

GUYANA: THE LOST WORLD TOUR REPORT

21 JANUARY – 03 FEBRUARY 2023

By Eduardo Ormaeche



Rufous-winged Ground Cuckoo was a mega sighting during this Guyana birding tour (photo Anne Koke).



Overview

Our 2023 Guyana birding tour took us to explore the heart of the neotropics in search of a special and unique set of birds known as the Guianan shield specials, found only in pristine Guianan rainforest. Over the course of 14 days, we birded the remote Guianan forests, from the magnificent Kaeiteur waterfalls to the canopy walkways of Atta Lodge, and the Esquibbo and Rupuni Rivers, finding many great birds along the way. Standout species from this Guyana birding trip included: Guianan Cock-of-the-rock, Guianan Red Cotinga, Guianan Trogon, Guianan Puffbird, Guianan Warbling Antbird, Guianan Streaked Antwren, Guianan Toucanet, Red-winged Ground Cuckoo, Red-fan Parrot, Little Chachalaca, Crestless and Black Curassows, Greywinged Trumpeter, Black Nunbird, Green-tailed Jacamar, Pompadour and Spangled Cotingas, Dusky Purpletuft, Black-headed, Dusky and Caica Parrots, Red-and-green, Blueand-yellow, Red-bellied, and Red-shouldered Macaws, Spotted Antpitta, Spot-tailed Antwren, White-plumed, and Rufous-throated Antbirds and Crimson Fruitcrow.



Guianan Cock-of-the-rock was seen well.

We went on special expeditions in the Rupuni savannahs of southern Guyana to find two of the holy grails of South American birding: the Endangered Sun Parakeet and Red Siskin, both of which we saw very well. We also saw other great birds such as Bearded Tachuri and Crested Doradito.

This comprehensive birding tour was designed to cover the main birding hotpots in this amazing and seldom-visited country. Guyana is a must-visit South American birding destination, and this tour was custom-made for avid and adventurous birders, willing to travel in remote forests.



Detailed Report

Day 1, 21st January 2023. Arrival in Georgetown and transfer to Cara Lodge

Some of the tour participants arrived in Georgetown a day early, and others arrived late in the evening of the first day. All participants were met by our crew at the airport and transferred to <u>Cara Lodge</u> to get ready for the following morning's birding activities.

Day 2, 22nd January 2023. Coastal birding and Georgetown botanical gardens

After breakfast we left Cara Lodge and drove towards the coast and Georgetown Waterfront and Kingston Seawall, our first birding stop, and were excited to find the place full of aquatic and coastal bird species. We scanned the mudflats, where we found species such as **Grey** and **Semipalmated Plovers**, **Hudsonian Whimbrel**, **Semipalmated Sandpiper**, **Greater Yellowlegs**, **Limpkin**, and **Cocoi**, **Tricoloured**, **Striated**, and **Little Blue Herons**. The coast was covered with **Neotropical Cormorants**, **Magnificent Frigatebirds**, **Laughing Gulls**, and a few **Common Terns**. We were very excited when we saw a flock of **Scarlet Ibis** flying in front of us and landing on the mudflat which then posed for photos. We also saw **Osprey**, **Turkey** and **Black Vultures**, **Yellow-crowned Night Heron**, **Great** and **Snowy Egrets** and **Carib Grackle**. We then left this site to check some nearby mangrove habitats where we tried for **Mangrove Rail**, which gave us excellent views. Here, we also saw **Snail Kite**, and more **Scarlet Ibis** flying by.



Scarlet Ibises along the coast at Georgetown (photo Sherry Rhodes).



We continued exploring the coast at Georgetown and at BV Seawall where we found our second big target of the morning, the localized **Rufous Crab Hawk**, and enjoyed excellent scope views. While birding nearby we got great views of **Long-winged Harrier** and **Zone-tailed Hawk**. We also had views of **Spotted Sandpiper**, **Southern Lapwing**, and other birds, including **Brown-throated Parakeet**, **Grey-breasted Martin**, and **Yellow Oriole**. From here, we continued our adventure in the form of a boat trip on the Mahaica River where one of the targets was the widespread **Hoatzin** (Guyana's national bird), which we saw quite well. Additionally, we managed to see **Pale-vented Pigeon**, **Amazon**, **Green**, and **Ringed Kingfishers**, and the diminutive and most-wanted **American Pygmy Kingfisher**.



We saw this American Pygmy Kingfisher along the Mahaica River (photo Vernon Campos).

Raptors seen included Laughing Falcon, Great Black Hawk, Snail Kite, Savanna Hawk, Yellow-headed Caracara, Turkey Vulture, and our first Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture of the trip. These were followed by our first Green-tailed Jacamar, the skulking Silvered Antbird, and the handsome Black-capped Donacobius. Other exciting birds seen here included: Yellow-bellied Elaenia, Great and Lesser Kiskadees, Orange-winged Amazon, Red-shouldered Macaw, Brown-throated Parakeet, our first of many Fork-tailed Flycatchers, White-winged Swallow, Blue-black Grassquit, Blue-grey and Palm Tanagers, Yellow Oriole, Carib Grackle, Rusty-margined Flycatcher, as well as a few Wood Storks. We arrived at a local house, where we enjoyed lunch - a tasty and interesting Guyanese cuisine which is more influenced by Indian-Asian food than the rest of Latin America. From the veranda we saw Long-winged Harrier, Little Cuckoo, Smooth-billed Ani, and Fork-tailed Palm Swift (which, until recently, was known as Neotropical Palm Swift by several authorities).



We left the Mahaica River and set off towards the <u>Georgetown Botanical Gardens</u> and on the way we saw **Red-breasted Blackbird**. The botanical gardens were fairly crowded with locals relaxing over the weekend, but the birding was nevertheless good. We saw **Toco Toucan**, **Red-shouldered Macaw**, **Cayenne Jay**, **Violaceous Euphonia**, **Green-rumped Parrotlet**, **Southern Mealy**, **Orange-winged** and **Yellow-crowned Amazons**, **Lineated Woodpecker**, **Silver-beaked Tanager**, **Wing-barred Seedeater**, **Tropical Mockingbird**, and **Grey Kingbird**. The water ponds provided **Yellow-chinned Spinetail**, walking on the floating vegetation, and the cute **Pied Water Tyrant**. We also had brilliant views of our two major targets here, **White-bellied Piculet** and **Blood-colored Woodpecker**.

After an intense day we returned to the lodge, ate supper, and had a good night's sleep, in anticipation of our next day's adventure.

Day 3, 23rd January 2023. Flight to Kaieteur Falls Park and then to Surama Lodge

After breakfast we transferred to the domestic airport to catch our scheduled charter flight to the Kaieteur Falls. Sadly, take-off from the airport was delayed for hours by bad weather at the falls. It felt like an eternity had passed and I was thinking that we would not be able to fly to the falls at all, but would have to fly straight to Surama Lodge. However, at the last moment they called us to board the small aircraft (with room for six people) and we took off. It was a bumpy flight but we made it safely to the falls. These underrated falls are a true jewel and a definite wonder of nature, being surrounded by pristine rainforest. The weather was perfect but our time was extremely limited, due to our flight delay. After our arrival in the park we went straight to the falls to see the spectacular views and, of course, to look for Orange-breasted Falcon - which sadly we did not find, no matter how hard we tried. We did however find **Golden Rocket Frog**, a tiny yellow tree frog which lives within the giant bromeliads. This species is Endangered and endemic to only the Kaieteur plateau and the inaccessible highlands of Guyana.

After some time here, we then focused on our main target, the **Guianan Cock-of-the-rock**, and were able to find several males displaying at the usual lek site. Additionally, we had good views of **Cliff Flycatcher**, **Rufous-crowned Elaenia**, **Tropical Kingbird** and **Burnished-buff Tanager**.

With our time at Kaieteur Falls running out, we boarded our plane and flew towards Surama Lodge. This flight went much more smoothly than before and we arrived without any delays or inconvenience. We were met at the airfield by the lodge staff, and transferred to Surama Lodge. This is a basic lodge located on the lands of the Surama Amerindian community, and famous for offering chances of seeing the legendary Rufous-winged Ground Cuckoo, and often-active Harpy Eagle nests. We were scheduled to spend two full days here to see as much as we could.

Day 4, 24th January 2023. Surama Lodge birding

We had a predawn start with breakfast and explored the grasslands and forest edge around the lodge and then explored the lodge area itself. We got the usual and expected birds, such as Yellow-rumped Cacique, Piratic Flycatcher, Vermilion and Short-crested Flycatchers, Epaulet Oriole, Great Kiskadee, and Blue-grey and Palm Tanagers. We had Black and Greater Yellow-headed Vultures soaring above the clearing, and enjoyed scope views of Scaled Pigeon



and **Black-tailed Tityra**. We heard the calls of **Little Tinamou** in the distance but unfortunately, we were not able to obtain any visuals.

We approached the forest edge and got good views of the skulking White-bellied Antbird, and had awesome views of Cream-colored Woodpecker, in response to tape. On the forest trails we saw magic bird after magic bird including Green-backed Trogon, Guianan Puffbird, White-throated Toucan, Red-necked and Ringed Woodpeckers, Black-crested Antshrike, Rufous-bellied, White-flanked and Long-winged Antwrens, Plain-brown, Cinnamon-throated and Wedge-billed Woodcreepers, Helmeted Pygmy Tyrant, White-crowned and Golden-headed Manakins, Ochre-lored Flatbill, Spix's Guan, Little Chachalaca (also called Variable Chachalaca by other authorities), Red-and-green Macaw, and had flyby views of Caica Parrots which sadly did not perch for us. The name Caica comes from the Carib (Haitian) Indian word "caica", which means "parrot". In the forest we spotted a Double-toothed Kite, and one of the specials of Guyana, Black-faced Hawk, was seen well.



Black-faced Hawk was amazing to see.

The absolute highlight of the day came near the end of the trail. Even though there were no armyant swarms, we tried for the elusive and seldom-seen Rufous-winged Ground Cuckoo - and before long, we heard the characteristic bill snapping, approaching us from the bush. We held our breaths, motionless, and suddenly, not one, but two, **Rufous-winged Ground Cuckoos** crossed the trail in front of us twice, giving us all kinds of views (unreal, awesome, amazing, "oh my gosh", breathtaking, heart-stopping, out of this world views). We could not have been more satisfied and content. On the way back to the lodge for lunch and a short break, we found two **Blackish Nightjars** at their daytime roosts.



In the afternoon we birded the clearing and the road, where we saw Blue-black Grassquit, Wingbarred and Yellow-bellied Seedeater, Finsch's Euphonia, Tropical Gnatcatcher, Rufous-browed Peppershrike, Crimson-crested Woodpecker, Swallow-winged Puffbird, Savanna Hawk, Green-tailed Goldenthroat, White-collared and Band-rumped Swifts, and White-tipped Dove. We tried for Ash-throated Crake and went to look for a daytime roosting Great Potoo. Before dusk we saw Lesser Nighthawk, and after dusk we looked for Tawny-bellied Screech Owl, which came in and gave us good views. Back at the lodge we got excellent views of Pauraque, White-tailed Nightjar and Short-tailed Nighthawk. Crested Owl was heard but only distantly.

Day 5, 25th January 2023. Transfer to Iwokrama Lodge

Today we left Surama Lodge and drove along the Atta Road to Iwokrama Lodge, where we were scheduled to stay for two nights. The morning started with great sightings in the fruiting trees along the road of **Blue-throated Piping Guan**. IOC has recently split this species into two species, with Blue-throated Piping Guan (*Pipile cumanensis*) occurring from eastern Colombia to the Guianas, western Brazil and Peru, and White-throated Piping Guan (Pipile grayi), a new species, occurring from southwestern Brazil, southeastern Peru, eastern Bolivia, and northeastern Paraguay. The split is based on differences in plumage, the color and shape of the wattle, and limited hybridization in zones of contact in south-eastern Peru. In the same tree, we had Little Chachalaca and Spix's Guan, followed by Green-backed Trogon and White-throated Toucan. We further scored with some specials in the form of Black Nunbird, Black-spotted Barbet, Green Aracari, Guianan Toucanet, and Green-tailed Jacamar. Another fruiting tree gave us brilliant scope views of Pompadour Cotinga (male), together with Spangled Cotinga (male), both in the same frame. As if that was not enough, the cotingas flew away and the tree received a visit from a Black-necked Aracari and Channel-billed Toucan. Suddenly, our attention was captured by a couple of the most-wanted Red-fan Parrots, which showed well in the scope. Then Red-throated Caracara showed up and perched on a dead tree, making their typical cacophony - one of our tour participants was particularly happy to see this forest caracara! We added the usual suspects, such as Blue-grey, Silver-beaked and Palm Tanagers, Crested Oropendola, and a Black-crowned Tityra.

Next, we continued our drive and found a **Bat Falcon** and then spotted a **Black-and-white Hawk-Eagle** flying above the forest. Other raptors seen during the heat of the day included the attractive **Pearl Kite**, **Roadside Hawk**, **Great Black Hawk**, and the always-nice-to-see **Swallow-tailed Kite**. While we were watching these raptors, our driver called us from a distance, where he was with the parked vehicle, but we were too late to see the only Marail Guan of the trip.

We continued driving and then the vehicle broke down which had something to do with the oil filter, so we were forced to wait while the driver fixed the problem. It took some time during the heat of the day, but fortunately we got nice views of **King Vulture** flying on the thermals, while we waited. After fixing the problem, we continued to Iwokrama Lodge. Our driver then dropped us there and drove back to Georgetown to take proper care of the vehicle. He would come back for us two days later, which was fine because we had planned to explore the tropical lowlands of Iwokrama by foot and boat during the next two days.

In the afternoon we checked the lodge surroundings and took a boat to explore the Essequibo River. We found species like **Chestnut-bellied Seedeater**, **Pied Plover**, **Neotropic Cormorant**,



Snail Kite, Amazon and Ringed Kingfishers, White-winged Swallow, Red-capped Cardinal, Muscovy Duck, Large-billed Tern, and Cocoi and Capped Herons. Two good new species were Ladder-tailed Nightjar and Black-collared Swallow.

Day 6, 26th January 2023. Iwokrama Lodge birding

Today we planned to leave the lodge after breakfast to explore the lower and mid sections of the Turtle Mountain, hoping for the localized Red-and-black Grosbeak and other special birds found in the Guianan rainforest. We took two boats to the base of the trail, and during the river trip over we saw some of the species seen the previous days, such as Black-collared Swallow, Osprey, Pale-vented Pigeon, Large-billed Tern, and Wood Stork. One of our boats managed a glimpse of **Brazilian Tapir** coming out of the water and disappearing into the bush. We started our birding with good views of the secretive Spotted Antpitta. After this sighting we walked up the trail, getting birds like Black Nunbird, Black-necked Aracari, White-throated and Channel-billed Toucans, Purple-throated Fruiteater, White-throated Manakin, and Yellow-billed Jacamar. The calls of **Screaming Pihas** were loud, and we managed to get scope views of one individual, followed by views of Long-tailed, Plain-brown, Wedge-billed, and Buff-throated Woodcreepers. Then, after some hard work, we managed good views of the secretive Rufouscapped Antthrush which initially played hide-and-seek with us before finally giving itself up. We also had enjoyable encounters with Mouse-colored Antshrike, and Long-winged, Grey, and White-flanked Antwrens. There was no sign of the Red-and-black Grosbeak, and we did not venture higher up even though the trail was not very demanding. Before heading down we got a nice Great Jacamar and found a small army-ant swarm which provided Common Scale-backed Antbird, the stunning White-plumed Antbird, and the special Rufous-throated Antbird.

In the afternoon we crossed the river and explored a road which harbored some white-sand forest specials. We managed good views of Cinnamon Attila, Turquoise Tanager, Red-fan Parrot, Cinnamon-throated Woodcreeper, Yellow-tufted Woodpecker, Black Caracara, and a Paradise Jacamar. We tried for Black Manakin, which we heard, but it did not show for us. We then had Blue Dacnis, Red-rumped Cacique, Lineated Woodpecker, and a lovely Bronzy Jacamar. Before the end of the afternoon we saw a flock of the most-wanted Lilac-tailed Parrotlet. This attractive parrot flew in front of us and then perched in a tree top against the sun, where we could not find any angle for a better view. Unfortunately, we could not see any features, and had to settle with just the right shape and call, and silhouettes of them flying.

Day 7, 27th January 2023. Capuchinbird and transfer to Atta Lodge

Our last morning at Iwokrama Lodge came and we went to look for the most-wanted Capuchinbird. We were in a hurry and thus did not stop along the trail to look for other birds, since this was the major target, and the most reliable place to see it. We had a glimpse of **Great Tinamou** crossing the trail in front of us, and we heard the calls of **Cinereous Tinamou**. We noticed **Black-necked Aracari** on our way to our target bird's territory. It took time and some effort, but the entire group was eventually very satisfied with the good scope views of **Capuchinbird** in the subcanopy at Iwokrama.

We returned to the lodge, had breakfast, and found our driver, who had come back with a fully fixed vehicle. We said goodbye to Iwokrama and the amazing two days spent here. We wanted to



stay longer but there were new hunting grounds ahead of us - the famous and exciting forest at Atta Lodge.



The most-wanted Capuchinbird, seen on our Guyana birding tour.

We arrived at Atta Lodge in the mid-morning when activity was slow, and after our welcome, we checked into our rooms and then met in the lodge clearing. The first bird we noticed was **Grey-breasted Sabrewing** coming to the lodge feeder. Hummingbird feeders in the Guianan and Amazon rainforest are less active, with less species diversity, compared to the busy feeders made famous in other parts of the neotropics. Our driver called us when he got a tip from another driver about a large **Green Anaconda** laying in the marshy grasses on the side of the road. We of course jumped into the vehicle and soon found the fine specimen of this mythical animal and a lifer for all tour participants.

We then birded the whole afternoon, finding birds like Black-faced Hawk, near the lodge clearing, as well as Black-spotted Barbet, Black Nunbird, Green and Black-necked Aracaris, Guianan Toucanet, White-throated and Channel-billed Toucanets, Golden-collared Woodpecker, Blue-cheeked Parrot, Spangled Cotinga, Green Oropendola, and Little Chachalaca. Further along the road we found Bronzy Jacamar, Black Manakin, Bat Falcon, Blue-headed Parrot, and Cinnamon-throated and Buff-throated Woodcreepers. We waited until dusk and called White-winged Potoo, which came in and showed nicely for us. This is one of the hardest potoos to find and Atta is always a good place to see it. We also tried for Black-banded Owl, which showed up well. It kept relatively high up in the trees and not as close as the photographers would have liked, but the sighting was great. We happily went to bed in anticipation of another busy and full day to come.





The huge Green Anaconda seen along the Atta Road.

Day 8, 28th January 2023. Birding the canopy walkway and Atta Lodge

Our mission for the morning was to bird from the canopy walkway, trying to get the best views possible of the many forest canopy dwellers. We walked the trail up to the base of the tower and started looking for birds. The first new bird for the trip, and a big site target, was the Guianan Trogon. We also saw Red-and-green Macaw, the localized Spot-tailed Antwren, a second Pompadour Cotinga, and another Spangled Cotinga. These were followed by Black-crowned Tityra, Blue Dacnis, Purple Honeycreeper, White-shouldered Tanager, Swallow-tailed and Plumbeous Kites, and Red-necked Woodpecker. The activity slowed as it got hot, so we walked down the canopy walkway back to the lodge. Then we explored the trails and forest clearings for the remainder of the morning, adding species like Purple-throated Fruitcrow, Helmeted Pygmy Tyrant, Guianan Warbling Antbird, Black-chinned, Common Scale-backed, Rufous-throated, and White-plumed Antbirds, and the splendid Guianan Red Cotinga. Of course, the star of the understory species today was the Ferruginous-backed Antbird which gave us a terrific show on the forest floor. Together with the antbirds, we had Brown-bellied Stipplethroat, Dusky-throated and Cinereous Antshrikes, and White-flanked and Long-winged Antwrens.

Later we managed to feast our eyes on **Grey-winged Trumpeter**, one of the most-wanted neotropical families. It was good not only to see this bird but also to be able to witness some of its behaviour. We had a couple of encounters with this species during our days at Atta Lodge, which seems to be the best place in the world to find this bird. It is one of only three trumpeters worldwide and therefore of particular importance for bird family collectors.

After lunch we found a diminutive and splendid **Dusky Purpletuft** around the lodge clearing and enjoyed prolonged views. The afternoon brought some great species, as we birded around the clearing and along the main road. We started with good views of **Amazonian Pygmy Owl** around



the lodge clearing, followed by **Spotted Puffbird** off from the main road. Others birds included species such as **Crane Hawk**, **King Vulture**, **Black-headed Parrot**, **White Hawk**, **Saffroncrested Tyrant-Manakin**, **Yellow-throated Flycatcher**, **Tropical Gnatcatcher**, **Dusky Parrot**, **Waved Woodpecker**, **Painted Parakeet**, **Bay-headed Tanager**, and **Black Curassow**. We were informed during our stay at Atta that unfortunately the Rufous Potoo perch had not been found again after the previous tree fell during a storm and that new sites had not yet been discovered by the local guides. During our two days at Atta we took every opportunity to look for the Crimson Topaz on the black water streams by the river, but no matter how hard we tried, we could not find it. The lodge clearing gave us the only **Crimson Fruitcrow** of the whole trip, but sadly not everyone saw it, although some of the group managed exquisite scope views of this most-wanted and range-restricted species.

Day 9, 29th January 2023. Transfer to Rock View

We continued birding and had our last attempts at Crimson Topaz, without success, although we did see our first **Red-rumped Agouti** of the trip around Atta Lodge. We left the lodge after getting the usual species and headed towards our next port of call, a family place called <u>Rock View</u>, strategically located as a base from which to explore the Rupuni River and nearby savannas. We wondered how much the birding in this amazing forest might change when the roadworks near Atta are finished. After arriving at Rock View and being cordially welcomed by the family host, we birded the grasslands near the lodge. It was obvious that we were in a different ecosystem, out of the lush forest and into the hot and dry savannas, with the smells of recent fires in the lodge vicinity hanging in the air.

The birding in the afternoon provided Ruddy Ground Dove, Buff-necked Ibis, Pale-breasted Thrush, Grassland Yellow Finch, and Glittering-throated Emerald. Crested Bobwhite were only flushed but we had good enough views to include on our list, and we had great views of Aplomado Falcon.

Day 10, 30th January 2023. Rupununi River and Rock View

This exciting day started with a second boat trip to explore the famous <u>Rupununi River</u>, where we saw some classic aquatic species, already seen on the trip. Some of the highlights of the cruise included **Anhinga**, **Large-billed Tern**, **Muscovy Duck**, **Wood Stork**, **Limpkin**, **Jabiru**, **Boat-billed Heron**, and **Osprey**. We also saw **Pale-vented Pigeon**, **American Yellow Warbler**, **Ringed**, **Amazon** and **Green Kingfishers**, **Rufous-tailed Jacamar**, **Yellow-hooded Blackbird**, and **Southern Rough-winged Swallow**. Of course, our most important target, and the reason we were here, was the scarce and shy **Crestless Curassow** which we managed super views of on the river banks. Sadly, we did not see Giant (River) Otters this time. We took a short walk along a trail near the river and found **Black-crested Antshrike**, **Green-backed Trogon**, and **Amazonian Black Tyrant**, which is a rare bird in Guyana and was a lifer for our local guide, who has been birding in the country for years.

In the afternoon we birded some grassland and wetlands near Rock View, where we added Azure Gallinule, Spotted and Solitary Sandpipers, Wattled Jacana, White-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Brown-throated Parakeet, and Red-and-green Macaw. Scanning the palm trees, we were able to find the smaller Red-bellied Macaw, which completed our set of all the possible



macaw species on this trip. In addition, we saw Yellow-chinned Spinetail, White-naped Xenopsaris, Bicolored Wren, Red-breasted Blackbird, Ruddy-breasted Seedeater, Tropical Kingbird, and Northern Mouse-colored Tyrannulet (Nesotriccus incomtus), a new split from Southern Mouse-colored Tyrannulet, before returning to Rock View for a good night's rest.



One of the main targets for the trip was **Sun Parakeet**.

Day 11, 31st January 2023. Sun Parakeet and transfer to Manari Ranch

We left Rock View before dawn to drive to <u>Karasabai</u>, near the border with Brazil, to search for one of the most-wanted psittacids in the neotropics, Sun Parakeet. This species is Endangered and numbers are declining due to many years of habitat loss and the pet trade – it is a sad fact that there are now more individuals living in cages around the world than in their natural habitat. It is only found in southern Guyana, the adjacent state of Roraima, in northern Brazil, and small portions of Suriname and French Guyana. We went directly to their feeding site in Guyana before they cross the river into Brazil to roost. We arrived and, with the help of local contacts, we searched the area until we saw our first **Sun Parakeet**. Bingo! I made sure everyone had seen the bird well, before trying to approach for better views and to take photos.

With one of the two main targets for the second part of the trip successfully ticked, we were a lot more relaxed. While birding the area, we also saw species such as White-tailed Hawk, Buff-



necked Ibis, Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, Crested Caracara, Crested Bobwhite, Glittering-throated Hummingbird, Southern White-fringed Antwren, Tropical Gnatcatcher, Pale-eyed Pygmy Tyrant, Plumbeous Seedeater, and Long-billed Starthroat.

After a successful morning, we started driving to Manari Ranch, which was to be our base for the next couple of days. On the way to Manari Ranch we made stops to look for some special grassland species, and we were lucky to find all our targets, including **Double-striped Thick-knee**, **Pinnated Bittern**, **Crested Doradito** and the most-wanted **Bearded Tachuri**. We all had great views of these species before we arrived at our lodge and settled down for a good rest.

Day 12, 1st February 2023. Red Siskin

Another predawn start, but this time we split the group into two 4x4 vehicles to deal with the bad roads on the way to the **Red Siskin** habitat. The search for this special bird required a full morning, including a long drive with not many new birds to be seen. This bird has great ornithological importance. It is native to northern Colombia, northern Venezuela, and Guyana, and considered an Endangered species (Critically Endangered in Venezuela). It is extinct in Trinidad and there are no recent records of a small population in the extreme northeast of Colombia, with the population in Guyana discovered in the early 2000s. The world population is believed to range between 600-2,500 pairs. The main reasons for its decline, like the Sun Parakeet, is the pet trade and habitat loss. Fortunately, the population in southern Guyana seems to be doing well and is benefitting from research by enthusiastic volunteers from local communities. They are also playing a role in the conservation of the species by developing ecotourism in the area. With the help of Leeroy, the best-known of the **Red Siskin** trackers and head of his community conservation program, we explored the dry foothills in search of this avian gem.



Red Siskin was a success on our Guyana birding tour (photo John Christian).



It took longer than usual but we managed to get a view of a single **Red Siskin** - not the best view but certainly enough to count. Leeroy went to check a further area while we waited, hoping that the bird we saw would come back to its usual roosting tree or drink from a small freshwater spring. Finally Leeroy called us and we had good views of a much closer bird. We had done it! We stopped in Leeroy's village for lunch at his house and then continued the trip towards Manari Ranch.

Day 13, 2nd February 2023. Ireng River forest and flight back to Georgetown

We made a final predawn start to explore some gallery forest adjacent to the <u>Ireng River</u> in southern Guyana. This place is good for two Critically Endangered species, **Rio Branco Antbird** (named after the southwest Brazilian state of Rio Branco) and the **Hoary-throated Spinetail**, both found only in Guyana and Brazil. We were driving across nice unbroken savanna habitat at dawn when suddenly one of our vehicles stopped to point out a **Giant Anteater** on its early morning walk in the grasslands. We normally see this amazing animal on our Brazil and Paraguay birding tours, and sometimes in Colombia as well, but it was nice to see it for the first time in Guyana.

We arrived at our target species' habitat and quickly found **Rio Branco Antbird**. Unfortunately, the spinetail was not responding, and no matter how hard and how many times we tried, using different strategies, it always got away from us. We all heard it, and only I and a local guide, venturing through the tangled branches and vines and getting down on the floor, managed to get a full view of a single **Hoary-throated Spinetail**. It was busy with its own agenda and did not care about us. One of the participants caught a glimpse, but nobody else managed to see the whole bird. During our search, we added some additional new species, such as **Buff-breasted Wren**, **Palelegged Hornero**, **Orange-backed Troupial**, **Short-tailed Pygmy Tyrant** (one of the smallest passerines in the world), **Chestnut-vented Conebill** and **Chivi Vireo**.

On the way back to Manari Lodge, we managed to find **Burrowing Owl**, **Yellowish Pipit**, **Grassland Sparrow** and a **Maguari Stork**, amongst the other usual suspects. We transferred to Letham airport, where we said goodbye to our marvellous land crew, and then waited for our flight which was, once again, delayed.

We arrived in Georgetown and took the hour-long drive back to Cara Lodge, where we said our farewells. We each got our own supper, because everyone had different international flights scheduled for that day or very early the next day.

Although there were no large cats nor Harpy Eagle seen this time, this trip stands out as one of our greatest South American adventures. The experience of the **Rufous-winged Ground Cuckoo** will surely remain in our memories for a very long time.

Day 14, 3rd February 2023. Transfer to the airport and international flight home

The participants who had not left the previous night transferred to the airport early this morning to catch their international flights home which ended a fabulous 14 days in Guyana.



Bird List - Following IOC (12.3)

Birds 'heard only' are marked with (H) after the common name, all other species were seen.

The following notation after species names is used to show conservation status following the IUCN Red List:

CR = Critically Endangered, EN = Endangered, VU = Vulnerable, NT = Near Threatened.

Common Name	Scientific Name
Tinamous (Tinamidae)	
Great Tinamou	Tinamus major
Cinereous Tinamou (H)	Crypturellus cinereus
Little Tinamou (H)	Crypturellus soui
Ducks, Geese, Swans (Anatidae)	
Muscovy Duck	Cairina moschata
Chachalacas, Curassows, Guans (C	racidae)
Little Chachalaca	Ortalis motmot
Spix's Guan	Penelope jacquacu
Blue-throated Piping Guan	Pipile cumanensis
Crestless Curassow	Mitu tomentosum
Black Curassow - VU	Crax alector
New World Quail (Odontophoridae)
Crested Bobwhite	Colinus cristatus
Nightjars (Caprimulgidae)	
Least Nighthawk	Chordeiles pusillus
Lesser Nighthawk	Chordeiles acutipennis
Short-tailed Nighthawk	Lurocalis semitorquatus
Blackish Nightjar	Nyctipolus nigrescens
Pauraque	Nyctidromus albicollis
White-tailed Nightjar	Hydropsalis cayennensis
Ladder-tailed Nightjar	Hydropsalis climacocerca
Potoos (Nyctibiidae)	
Great Potoo	Nyctibius grandis



Common Name	Scientific Name
White-winged Potoo	Nyctibius leucopterus
Swifts (Apodidae)	
White-collared Swift	Streptoprocne zonaris
Band-rumped Swift	Chaetura spinicaudus
Neotropical Palm Swift	Tachornis squamata
Hummingbirds (Trochilidae)	
White-necked Jacobin	Florisuga mellivora
Reddish Hermit	Phaethornis ruber
Black-eared Fairy	Heliothryx auritus
Green-tailed Goldenthroat	Polytmus theresiae
Long-billed Starthroat	Heliomaster longirostris
Grey-breasted Sabrewing	Campylopterus largipennis
Glittering-throated Emerald	Chionomesa fimbriata
Cuckoos (Cuculidae)	
Greater Ani	Crotophaga major
Smooth-billed Ani	Crotophaga ani
Rufous-winged Ground Cuckoo	Neomorphus rufipennis
Little Cuckoo	Coccycua minuta
Pigeons, Doves (Columbidae)	
Rock Dove (Introduced)	Columba livia
Scaled Pigeon	Patagioenas speciosa
Pale-vented Pigeon	Patagioenas cayennensis
Ruddy Pigeon - VU	Patagioenas subvinacea
Common Ground Dove	Columbina passerina
Plain-breasted Ground Dove	Columbina minuta
Ruddy Ground Dove	Columbina talpacoti
White-tipped Dove	Leptotila verreauxi
Eared Dove	Zenaida auriculata
Rails, Crakes & Coots (Rallidae)	
Ash-throated Crake	Mustelirallus albicollis



Common Name	Scientific Name
Mangrove Rail	Rallus longirostris
Azure Gallinule	Porphyrio flavirostris
Grey-breasted Crake (H)	Laterallus exilis
Trumpeters (Psophiidae)	
Grey-winged Trumpeter	Psophia crepitans
Limpkin (Aramidae)	
Limpkin	Aramus guarauna
Stone-curlews, Thick-knees (B	urhinidae)
Double-striped Thick-knee	Burhinus bistriatus
Plovers (Charadriidae)	
Southern Lapwing	Vanellus chilensis
Grey Plover	Pluvialis squatarola
Semipalmated Plover	Charadrius semipalmatus
Pied Plover	Hoploxypterus cayanus
Jacanas (Jacanidae)	
Wattled Jacana	Jacana jacana
Sandpipers, Snipes (Scolopacio	lae)
Hudsonian Whimbrel	Numenius hudsonicus
Semipalmated Sandpiper	Calidris pusilla
Spotted Sandpiper	Actitis macularius
Solitary Sandpiper	Tringa solitaria
Greater Yellowlegs	Tringa melanoleuca
Gulls, Terns, Skimmers (Larid	lae)
Laughing Gull	Leucophaeus atricilla
Common Tern	Sterna hirundo
Large-billed Tern	Phaetusa simplex



Common Name	Scientific Name
Storks (Ciconiidae)	•
Wood Stork	Mycteria americana
Maguari Stork	Ciconia maguari
Jabiru	Jabiru mycteria
Frigatebirds (Fregatidae)	
Magnificent Frigatebird	Fregata magnificens
Anhingas, Darters (Anhingidae)	
Anhinga	Anhinga anhinga
Cormorants, Shags (Phalacrocora	acidae)
Neotropic Cormorant	Nannopterum brasilianum
Ibises, Spoonbills (Threskiornithi	idae)
Buff-necked Ibis	Theristicus caudatus
Green Ibis	Mesembrinibis cayennensis
Scarlet Ibis	Eudocimus ruber
Roseate Spoonbill	Platalea ajaja
Herons, Bitterns (Ardeidae)	
Boat-billed Heron	Cochlearius cochlearius
Pinnated Bittern	Botaurus pinnatus
Yellow-crowned Night Heron	Nyctanassa violacea
Striated Heron	Butorides striata
Western Cattle Egret	Bubulcus ibis
Cocoi Heron	Ardea cocoi
Great Egret	Ardea alba
Tricolored Heron	Egretta tricolor
Little Blue Heron	Egretta caerulea
Snowy Egret	Egretta thula
Hoatzin (Opisthocomidae)	
Hoatzin	Opisthocomus hoazin





Common Name	Scientific Name
Tawny-bellied Screech Owl	Megascops watsonii
Crested Owl	Lophostrix cristata
Black-banded Owl	Strix huhula
Trogons (Trogonidae)	
Green-backed Trogon	Trogon viridis
Guianan Trogon	Trogon violaceus
Kingfishers (Alcedinidae)	
Amazon Kingfisher	Chloroceryle amazona
American Pygmy Kingfisher	Chloroceryle aenea
Green Kingfisher	Chloroceryle americana
Ringed Kingfisher	Megaceryle torquata
Jacamars (Galbulidae)	
Yellow-billed Jacamar	Galbula albirostris
Rufous-tailed Jacamar	Galbula ruficauda
Green-tailed Jacamar	Galbula galbula
Bronzy Jacamar	Galbula leucogastra
Paradise Jacamar	Galbula dea
Great Jacamar	Jacamerops aureus
Puffbirds (Bucconidae)	
Guianan Puffbird	Notharchus macrorhynchos
Spotted Puffbird	Bucco tamatia
Black Nunbird	Monasa atra
Swallow-winged Puffbird	Chelidoptera tenebrosa
New World Barbets (Capitonidae)	
Black-spotted Barbet	Capito niger
1	
Toucans (Ramphastidae)	
Green Aracari	Pteroglossus viridis
Black-necked Aracari	Pteroglossus aracari
Guianan Toucanet	Selenidera piperivora
Channel-billed Toucan - VU	Ramphastos vitellinus



Common Name	Scientific Name
Toco Toucan	Ramphastos toco
White-throated Toucan	Ramphastos tucanus
Woodpeckers (Picidae)	
White-bellied Piculet - VU	Picumnus spilogaster
Yellow-tufted Woodpecker	Melanerpes cruentatus
Blood-colored Woodpecker	Veniliornis sanguineus
Golden-collared Woodpecker	Veniliornis cassini
Waved Woodpecker	Celeus undatus
Cream-colored Woodpecker	Celeus flavus
Ringed Woodpecker	Celeus torquatus
Lineated Woodpecker	Dryocopus lineatus
Red-necked Woodpecker	Campephilus rubricollis
Crimson-crested Woodpecker	Campephilus melanoleucos
Caracaras, Falcons (Falconidae)	
Black Caracara	Daptrius ater
Red-throated Caracara	Ibycter americanus
Crested Caracara	Caracara plancus
Yellow-headed Caracara	Milvago chimachima
Laughing Falcon	Herpetotheres cachinnans
Barred Forest Falcon (H)	Micrastur ruficollis
Lined Forest Falcon (H)	Micrastur gilvicollis
Aplomado Falcon	Falco femoralis
Bat Falcon	Falco rufigularis
Peregrine Falcon	Falco peregrinus
African & New World Parrots (Parrots (P	sittacidae)
Lilac-tailed Parrotlet	Touit batavicus
Caica Parrot	Pyrilia caica
Dusky Parrot	Pionus fuscus
Blue-headed Parrot	Pionus menstruus
Blue-cheeked Amazon	Amazona dufresniana
Southern Mealy Amazon	Amazona farinosa
Orange-winged Amazon	Amazona amazonica





Common Name	Scientific Name
Northern Slaty Antshrike	Thamnophilus punctatus
Black-crested Antshrike	Sakesphorus canadensis
White-plumed Antbird	Pithys albifrons
Rufous-throated Antbird	Gymnopithys rufigula
Common Scale-backed Antbird	Willisornis poecilinotus
Guianan Warbling Antbird	Hypocnemis cantator
Rio Branco Antbird - CR	Cercomacra carbonaria
Ferruginous-backed Antbird	Myrmoderus ferrugineus
Black-chinned Antbird	Hypocnemoides melanopogon
Silvered Antbird	Sclateria naevia
White-bellied Antbird	Myrmeciza longipes
Antthrushes (Formicariidae)	
Rufous-capped Antthrush	Formicarius colma
11	
Antpittas (Grallariidae)	
Spotted Antpitta	Hylopezus macularius
Tymont Elyantahana Calamtana (Ta	• 1 \
Tyrant Flycatchers, Calyptura (Ty	rannidae)
Yellow-bellied Elaenia	Elaenia flavogaster
Yellow-bellied Elaenia	Elaenia flavogaster
Yellow-bellied Elaenia Plain-crested Elaenia	Elaenia flavogaster Elaenia cristata
Yellow-bellied Elaenia Plain-crested Elaenia Lesser Elaenia	Elaenia flavogaster Elaenia cristata Elaenia chiriquensis
Yellow-bellied Elaenia Plain-crested Elaenia Lesser Elaenia Rufous-crowned Elaenia	Elaenia flavogaster Elaenia cristata Elaenia chiriquensis Elaenia ruficeps
Yellow-bellied Elaenia Plain-crested Elaenia Lesser Elaenia Rufous-crowned Elaenia Mouse-colored Tyrannulet	Elaenia flavogaster Elaenia cristata Elaenia chiriquensis Elaenia ruficeps Phaeomyias murina
Yellow-bellied Elaenia Plain-crested Elaenia Lesser Elaenia Rufous-crowned Elaenia Mouse-colored Tyrannulet Bearded Tachuri	Elaenia flavogaster Elaenia cristata Elaenia chiriquensis Elaenia ruficeps Phaeomyias murina Polystictus pectoralis
Yellow-bellied Elaenia Plain-crested Elaenia Lesser Elaenia Rufous-crowned Elaenia Mouse-colored Tyrannulet Bearded Tachuri Crested Doradito	Elaenia flavogaster Elaenia cristata Elaenia chiriquensis Elaenia ruficeps Phaeomyias murina Polystictus pectoralis Pseudocolopteryx sclateri
Yellow-bellied Elaenia Plain-crested Elaenia Lesser Elaenia Rufous-crowned Elaenia Mouse-colored Tyrannulet Bearded Tachuri Crested Doradito Short-tailed Pygmy Tyrant	Elaenia flavogaster Elaenia cristata Elaenia chiriquensis Elaenia ruficeps Phaeomyias murina Polystictus pectoralis Pseudocolopteryx sclateri Myiornis ecaudatus
Yellow-bellied Elaenia Plain-crested Elaenia Lesser Elaenia Rufous-crowned Elaenia Mouse-colored Tyrannulet Bearded Tachuri Crested Doradito Short-tailed Pygmy Tyrant Helmeted Pygmy Tyrant	Elaenia flavogaster Elaenia cristata Elaenia chiriquensis Elaenia ruficeps Phaeomyias murina Polystictus pectoralis Pseudocolopteryx sclateri Myiornis ecaudatus Lophotriccus galeatus
Yellow-bellied Elaenia Plain-crested Elaenia Lesser Elaenia Rufous-crowned Elaenia Mouse-colored Tyrannulet Bearded Tachuri Crested Doradito Short-tailed Pygmy Tyrant Helmeted Pygmy Tyrant Pale-eyed Pygmy Tyrant	Elaenia flavogaster Elaenia cristata Elaenia chiriquensis Elaenia ruficeps Phaeomyias murina Polystictus pectoralis Pseudocolopteryx sclateri Myiornis ecaudatus Lophotriccus galeatus Atalotriccus pilaris
Yellow-bellied Elaenia Plain-crested Elaenia Lesser Elaenia Rufous-crowned Elaenia Mouse-colored Tyrannulet Bearded Tachuri Crested Doradito Short-tailed Pygmy Tyrant Helmeted Pygmy Tyrant Pale-eyed Pygmy Tyrant Ochre-lored Flatbill	Elaenia flavogaster Elaenia cristata Elaenia chiriquensis Elaenia ruficeps Phaeomyias murina Polystictus pectoralis Pseudocolopteryx sclateri Myiornis ecaudatus Lophotriccus galeatus Atalotriccus pilaris Tolmomyias flaviventris
Yellow-bellied Elaenia Plain-crested Elaenia Lesser Elaenia Rufous-crowned Elaenia Mouse-colored Tyrannulet Bearded Tachuri Crested Doradito Short-tailed Pygmy Tyrant Helmeted Pygmy Tyrant Pale-eyed Pygmy Tyrant Ochre-lored Flatbill Cliff Flycatcher	Elaenia flavogaster Elaenia cristata Elaenia chiriquensis Elaenia ruficeps Phaeomyias murina Polystictus pectoralis Pseudocolopteryx sclateri Myiornis ecaudatus Lophotriccus galeatus Atalotriccus pilaris Tolmomyias flaviventris Hirundinea ferruginea
Yellow-bellied Elaenia Plain-crested Elaenia Lesser Elaenia Rufous-crowned Elaenia Mouse-colored Tyrannulet Bearded Tachuri Crested Doradito Short-tailed Pygmy Tyrant Helmeted Pygmy Tyrant Pale-eyed Pygmy Tyrant Ochre-lored Flatbill Cliff Flycatcher Vermilion Flycatcher	Elaenia flavogaster Elaenia cristata Elaenia chiriquensis Elaenia ruficeps Phaeomyias murina Polystictus pectoralis Pseudocolopteryx sclateri Myiornis ecaudatus Lophotriccus galeatus Atalotriccus pilaris Tolmomyias flaviventris Hirundinea ferruginea Pyrocephalus obscurus







Common Name	Scientific Name
Finches, Euphonias (Fringillida	·
Red Siskin - EN	Spinus cucullatus
Finsch's Euphonia	Euphonia finschi
Violaceous Euphonia	Euphonia violacea
New World Sparrows (Passerel	lidae)
Grassland Sparrow	Ammodramus humeralis
Oropendolas, Orioles, Blackbir	ds (Istoridae)
Eastern Meadowlark	
	Sturnella magna
Red-breasted Blackbird	Leistes militaris
Crested Oropendola	Psarocolius decumanus
Green Oropendola	Psarocolius viridis
Yellow-rumped Cacique	Cacicus cela
Red-rumped Cacique	Cacicus haemorrhous
Yellow Oriole	Icterus nigrogularis
Orange-backed Troupial	Icterus croconotus
Epaulet Oriole	Icterus cayanensis
Giant Cowbird	Molothrus oryzivorus
Shiny Cowbird	Molothrus bonariensis
Carib Grackle	Quiscalus lugubris
Yellow-hooded Blackbird	Chrysomus icterocephalus
New World Warblers (Parulida	ne)
American Yellow Warbler	Setophaga aestiva
Cardinals & Allies (Cardinalida	ae)
Amazonian Grosbeak	Cyanoloxia rothschildii
Tonogong & Allies (Thursday)	
Tanagers & Allies (Thraupidae	,
Purple Honeycreeper	Cyanerpes caeruleus
Blue Dacnis	Dacnis cayana
Blue-black Grassquit	Volatinia jacarina
White-shouldered Tanager	Loriotus luctuosus



Common Name	Scientific Name
Silver-beaked Tanager	Ramphocelus carbo
Wing-barred Seedeater	Sporophila americana
Yellow-bellied Seedeater	Sporophila nigricollis
Plumbeous Seedeater	Sporophila plumbea
Chestnut-bellied Seedeater	Sporophila castaneiventris
Ruddy-breasted Seedeater	Sporophila minuta
Chestnut-vented Conebill	Conirostrum speciosum
Grassland Yellow Finch	Sicalis luteola
Red-capped Cardinal	Paroaria gularis
Spotted Tanager	Ixothraupis punctata
Blue-grey Tanager	Thraupis episcopus
Palm Tanager	Thraupis palmarum
Burnished-buff Tanager	Stilpnia cayana
Bay-headed Tanager	Tangara gyrola
Turquoise Tanager	Tangara Mexicana

Species Seen	301
Total heard only	6
Total recorded	307

Mammal List

Common Name	Scientific Name	
Anteaters (Myrmecophagidae)		
Giant Anteater – VU	Myrmecophaga tridactyla	
Two-toed Sloths (Megalonychidae		
Hoffmann's Two-toed Sloth	Choloepus hoffmanni	
Agoutis and Acouchis (Dasyproctidae)		
Red-rumped Agouti	Dasyprocta leporina	
Howler and Prehensile-tailed Mon	ıkeys (Atelidae)	
Guianan Red Howler Monkey	Alouatta macconnelli	
Guianan Spider Monkey - VU	Ateles paniscus	



Common Name	Scientific Name
Bulldog Bats (Noctilionidae)	
Lesser Bulldog Bat	Noctilio albiventris
Greater Bulldog Bat	Noctilio leporinus
Free-tailed Bats (Molossidae)	
Brazilian Free-tailed Bat	Tadarida brasiliensis
Tapirs (Tapiridae)	
Lowland Tapir - VU	Tapirus terrestris
Deer (Cervidae)	
Red Brocket - DD	Mazama americana
Species Seen	10

Reptile List

Common Name	Scientific Name	
Alligators and Caimans (Alligatoridae)		
Common Caiman	Caiman crocodilus	
Black Caiman	Melanosuchus niger	
Boas (Boidae)		
Garden Tree Boa	Corallus hortulana	
Green Anaconda	Eunectes murinus	
Whiptails and Tegus (Teiidae)		
Amazon Racerunner	Ameiva ameiva	
Gold Tegu	Tupinambis teguixin	
Tortoises (Testudinidae)		
Brazilian Giant Tortoise – VU	Chelonoidis denticulatus	
Species Seen	7	



Amphibian list

Common Name	Scientific Name		
Cryptic forest frogs (Aromobatidae)			
Golden Rocket Frog - EN	Anomaloglossus beebei		

\mathbf{S}	pecies Seen	-	1

