILBIRD (*Steatornis caripensis*) – The Oilbird cave at Asa Wright is among the easiest in the world to access, though weeks of rain rendered the path far slipperier than it normally is -- and meant we had to wade across a creek to get to the viewing platform. The fine views we got made it worth the trouble though -- several alert birds resting on their fruit paste nests.

Apodidae (Swifts)

SHORT-TAILED SWIFT (*Chaetura brachyura*) – Dozens flashed back and forth through the skies above our picnic site at Carli Bay, and we saw others at Bon Accord and over the Stewart trail (near Blue Waters Inn). As its name suggests, this species is distinctively short-tailed; it also has an eye-catching straw-colored rump and uppertail.

GRAY-RUMPED SWIFT (*Chaetura cinereiventris*) – The most abundant of the tour's swifts -- though in far smaller numbers than usual, presumably because of the weather. We saw them zooming over the forest far downhill from Asa Wright, and over the christophine fields along the Blanchisseuse road.

FORK-TAILED PALM-SWIFT (*Tachornis squamata*) – A little group of these long-tailed swifts swirled over part of the Waller Field complex, seen from a road edge outside the property one afternoon.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

WHITE-NECKED JACOBIN (*Florisuga mellivora*) – Abundant around the feeders at Asa Wright, often sipping sugar water within inches of people's heads. We saw a few wilder birds in the forest along the Gilpin Trace.

RUFOUS-BREASTED HERMIT (*Glaucois hirsutus*) – At least two visited the feeders at Asa Wright each day, and we saw others at along the Blanchisseuse road and the Gilpin Trace. On this tour, this is the only hermit to lack a long white tip to its central tail feathers.

GREEN HERMIT (*Phaethornis guy*) – At least one seen most days at Asa Wright -- often in the main hall, where one enterprising female had built her nest on the chain supporting the hanging lamp. A few folks got to see her feeding her two chicks, which is a bit like watching sword swallowers in action! [N]

LITTLE HERMIT (*Phaethornis longuemareus*) – A few scattered birds seen foraging on red *Salvia* flowers along the edges of the Blanchisseuse road. As its name suggests, this is the smallest of the island's hermits.

BROWN VIOLETEAR (*Colibri delphinae*) – One visited the feeders at Asa Wright on several days, often perching for extended periods on one of the little dead trees strapped to the feeding trays (to provide "better backgrounds" for photographers). This is a scarce resident, which is seldom seen on Trinidad.

RUBY-TOPAZ HUMMINGBIRD (*Chrysolampis mosquitus*) – One male had claimed the vervain bushes near one of the uphill cabins as his own, and spent long minutes resting in the bushes between brief bouts of nectar sipping. We saw others at Tobago Plantations and along the Gilpin Trace.

GREEN-THROATED MANGO (*Anthracothorax viridigula*) – At least three males seen perched up along the first part of our boat trip out to the Caroni Swamp roost. Though very similar to the next species, this one has a green (rather than dark) throat and a mostly-black undertail.

BLACK-THROATED MANGO (*Anthracothorax nigricollis*) – A couple of males were regular visitors to the feeders at Asa Wright, with others seen at Nariva Swamp and Morne La Croix on Trinidad. Our only good look at a female came in a flowering immortelle tree along the lower Gilpin Trace; we could see her telltale dark chest stripe as she visited the blossoms.

TUFTED COQUETTE (*Lophornis ornatus*) – Fabulous views of these little stunners on most days at Asa Wright, including two males sharing some dead twigs near one of the uphill cabins, and others jousting over the vervain bushes along the driveway.

LONG-BILLED STARTHROAT (*Heliomaster longirostris*) – A single bird seen daily around the Asa Wright feeders was a treat; this is another scarce resident on Trinidad.

BLUE-CHINNED SAPPHIRE (*Chlorestes notata*) – Best seen along the upper staircase at Asa Wright one morning, when we found one feeding right beside the path. We found another visiting the flowers along the Discovery trail.

WHITE-TAILED SABREWING (*Campylopterus ensipennis*) – Our first flashed along the Roxborough-Bloody Bay road, visiting a host of little yellow flowers growing on its grassy edge. Fortunately for those who somehow missed its antics, we found another flitting among the trees on the Gilpin Trace.

WHITE-CHESTED EMERALD (*Amazilia brevirostris*) – Another common species around the Asa Wright feeders, often perching in nearby bushes while digesting.

COPPER-RUMPED HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia tobaci*) – Easily the most common and widespread of the tour's hummingbirds, seen in numbers every day.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

GREEN-BACKED TROGON (*Trogon viridis*) – A female grabbing berries in a fig tree visible from the Asa Wright entertained us before breakfast one morning, thanks to some stellar spotting from Carol. We found an even closer male along the Blanchisseuse road the following day. This species was split from the former White-tailed Trogon complex.

GUIANAN TROGON (*Trogon violaceus*) – A pair along the road to Brasso Seco gave us a lovely chance to study them well. We saw others along Asa Wright's Discovery trail, and found a male from the veranda on our last pre-breakfast morning there. This was split from the former Violaceous Trogon.

COLLARED TROGON (*Trogon collaris*) – One at the top of Asa Wright's Guacharo trail performed nicely, giving us a chance to catch our breath after our climb. We saw others on the Blanchisseuse road and found both male and female along the Gilpin Trace. This is the only red-bellied trogon on Trinidad and Tobago, and the only trogon found on Tobago.

Momotidae (Motmots)

TRINIDAD MOTMOT (*Momotus bahamensis*) – After finding our first in a darkening forest along the Blanchisseuse road (on our drive down for our picnic supper and night drive at Waller Field), we had a much more satisfying encounter with an incredibly confiding pair at Grafton Estate, with others along the Gilpin Trace. This is one of the country's two endemics, recently split from the Blue-crowned Motmot. [E]

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

RINGED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle torquata*) – A couple of these big kingfishers -- largest in the New World -- perched on roadside wires at Nariva Swamp.

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle alcyon*) – One of these winter visitors flashed in and landed in a mangrove tree near the Bon Accord sewage ponds, resting for a few minutes before flashing away again. [b]

GREEN KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle americana*) – A few of these small kingfishers darted down the mangrove channels ahead of our boat in Caroni Swamp, occasionally landing where we could get a good look at them.

AMERICAN PYGMY KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle aenea*) – Yay! Some great spotting by Mahase netted us fabulous views of a tiny male sitting only a couple of feet off the ground right beside the road in to the Caroni Swamp visitor's center.

Galbulidae (Jacamars)

RUFOUS-TAILED JACAMAR (*Galbula ruficauda*) – We found our first -- a male -- hunting along the road near Brasso Seco, then found a female doing the same at Grafton Estate. But the busy pair along the Gilpin Trace probably gave us our best views.

Ramphastidae (Toucans)

CHANNEL-BILLED TOUCAN (*Ramphastos vitellinus*) – We heard them yelping from the forest down the hill from the Asa Wright veranda on several mornings, but our best views came along the Blanchisseuse road, where we found some sitting up in treetops.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

RED-CROWNED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes rubricapillus*) – We had a splendid encounter with one at the edge of the Bon Accord sewage works; it worked its way through a low tree mere yards from where we stood. We had nice looks at another along the Stewart track, up the hill from the Blue Waters Inn. This woodpecker isn't found on Trinidad.

GOLDEN-OLIVE WOODPECKER (*Colaptes rubiginosus*) – We heard the loud shriek of this woodpecker far more regularly than we saw the birds themselves, but we did catch up with several along the Blanchisseuse road, and others on the Gilpin Trace and nearby Roxborough-Bloody Bay road.

LINEATED WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus lineatus*) – A loudly calling pair of birds sailed across the clearing in front of the Asa Wright veranda our first morning, landing in the big tree just downhill. We found another industriously excavating a nest hole in a snag beside a back road in the Aripo savanna, and yet another doing the same in a telephone pole at Carli Bay. [N]

CRIMSON-CRESTED WOODPECKER (*Campephilus melanoleucos*) – One hitched its way up a succession of palm trees along "Coconut Alley" on Trinidad's east coast.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

CRESTED CARACARA (*Caracara cheriway*) – One strode around a cleared area along "Coconut Alley", only stopping briefly to check us out as we piled out of the minibus. We saw another at Caroni Swamp.

YELLOW-HEADED CARACARA (*Milvago chimachima*) – Our first was an adult perched up in a dead tree beside Trinidad's main east-west highway. We found a couple of youngsters mooching around the picnic site at Carli Bay, and spotted a couple of others over the Bon Accord sewage ponds and at Tobago Plantations.

MERLIN (*Falco columbarius*) – One rocketed past our picnic site at Waller Field, landing briefly in a nearby treetop. We found another perched bird that allowed nice scope studies on a back road in the Aripo savanna, and still another on our drive from the airport to our hotel on Tobago.

BAT FALCON (*Falco rufifigularis*) – One hunting near the Asa Wright veranda on our first evening snagged a passing bat and proceeded to dismember and gobble it down on a nearby snag while we ogled through the scopes. It was back in the same tree again the next morning -- though without prey this time.

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – We had especially nice views of one perched atop a cell phone tower at the edge of the little town of Cumoto (where our presence attracted one of the locals over for a look through the scope), with another hunting near the roost island in Caroni Swamp and yet another along the east coast's "Coconut Alley". [b]

Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots)

LILAC-TAILED PARROTLET (*Touit batavicus*) – A trio shot over our picnic supper spot at Waller Field, calling as they went.

BLUE-HEADED PARROT (*Pionus menstruus*) – A little group of four flew in and landed on a nearby utility wire as we birded in Morne La Croix -- which meant great scope looks for all. Their odd scientific name is a (perhaps rather rude?) reference to their red vents.

YELLOW-CROWNED PARROT (*Amazona ochrocephala*) – A few very soggy birds huddled among the palm fronds in some of the coconut palms along Trinidad's eastern flank, looking totally fed up. And we could certainly sympathize!

ORANGE-WINGED PARROT (*Amazona amazonica*) – Common and widespread throughout, seen in good numbers nearly every day.

- GREEN-RUMPED PARROTLET** (*Forpus passerinus*) – Particularly good views of a little group resting and chattering in an arbor behind a house in the Aripo savanna, with others near the start of our Caroni Swamp boat trip, and still more around the Bon Accord sewage ponds.
- RED-BELLIED MACAW** (*Orthopsittaca manilatus*) – Arg! Three pairs flew over Cumoto, headed for an unknown roost; unfortunately, by the time we'd piled out of the minibus, they were long gone, and we never saw another one. Those long, pointed tails are distinctive though, and this species is considerably smaller than the next.
- BLUE-AND-YELLOW MACAW** (*Ara ararauna*) – A couple of these big macaws -- easily the largest of the psittacids found on the islands -- appeared to be investigating potential nest holes in some dead palm trunks in Nariva Swamp. This species was extirpated from Trinidad in the 1970s, but a reintroduction program (centered around Nariva Swamp) appears to be having some success.

Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)

- GREAT ANTSHRIKE** (*Taraba major*) – Those who ventured off the Asa Wright veranda for a pre-breakfast excursion on a soggy morning were rewarded by brief glimpses of a bold black and white male along the edge of the driveway near the security building.
- BLACK-CRESTED ANTSHRIKE** (*Sakesphorus canadensis*) – A pair in the mangroves at Orange Walk -- though the female proved to be far more obliging than her mate.
- BARRED ANTSHRIKE** (*Thamnophilus doliatus*) – Common and widespread, seen on nearly every day of the tour. The pair that hung around the main building at Asa Wright were particularly approachable (and regularly made quick visits to the feeders), and a male along the entrance drive to the Blue Waters Inn kept several of us well-entertained on an afternoon's outing.
- PLAIN ANTVIREO** (*Dysithamnus mentalis*) – One along the Gilpin Trace proved to be singularly uncooperative, moving off into the forest almost as soon as it was spotted.
- WHITE-FLANKED ANTWREN** (*Myrmotherula axillaris*) – After an unsatisfyingly brief encounter with a bird that quickly melted back into the forest along the Guacharo trail, we were happy to find a much more confiding pair along a little side track off the Blanchisseuse road. They danced all around us, part of a big mixed flock that also included Golden-hooded Manakins, Golden-crowned Warblers and more.
- WHITE-FRINGED ANTWREN** (*Formicivora grisea*) – Far less furtive than their Trinidadian cousins, these little antwrens were quite showy around the Bon Accord and Tobago Plantations sewage ponds. Some of us also had close looks at another pair along the Stewart trail.
- SILVERED ANTBIRD** (*Sclateria naevia*) – We heard the loud, descending song of this species echoing from the mangroves not far from our sheltered picnic spot on the day we explored Nariva Swamp, but the birds themselves never came close enough to see. [*]
- WHITE-BELLIED ANTBIRD** (*Myrmeciza longipes*) – This species, on the other hand, showed admirably! We found a trio -- presumably a pair with a fully-grown fledgling -- along the Blanchisseuse road. They gave us multiple great looks as they foraged their way through the understory. And what a great song!

Formicariidae (Antthrushes)

- BLACK-FACED ANTTHRUSH** (*Formicarius analis*) – We heard one calling (and calling and calling) from a little rise just up the hill from the Blanchisseuse road, but the bird itself just never appeared. Those who walked the Asa Wright entrance road one afternoon heard another for long minutes, but this time, we managed to find the bird itself, as it alternately preened and called from a spot on a little ridge. For some of us, only the head was visible -- and then, only when he stuck it well up into the air to sing!

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)

- GRAY-THROATED LEAFTOSSER** (*Sclerurus albicularis*) – Wow! One of these often furtive birds spent ages sitting and preening on a branch just up the hill from the Blanchisseuse road, giving us all multiple opportunities to study it in the scope. It's certainly nowhere near as strikingly colored as the field guides would have you believe!
- OLIVACEOUS WOODCREEPER** (*Sittasomus griseicapillus*) – We heard the quavering rise and fall of this small woodcreeper's song at several places along the Gilpin Trace. [*]
- PLAIN-BROWN WOODCREEPER** (*Dendrocincla fuliginosa*) – Some of the group spotted one from the Asa Wright veranda during an afternoon's break, but our best group views came the next day along a little track off the Blanchisseuse road, when we found one hitching its way up a trunk. This is the only Trinidad woodcreeper with no streaks or spots on its plumage.
- COCOA WOODCREEPER** (*Xiphorhynchus susurrans*) – Seen -- and heard -- on both islands, including one digging through bromeliads along the Blanchisseuse road, one not far from our Black-faced Antthrush along the Asa Wright entrance road, and one checking for tidbits along the Gilpin Trace.
- STRAIGHT-BILLED WOODCREEPER** (*Dendroplex picus*) – It took some patience, but we finally connected with one in Caroni Swamp (after hearing several others). This tends to be a bit of a mangrove specialist on Trinidad, unlike elsewhere in its range.
- YELLOW-CHINNED SPINETAIL** (*Certhiaxis cinnamomeus*) – A chirring bird flicked through the roadside weeds, creeping ever closer along the Kernaham road into Nariva Swamp.
- PALE-BREASTED SPINETAIL** (*Synallaxis albescens*) – We heard the distinctively "sneezy" song of this furtive species on several days, and finally caught up with a pair -- apparently attending a giant stick nest -- just down the road from Verdant Vale. They twitched through the bare twigs around their nest, giving us great views. [N]
- STRIPE-BREASTED SPINETAIL** (*Synallaxis cinnamomea*) – Some of the group got quick looks at a fairly uncooperative (though very vocal) pair along the Blanchisseuse road, but our best views came along the Gilpin Trace, where a pair danced along the hillsides on both sides of the path, occasionally perching right out in the open.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

- SOUTHERN BEARDLESS-TYRANULET** (*Camptostoma obsoletum*) – Quick looks for some at one high above the Blanchisseuse road -- quickly abandoned when the first Channel-billed Toucans were spotted. Tony found another (for nice pictures!) in the gardens at Asa Wright, where many of us heard its clear, whistled song.
- YELLOW-BELLIED ELAENIA** (*Elaenia flavogaster*) – Two, looking like spiky-headed little Myiarchus flycatchers, twitched along the side of Kernaham road, seen as we started our exploration of Nariva Swamp. We saw plenty of others on Tobago, where they're quite common -- including two along the edge of the sewage ponds at Tobago Plantations.
- OLIVE-STRIPED FLYCATCHER** (*Mionectes olivaceus*) – One flitted through a fruiting tree along the Blanchisseuse road, sharing space with Bay-headed and Speckled tanagers. It was a bit challenging to find amidst all of the activity, but fortunately it was hungry, and thus stayed around long enough that everyone eventually got a look.

- OCHRE-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** (*Mionectes oleagineus*) – Quite common, particularly on Trinidad, where we saw them most days. One flicking through the fruiting trees around the Asa Wright veranda on several days (quickly distinguished by its peachy belly and its habit of regularly twitching one wing) gave us especially nice views.
- SLATY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER** (*Leptopogon superciliaris*) – One with a little mixed flock along the Blanchisseuse road. The black "ear muff" of this species helps to quickly identify it.
- EULER'S FLYCATCHER** (*Lathrotriccus euleri*) – Our first bounced across a pile of downed tree branches near the summit of the ridge along the Blanchisseuse road, and we found another along the Guacharo trail on our way down to the Oilbird cave.
- OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER** (*Contopus cooperi*) – One, perched up on a dead snag along the road down to Brasso Seco, returned again and again to the same branch between sallies out after prey. This is a scarce winter visitor to the islands. [b]
- TROPICAL PEWEE** (*Contopus cinereus*) – A couple of calling birds hunted over the Blanchisseuse road one morning. This species resembles North America's wood-pewees, though, as a non-migrant, it has much shorter wings.
- FUSCOUS FLYCATCHER** (*Cnemotriccus fuscatus*) – Several hunted low along the Gilpin Trace, including one dancing along at eye level on the lower stretch of the trail we started at.
- PIED WATER-TYRANT** (*Fluvicola pica*) – Several in the wet fields around Nariva Swamp, with another foraging among the mangrove roots near the start of our Caroni Swamp boat trip.
- WHITE-HEADED MARSH TYRANT** (*Arundinicola leucocephala*) – A few pairs along the Kernaham road (on the way in to Nariva Swamp), typically perched up near the top of a reed stem or bush. The locals call this one "Nunbird" -- a reference to the black and white plumage of the male.
- BRIGHT-RUMPED ATTLA** (*Attila spadiceus*) – We heard the maniacal laugh of this one from far downhill one morning during a pre-breakfast watch on the Asa Wright veranda. [*]
- VENEZUELAN FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus venezuelensis*) – A calling bird flicked along the top of one of the big immortelle trees on the lower bit of the Gilpin Trace, giving us the chance to study it in the scopes. Unlike the next species, this one has no rust stripe down the center of the undertail.
- BROWN-CRESTED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus tyrannulus*) – A couple of territorial birds along the jetty road at Orange Walk showed well as they worked along the edge of the mangroves. We saw others at Tobago Plantations (near where we found our Mangrove Cuckoo) and along the Roxborough-Bloody Bay road.
- GREAT KISKADEE** (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) – Common and widespread, sprinkled on roadside wires all across both islands. One noisy pair were regular visitors to the Asa Wright fruit feeders.
- BOAT-BILLED FLYCATCHER** (*Megarynchus pitangua*) – As frequently heard as seen, with their whiny calls echoing through many a woodland. We got fine looks at a couple hunting along the Blanchisseuse road, which allowed us to get looks at their distinctively big bills in the scopes, with others along the Guacharo trail and off the Asa Wright veranda.
- STREAKED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiodynastes maculatus*) – One hunting low along the Blanchisseuse road gave us the opportunity to study it from just about every conceivable angle.
- PIRATIC FLYCATCHER** (*Legatus leucophaeus*) – One perched low in a tree right across the road from our picnic lunch spot in the Arena Forest. The species gets its name from its habit of stealing recently finished oriole and cacique nests from their makers.
- SULPHURY FLYCATCHER** (*Tyrannopsis sulphurea*) – Two yelling from the top of one of the Moriche Palms at Waller Field were a highlight of our afternoon walk there -- though they made juggling our cups of rum punch and binoculars a bit more challenging!
- TROPICAL KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – Abundant throughout, with multiples seen on most days. This, along with the Great Kiskadee, was one of the common "roadside wire" birds.
- GRAY KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus dominicensis*) – One on a roadside wire at Morne La Croix, with others around the Bon Accord sewage ponds. This species is much more common on Tobago than on Trinidad.

Cotingidae (Cotingas)

- BEARDED BELLBIRD** (*Procnias averano*) – Wow! After slithering our way down the slimy trail to the bellbird lek (no thanks to all that rain), we were rewarded with a fantastic 20-minute encounter with a bird that sat literally yards away from us, vocally competing with a more distant bird. It seemed completely unconcerned with chatting groups passing right below it. And its calls made our ears hurt!

Pipridae (Manakins)

- BLUE-BACKED MANAKIN** (*Chiroxiphia pareola*) – After an all-too-brief encounter with our first, at Grafton Estate, we had far more satisfying views along the Gilpin Trace and the Roxborough-Bloody Bay road, where we found a few gorgeous males snatching berries from roadside/trailside bushes.
- WHITE-BEARDED MANAKIN** (*Manacus manacus*) – We started with a female seen in one of the berrying trees just off the Asa Wright veranda -- blending in quite smartly with all those female Violaceous Euphonias, except for her bright orange legs. She (or another) showed up again the following morning with an amorous male in tow; he danced along the branches beside her, thrusting his little white beard in her direction. We found a small group of males in their lek during our walk along the Discovery trail; periodically, they bounced between their "dance poles", snapping their wings together and calling.
- GOLDEN-HEADED MANAKIN** (*Ceratopipra erythrocephala*) – Scattered males, both at the lek along Asa Wright's Discovery trail, and on some of the nearby paths. We found others in a fruiting tree that hung over a little track off the Blanchisseuse road. What a little charmer!

Tityridae (Tityras and Allies)

- BLACK-TAILED TITYRA** (*Tityra cayana*) – One landed in the top of a huge tree growing in the middle of the big christophine plantation along the Blanchisseuse road, giving us the chance to study it in the scope. The bright red facial skin of this species is certainly eye-catching!

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

- RUFOUS-BROWED PEPPERSHRIKE (NORTHERN)** (*Cyclarhis gujanensis flavipectus*) – We heard them for days and days and DAYS on Trinidad, and finally caught up with a few -- parents with some begging, recently-fledged youngsters in tow -- along the edge of the road at Orange Valley.
- SCRUB GREENLET (TOBAGO)** (*Hylophilus flavipes insularis*) – We had a close encounter with a couple in the scruffy bushes around the sewage ponds at Tobago Plantations, and others along the edge of the Stewart track, just up the hill from Blue Waters Inn. This species is found on the mainland from southern Costa Rica south and east through Venezuela, but the subspecies here (*insularis*) is endemic to Tobago.
- GOLDEN-FRONTED GREENLET** (*Pachysylvia aurantiifrons saturata*) – We struggled a bit to get good looks at these early in the week (damn all that heavy overcast and gloomy forest!), but eventually caught up with them either on the Guacharo trail or with a busy mixed flock on a little side trail

off the Blanchisseuse road (part of the same flock as our Golden-crowned Warblers).

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

SOUTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) – Small groups on several days on Trinidad, typically coursing over roadside fields, as they were doing over the christophine fields down the hill from Asa Wright; their distinctive buffy rumps show well in flight. We spotted others on wires near the edge of the Nariva Swamp.

CARIBBEAN MARTIN (*Progne dominicensis*) – Common around and over the Bon Accord sewage ponds, where their snowy white bellies made them easy to pick out.

GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN (*Progne chalybea*) – Common in the skies over Nariva Swamp (with a handful sprinkled on roadside wires) with others around Caroni Swamp. These look a bit like female Purple Martins.

WHITE-WINGED SWALLOW (*Tachycineta albiventer*) – Seen swirling over the fields near Nariva Swamp, Caroni Swamp and the Bon Accord sewage ponds. One sitting beside the previous species on a wire along the Kernaham road showed just how small they really are!

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*) – A few zoomed back and forth over the sewage ponds at Bon Accord, and Suzanne spotted another while we searched for Trinidad Euphonias in the Heights of Aripo. The bulk of this species is usually well south of the islands by the time of our tours.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

HOUSE WREN (*Troglodytes aedon*) – Common throughout, including one busy bird seen around the Asa Wright feeders each morning. Their bubbling songs were a regular part of the tour soundtrack.

RUFOUS-BREASTED WREN (*Pheugopedius rutilus rutilus*) – We heard the rollicking chorus of this common species on many days on Trinidad, but never laid eyes on one. [*]

RUFOUS-BREASTED WREN (*Pheugopedius rutilus tobagensis*) – Fortunately, the subspecies on Tobago proved far more obliging; we had several satisfying encounters with inquisitive pairs along the Gilpin Trace, watching as they poked and prodded their way along branches and twigs.

Poliophtilidae (Gnatcatchers)

LONG-BILLED GNATWREN (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) – Two, looking rather like small birds carrying toothpicks, moved through some of the bigger trees along a little track off the Blanchisseuse road, part of a loose mixed flock.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

YELLOW-LEGGED THRUSH (*Turdus flavipes xanthoscelus*) – Scattered birds along the Gilpin Trace and Roxborough-Bloody Bay road, with our best views coming at a fruiting tree where a half-dozen flitted in and out, grabbing ripe berries.

COCOA THRUSH (*Turdus fumigatus*) – A regular visitor to the Asa Wright fruit feeders, with others seen scurrying along trails and roads in the Northern Range.

SPECTACLED THRUSH (*Turdus nudigenis*) – Common and widespread on both islands, with some daily at Asa Wright's fruit feeders and others along the Gilpin Trace.

WHITE-NECKED THRUSH (GRAY-FLANKED) (*Turdus albicollis phaeopygoides*) – Especially nice views of some along Asa Wright's Discovery trail, with others in a busy fruiting tree along the Roxborough-Bloody Bay road.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

TROPICAL MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus gilvus*) – Abundant throughout, including a few brash individuals around the Asa Wright feeders. This species lacks the white wing patches of the Northern Mockingbird.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – Quite common, with very close looks at one rambling around under Bobby's house while we ate our sheltered picnic lunch, and others wagging along mangrove roots in Caroni Swamp.

AMERICAN REDSTART (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – Scattered birds, including a handsome male foraging along the Asa Wright entrance road, and a "yellowstart" in the same brush pile as our first Euler's Flycatcher.

TROPICAL PARULA (*Setophaga pitiayumi*) – One handsome male flicked through a berrying tree along the Blanchisseuse road, distracting some repeatedly in their search for Olive-striped Flycatcher.

GOLDEN-CROWNED WARBLER (*Basileuterus culicivorus*) – A couple of singing birds poked and prodded their way along branches and trunks near a little trail off the Blanchisseuse road, part of a big mixed flock.

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

MASKED CARDINAL (*Paroaria nigrogenis*) – A couple of birds coming in for scraps near the guard shack at Caroni Swamp were real stunners. This is primarily found on the west coast of Trinidad, particularly among the mangroves and associated marshes.

WHITE-LINED TANAGER (*Tachyphonus rufus*) – Among the tour's most common tanagers, with dozens seen on most days. The jet-black males have white wing linings (i.e. underwings).

SILVER-BEAKED TANAGER (*Ramphocelus carbo magnirostris*) – Another common species, though only on Trinidad. A territorial male serenaded us from his favorite stick in front of the Asa Wright veranda each morning.

BLUE-GRAY TANAGER (BLUE-GRAY) (*Thraupis episcopus nesophila*) – Another regular on Trinidad, with pairs seen there daily -- particularly around the Asa Wright feeders.

BLUE-GRAY TANAGER (BLUE-GRAY) (*Thraupis episcopus berlepschi*) – And this was the Tobago version -- an even BLUER subspecies than the Trinidad one! It too was common.

PALM TANAGER (*Thraupis palmarum*) – One of the tour's commonest birds, with dozens seen every day -- including plenty swarming over the feeders, and others in gangs virtually everywhere we went.

SPECKLED TANAGER (*Ixothraupis guttata*) – A handful of these handsome tanagers gobbled fruits in a tree along the Blanchisseuse road. In most of South America, this is a foothills species. On Trinidad, where the "mountains" are just over 3000 feet high, they're found only in the highest bits of the Northern Range.

TURQUOISE TANAGER (*Tangara mexicana*) – The fruiting fig tree just off the Asa Wright veranda was a veritable magnet for these gorgeous birds, pulling in small groups of munchers every day.

BAY-HEADED TANAGER (*Tangara gyrola*) – And this species often joined the previous one at the fig tree buffet. We saw others elsewhere along the Blanchisseuse road, including some in the fruiting tree with the Speckled Tanagers.

- BLUE DACNIS** (*Dacnis cayana*) – A single bright male glowed among the leaves near our Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, part of a sizable mob of anxious little birds.
- PURPLE HONEYCREEPER** (*Cyanerpes caeruleus*) – Abundant around the Asa Wright feeders, where we had good views of both males and females from just about every conceivable angle.
- RED-LEGGED HONEYCREEPER** (*Cyanerpes cyaneus*) – A few flicked through a flowering immortelle tree along the Gilpin Trace, giving us views (eventually) of their distinctively colored legs in the scopes. This species is far more common on Tobago than it is on Trinidad.
- GREEN HONEYCREEPER** (*Chlorophanes spiza*) – Another regular visitor to the Asa Wright feeders, with a few scattered birds among mixed flocks elsewhere on Trinidad.
- BICOLORED CONEBILL** (*Conirostrum bicolor*) – A couple of very obliging males along the edge of the mangroves at Orange Walk -- sometimes within yards of where we stood.
- SAFFRON FINCH** (*Sicalis flaveola*) – A little gang of these bright birds swarmed over a roadside grassy strip at Carli Bay (searching for tasty grass seeds), flashing up into the shady branches of a nearby tree every time a vehicle went past.
- BLUE-BLACK GRASSQUIT** (*Volatinia jacarina*) – Good views on most days on Trinidad, including several males performing their endearing little courtship displays, which are clearly the origin of their local name -- Johnny Jump Up.
- RUDDY-BREASTED SEEDEATER** (*Sporophila minuta*) – A female among the yellowing grasses at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station was a surprise; this was a species we thought we'd miss, since we couldn't get into the station itself. Fortunately, we picked a spot along the road where one happened to be visible! This species is in jeopardy of being extirpated on the island, no thanks to an uncontrolled caged bird trade.
- BANANAQUIT** (*Coereba flaveola*) – Ubiquitous on both islands, with dozens swarming over the feeders at Asa Wright each morning. If we had a dollar for every one we saw, we could probably have paid for our trips!
- SOOTY GRASSQUIT** (*Tiaris fuliginosus*) – A singing, territorial male in a stand of bamboo along the Blanchisseuse road was a nice find.
- BLACK-FACED GRASSQUIT** (*Tiaris bicolor*) – A couple of birds on the chainlink fence around the Bon Accord sewage ponds dropped down into the weedy edges of the enclosure itself.
- GRAYISH SALTATOR** (*Saltator coerulescens*) – Two played hard to get in a viny tangle in the Heights of Aripo, showing very well for some and not at all for others.

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

- RED-CROWNED ANT-TANAGER** (*Habia rubica*) – A male only a few feet above the ground along the Guacharo trail was followed by another along the Asa Wright entrance road the next afternoon. These tanagers often follow antswarms; the ants unwittingly act as beaters for the birds, stirring up potential prey.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

- RED-BREASTED MEADOWLARK** (*Sturnella militaris*) – A handful of birds chased each other around in a fallow field at the Aripo Agricultural Research Station. The name of this species has recently been changed from "Red-breasted Blackbird".
- CRESTED OROPENDOLA** (*Psarocolius decumanus*) – Daily, often in big numbers -- including dozens rowing their way up the Arima valley each morning. We had great views of their somersaulting courtship displays in the communal nesting tree behind our cabins, where dozens of their long, pendulous nests were being constructed. [N]
- YELLOW-RUMPED CACIQUE** (*Cacicus cela*) – Regular across much of Trinidad, including a burgeoning tree full of nests and noisy birds in Brasso Seco. [N]
- EPAULET ORIOLE (MORICHE)** (*Icterus cayanensis chrysocephalus*) – A single soggy bird preened and sang softly, silhouetted against the soggy, darkening sky at Waller Field late one afternoon.
- YELLOW ORIOLE** (*Icterus nigrogularis*) – Plenty of these bright birds flashed across our views at various spots on Trinidad, with particularly fine views of several at Nariva Swamp.
- SHINY COWBIRD** (*Molothrus bonariensis*) – A little group at Nariva Swamp, a couple of females/youngsters on a concrete wall near Carli Bay, and a handful on the grass at the Bon Accord sewage ponds.
- GIANT COWBIRD** (*Molothrus oryzivorus*) – A few of these big brood parasites hung around the oropendola colony in Brasso Seco, waiting for opportunities. We had good looks at their red eyes in the scopes.
- CARIB GRACKLE** (*Quiscalus lugubris*) – Abundant in open area on both islands, particularly, it seemed, along roadsides.
- YELLOW-HOODED BLACKBIRD** (*Chrysomus icterocephalus*) – A male and a couple of females winked in and out of view among some reeds along the Kernaham road, at the edge of Nariva Swamp.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

- TRINIDAD EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia trinitatis*) – They were right where Mahase said they'd be! A tree covered with mistletoe in the Heights of Aripo had attracted a number of these handsome birds, which -- despite their name -- are far less common than the next species on the island.
- VIOLACEOUS EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia violacea*) – Common and widespread on both islands, with many fine looks at these lovely birds at the Asa Wright feeders.

MAMMALS

- COMMON OPOSSUM** (*Didelphis marsupialis*) – Two scuttled along the Asa Wright entrance drive, crisscrossing trails several times before finally crashing off into the forest. We saw them as we returned after dark from Waller Field.
- PALLAS'S LONG-TONGUED BAT** (*Glossophaga soricina*) – These were the speedsters we saw making flying visits to the hummingbird feeders at Asa Wright each evening (and early morning).
- GREATER WHITE-LINED BAT** (*Saccopteryx bilineata*) – These were the bats winnowing up and down the narrow forest trails at Asa Wright, and along the dark sections of the Blanchisseuse road. Unlike most bats, these insect eaters are often out during the day.
- SILKY ANTEATER** (*Cyclopes didactylus*) – One, looking rather like a furry coconut, was curled up snoozing in a mangrove along one of the channels at Caroni Swamp.
- RED-TAILED SQUIRREL** (*Sciurus granatensis*) – Doreen spotted one on the grounds of Blue Waters Inn while birding on her own before breakfast on the final morning of the tour.

RED-RUMPED AGOUTI (*Dasyprocta agouti*) – Very common around the feeders at Asa Wright -- particularly first thing in the morning, when the staff piled chunks of the previous day's leftover bread.

EGYPTIAN MONGOOSE (*Herpestes ichneumon*) – We spotted several as they streaked across roads in front of us on Trinidad, where they've been introduced. Unfortunately for the island's birds, mongooses are as happy to raid bird nests as they are to tackle poisonous snakes. [1]

Herps

GREEN IGUANA (*Iguana iguana*) – One eyed us from the grassy far edge of one of the ponds at the Bon Accord sewage works before charging back into the weeds.

GIANT AMEIVA (*Ameiva ameiva*) – Seen at the Bon Accord sewage works and along the Gilpin Trace. These lean lizards (males green with a brown head, females the reverse) can grow to 20 inches in length.

GOLDEN TEGU (*Tupinambis teguixin*) – Surprisingly, we saw not a single one under the feeders at Asa Wright (where they're normally common). Fortunately, we could up with one of these big, tiger-striped lizards at the Bon Accord sewage ponds -- though like the Green Iguana, it quickly beat feet into the safety of the nearby weeds. These big lizards are hunted as food on the islands.

TREE BOA (*Corallus ruschenbergerii*) – We spotted one of these nocturnal hunters coiled up in a mangrove along one of the channels at Caroni Swamp, fast asleep.

YELLOW-BELLIED PUFFING SNAKE (*Pseustes sulphureus*) – This was the large, brown-backed, yellow-bellied snake we found along the Blanchisseuse road. Like it's congeners, it eats birds and small mammals.

NEOTROPICAL RACER (*Mastigodryas boddaerti*) – One along the trail at Grafton Estate belied its name as it slid slowly off the trail and into the underbrush.

SPECTACLED CAIMAN (*Caiman crocodilus*) – We found one small specimen resting along the bank of a ditch in Nariva Swamp, and spotted a second (well, the EYEBALLS of a second) in one of the Tobago Plantations sewage ponds.

YELLOW-THROATED FROG (*Mannophryne trinitatis*) – Several of these tiny frogs, which are extraordinarily loud for their size, hopped around on the rocks near the entrance to the Oilbird cave.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The little frog we found along the Gilpin Trace was one of the "thin-footed frogs" (genus *Leptodactylus*), but I'm unsure which one. There are at least five "thin-footed" species on the islands!

Totals for the tour: 217 bird taxa and 7 mammal taxa