

10-Day, 2-Island Classic on Trinidad & Tobago With Naturalist Journeys & Caligo Ventures



Featuring
Wildlife & Bird Artist
Keith Hansen
October 6 – 15, 2017

**CALIGO
VENTURES**

Birding Tours & Nature Travel

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Join us for a special 10-Day, 2-Island Classic birding and nature tour on the twin islands of Trinidad and Tobago, often considered the world's best introduction to tropical birding. This tour is part of the Asa Wright Nature Centre's 50th Anniversary celebrations and features artist and field guide illustrator Keith Hansen and his wife, fabric artist Patricia Briceño. Well-known in birding and art circles, Keith looks forward to sharing his expertise in illustrating birds with you.

Trinidad, with its proximity to Venezuela, offers a variety of birds not usually seen on an island (Caroni Marsh, with its daily Scarlet Ibis Spectacular, is an iconic destination in itself), while Tobago feels entirely different — classic Caribbean. Combined, these islands provide a variety of habitats that yield dramatic diversity.

This exciting tour takes place at the world-renowned Asa Wright Nature Centre (AWNC), your home for the first six nights of the tour. Join Keith and Patricia on the Centre's famed verandah for enticingly rich birding — if you are new to the tropics, you may see forty life birds before breakfast! After a Trinidad immersion, enjoy three nights on Tobago at the gracious Cuffie River Nature Retreat, an

intimate 10-room lodge tucked in the forest, where birds abound.

Caligo Ventures has over thirty years' experience setting up Guided Group Tours, using expert local guides and supporting local communities, which in turn supports the Centre. Your visit funds important conservation and education work at the Centre.

Keith Hansen is a long-time colleague of Caligo Ventures' owner Peg Abbott, having worked together as young biologists on the Farallon Islands in the 1980s. Keith is a crack birder, and he can also help you learn techniques to "capture" these feathered creatures accurately on paper. Enhance your birding experience by learning to render quick impressions in your notebook, or simply to create something of beauty. Step-by-step demonstrations examine elements including anatomy, form, perspective, lighting, and negative space. Whether you are a beginner or an expert, absorbing methods for deeper observation heightens your enjoyment of your time spent in nature. Join Keith in one or more sketching sessions offered during the week, and develop or hone your artistic skills! Keith and Patricia's participation is icing on the cake for this special 10-Day, 2-Island Classic tour.

Only have a week? Consider participating in just the AWNC portion of this trip and fly home on Day 7. [Contact Caligo Ventures](#) for details.



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Tour Highlights on Trinidad

- Explore with AWNC's expert guides, who offer robust knowledge and friendly, world-class guiding
- Relish morning coffee and relaxed birding on the famous verandah
- Gain exclusive access to Oilbirds in Dunston Cave on the Centre's grounds
- Watch a grand variety of tropical birds from the Centre's famed verandah
- Develop your artistic side in optional sketching workshops with Keith Hansen
- Walk intriguing trails with trained and personable naturalist guides
- Witness skies filled with hundreds of Scarlet Ibis as they roost at Caroni National Park



Tour Highlights on Tobago

- Arrive to a feeding frenzy at Cuffie River's feeder, perfect for photography and relaxed viewing
- Enjoy Cuffie River's creative tropical architecture and cool breezes in the mountains
- Marvel at Cuffie River's dinner guests: perhaps a White-tailed Nightjar or Common Potoo
- Visit Tobago's historic Main Forest Ridge Preserve and Little Tobago Island

Tour Summary

10-Day / 9-Night Neotropical Birding & Nature Tour with
Local Expert Guides, Keith Hansen & Patricia Briceño
\$2250*, from Port of Spain

Airport is Piarco International Airport (POS)

**A limited number of single occupancies are available with no single supplement fee.*



Itinerary

Fri., Oct. 6 Arrive & Explore at the Asa Wright Nature Centre (AWNC)

Welcome to Trinidad! Upon arrival at Piarco International Airport, you are met by an AWNC guide who drives you from the bustling metropolis to the quiet seclusion of the Centre, about an hour's trip up into the Northern Range. Lush forests of the Arima Valley offer

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untamed vistas and provide the perfect place to learn about Trinidad's abundant birds and natural heritage.

Step out onto the Centre's wide verandah to marvel at the almost tame hummingbirds, tanagers, honeycreepers, oropendolas, Bananaquits, and other birds that frequent the feeders.

The views of the valley (and the birds) are breathtaking. Beyond the verandah, an extensive trail system beckons.

If you arrive early, the entrance road is an easy walk, where, under a lush canopy, Trinidad Motmot, Yellow-olive and Yellow-breasted Flycatchers, and a host of other species can be found. Centre naturalists are on hand to help identify species.

Tea time is at 4:00 PM, followed by Rum Punch at 6:00 PM, and then dinner. Meet your fellow guests and enjoy the surrounding nature.

Bird & Wildlife Highlights

Commonly Found at the Feeders: White-chested Emerald; White-necked Jacobin; Blue-chinned Sapphire; Rufous-breasted and Little Hermits; Copper-rumped Hummingbird; Crested Oropendola; Blue-gray, Palm, White-lined, Silver-beaked, and Turquoise Tanagers; Barred Antshrike; Tufted Coquette; both Purple and Green Honeycreepers; and Violaceous Euphonia.

Spot from the Verandah: Double-toothed Kite; Scaled Pigeon; Black-tailed Tityra; Common Black, Gray-lined, White, and Zone-tailed Hawks; Channel-billed Toucan; Bearded Bellbird; Piratic and Boat-billed Flycatchers; Squirrel Cuckoo; Tropical Pewee; Tropical Kingbird; Golden Tegu Lizard; and Red-rumped Agouti.

Note: If your flight arrives late, consider arriving a day early (additional cost), and enjoy an unscheduled morning. While our guides meet all flights, many travelers prefer to start the group tour well-rested.

Sat., Oct. 7 Introductory Walk into AWNC's Forests / Sketching Workshop / Night Bird Outing

This morning begins with 6:00 AM coffee and tea served on the verandah. A Centre naturalist is on duty to help you spy as many as 40 life birds before breakfast! After breakfast, enjoy an introductory walk on the Centre's Discovery Trail, learning more about the forest and discovering additional species. Many enjoy the challenge of spotting the Bearded Bellbird as their distinctive "bonk!" echoes throughout the forest. Near a known bellbird lek in the trees are two species of manakins, also attending their leks closer to the ground.

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After a delicious lunch at the Centre, join Keith in the afternoon for the first sketching workshop, or spend time relaxing on the Centre trails. Perhaps you pool!

The group leaves the for an optional with rum punch unused airfield



verandah or exploring other want to take a dip in the natural

Centre between 3:00 and 4:00 PM night bird excursion, complete and a hot dinner in tow. An is the first birding stop (pre-sunset), followed by a picnic dinner, then set off on a slow drive for night birds.

Morning Bird Highlights

Trinidad Motmot; both Cocoa and Thrushes; Gray-fronted Dove; White-bearded Manakins; Green-backed and Guianan Trogons; Channel-billed Toucan; Chestnut Woodpecker; Rufous-browed Peppershrike; both Turquoise and Bay-headed Tanagers; Green Hermit; Tufted Coquette; Black-throated Mango; Forest Elaenia; Ochre-bellied Flycatcher; Yellow Oriole; White-necked Thrush; Rufous-breasted Wren; White-flanked Antwren; Long-billed Gnatwren; and Bearded Bellbird.

Spectacled and Golden-headed

Night Bird Outing Highlights

Fork-tailed Palm-Swift; Sulphury Flycatcher; Moriche Oriole (extremely rare); White-tailed Nightjar; Common Pauraque; Common Potoo; Tropical Screech-Owl; Barn Owl; and Spectacled Owl (if we're lucky).

Sun., Oct. 8 Birding Trinidad's Northern Range / Evening Hummingbird Presentation by Keith Hansen

Today's scenic, day-long excursion takes us high into the Northern Range on the Blanchisseuse Road. We make frequent birding stops and then enjoy a local lunch and cacao demonstration in picturesque Brasso Seco (with groups of less than four, you have a picnic lunch). You then continue through the mountains to the village of Morne la Croix for afternoon tea and cakes (yum!) as you enjoy watching parrots head in to roost.

Today also offers the opportunity to examine the strange world of leaf-cutter and army ants, as well as the chance to photograph butterflies, orchids, and other tropical flora.

After dinner at the Centre, join Keith in the library for an entertaining and educational presentation on the hummingbirds of North and Central America.

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Bird Highlights

Swallow-tailed Kite; Common Black Hawk; Bat Falcon;
Collared Trogon; Ornate Hawk-Eagle; Channel-billed Toucan;
Trinidad Piping-guan; Short-tailed Hawk; both Streaked and
Euler's Flycatchers; Rufous-tailed Jacamar; Blue-headed Parrot;
Lilac-tailed Parrotlet; Orange-winged Parrot; Collared Trogon;
Golden-olive, Red-rumped, and Chestnut Woodpeckers; Ferruginous
Pygmy-Owl; Stripe-breasted Spinetail; both Cocoa and Plain-Brown
Woodcreepers; Dusky-capped, Slaty-capped Flycatchers; Rufous-
breasted Wrens; Long-billed Gnatwren; Golden-fronted Greenlet;
both Speckled and Hepatic Tanagers; Yellow-rumped Cacique.

Mon., Oct. 9 Nariva Swamp / Atlantic Coast / Monkeys at Bush Bush Wildlife Sanctuary

This morning you depart for the lowlands of Trinidad, and a drive to the Atlantic Coast for a picnic lunch and possible seabird sightings on the beach at Manzanilla. "Coconut Alley" leads you through beachside habitats before we enter Nariva Swamp. Here, the Nariva River reaches the sea; freshwater environments of herbaceous swamp and mangrove swamp forest make for spectacular birding.

Time permitting, we end today's excursion in search of two species of large macaws, as well as Red Howler and White-faced Capuchin Monkeys at Bush Bush Wildlife Sanctuary. This is a very full day with many stops and discovery of species found nowhere else on the island.

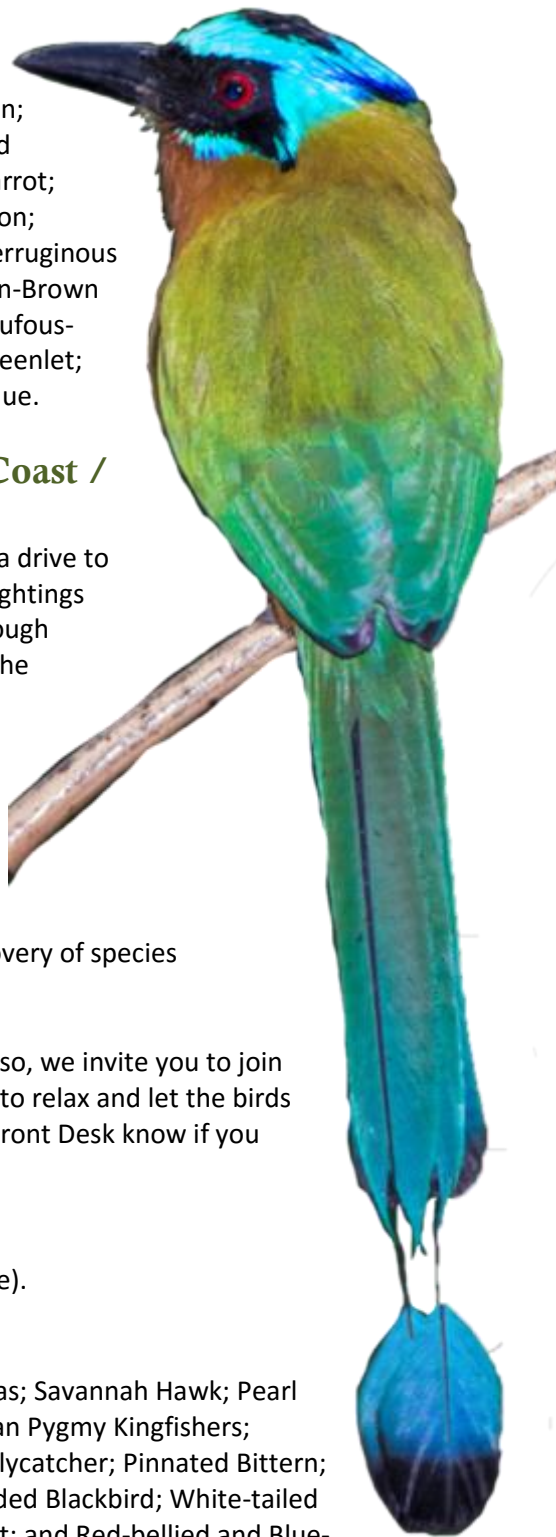
For some, today may be too long with too much driving. If so, we invite you to join Centre naturalists on walks close to home and enjoy a day to relax and let the birds come to you on AWNC's famous verandah. Please let the Front Desk know if you choose to opt out of the Nariva outing today.

Sea Bird Highlights

Magnificent Frigatebird; Brown Pelican; Leach's Petrel (rare).

Nariva Bird Highlights

Common Black-Hawk; Yellow-headed and Crested Caracaras; Savannah Hawk; Pearl Kite; Gray-lined Hawk; Plumbeous Kite; Green and American Pygmy Kingfishers; Black-crested Antshrike; Silvered Antbird; Brown-crested Flycatcher; Pinnated Bittern; Black-bellied Whistling-Duck; Purple Gallinule; Yellow-hooded Blackbird; White-tailed Goldenthrout; Long-winged Harrier; Yellow-crowned Parrot; and Red-bellied and Blue-and-yellow Macaws.



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Tues., Oct. 10 Port of Spain Cultural Day or Sketching Workshop and Birding at AWNC / Special Evening Presentation

Enjoy coffee, tea, and breakfast on the verandah, followed by one of two options for the day.

Choose between a drive into Port of Spain for a cultural day with a local Trinidadian, eating lunch at a local restaurant and viewing markets, museums, and some of the amazing fabrics much loved for use in the famous Trinidadian Carnival. Patricia Briceño is a fabric artist who adds delight to the day. You can also choose to partake in some great Verandah birding and partake in more extensive field sketching instruction with Keith Hansen at the Centre.

Around dinner that evening, join local residents for a presentation on Keith Hansen's Adventures in Life. Sure to be full of beautiful art and terrific stories, Keith shares many of the amazing experiences he has had as an artist, explorer, and birder.

Wed., Oct. 11

Sketching Workshop / The Scarlet Ibis of Caroni National Park

Enjoy a relaxing morning at AWNC. With 200 acres of grounds, you can round out your list and bask in the serenity of the forest. Keith also offers another morning of sketching instruction for those who missed it the day before, or who would like to continue to hone their skills.

After lunch, you depart for Caroni Swamp, birding along the way, then arrive at a dock in Caroni National Park. There is a Visitor Center with restrooms here, and the mangroves are good to check for new species. From here you bird by boat (watch for Ruschenberger Tree Boa and Silky Anteater, too), then moor up at a quiet spot in the mangroves to let the sunset show begin. Hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of Scarlet Ibis cloud the sky as they come in to roost. Tonight's experience is one you



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won't soon forget.

Caroni Bird Highlights

Long-winged Harrier; Yellow-hooded Blackbird; Bicolored Conebill; Masked (Red-capped) Cardinal; Straight-billed Woodcreeper; Green-throated Mango; Northern Waterthrush; Anhinga; Striated Heron; White-cheeked Pintail; Large-billed Tern; Pied Water-Tyrant; Black-crested Antshrike; Common Potoo; and Scarlet Ibis.

Thurs., Oct. 12

Rare Oilbirds / Flight to Tobago / Cuffie River Nature Retreat

This morning we say goodbye to the wonderful staff of AWNC and embark on the journey to Tobago. However, before we go to the airport, we have a chance to see the Centre's Oilbirds. Enjoy coffee, tea, and breakfast on the verandah, followed by this excursion. We start on a short, but steep, path to Dunston Cave, a riparian grotto at AWNC. We enjoy exclusive access to a breeding colony of Oilbirds — queer nocturnal, fruit-eating birds that congregate here at one of the world's most accessible nesting caves.



Since you are handling your luggage, today you can choose to buy lunch at the airport or carry a sack lunch from the Centre (ask the night before). For those who like to try local foods, we highly recommend doubles, the local favorite — ask your guide where to find them as we arrive at the airport.

We eat our lunches at the airport as we wait for our flight to Tobago. Generally, check in is quick and we have time.

Once we land in Tobago, our Tobago-based birding guide greets the group. Welcome to the distinctly Caribbean and laid-back Tobago. We make a few stops for birding, so be prepared with close-toed shoes, sunscreen, a hat, and binoculars. We then travel through vibrantly-colored hillside villages to the Cuffie River Nature Retreat. Once we arrive, enjoy the late-afternoon to stroll the grounds, take a dip in the pool, or just relax.

Cuffie River Nature Retreat is a small inn; please ask the staff for any needs, such as tea, beer, or wine, a pool towel, etc.

Dinner is announced daily, usually at 7:30 PM. Food is local and specially prepared, so relax and enjoy this wonderful dining experience! Perhaps we see and hear a Common Potoo right outside the dining area as we linger over dessert.

Oilbird Excursion Bird Highlights

Oilbird; Red-crowned Ant-Tanager; Black-faced Antthrush; White-bellied Antbird; and Gray-throated Leaftosser.

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Common Tobago Wildlife en Route to Cuffie

White-cheeked Pintail; Short-tailed Swift; Trinidad Motmot; Yellow-crowned Night-Heron; Green Kingfisher; and Spectacled Caiman.

Cuffie Bird Highlights

White-tailed Saberwing; Ruby Topaz Hummingbird; White-necked Jacobin; Bananaquit; Spectacled Thrush; Barred Antshrike; and sometimes at night, Common Potoo!

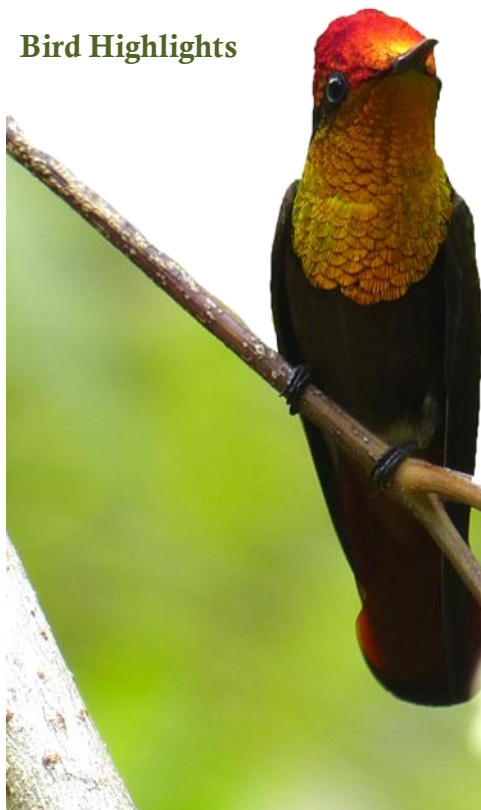
Cuffie River Nature Retreat was recognized as the 2011 "Sustainable Property of the Year" by the Tobago House of Assembly.

Fri., Oct. 13 Birding on Cuffie River Trails / Free Afternoon

In keeping with Tobago's laid-back vibe, today is easy-going. In the morning we explore a nature trail close to the lodge, walking from the entry with the lodge's expert guide, Desmond Wright. While we never move faster than a birder's pace, the trail is up and down small hills, so a walking stick may be handy. Return to the lodge for a delicious lunch, then savor a free afternoon. Most prefer to simply enjoy birding and photography on the grounds and time at the refreshing pool. If you would like to go snorkeling and swimming at a nearby beach, or visit cultural sites or shopping, our lodge host can arrange a taxi for you; please ask a day in advance if possible. Avid snorkelers can arrange a boat-assisted trip to some of the island's best reefs; you need the full day, which requires advanced notice.

Be sure to be at a good viewpoint for sunset, as hordes of parrots, parrotlets, and noisy chachalacas fly in to roost — quite a spectacle! After dark, check the driveway's street light for night birds.

Bird Highlights



Rufous-tailed Jacamar; White-tailed Sabrewing; Blue-backed Manakin; Yellow-legged Thrush; Rufous-vented Chachalaca; Ruby Topaz Hummingbird; Collared Trogon; Red-crowned Woodpecker; White-fringed Antwren; Orange-winged Parrot; Fuscous, Yellow-breasted, and Venezuelan Flycatchers; Caribbean Martin; Scrub Greenlet; Common Potoo; and White-tailed Nightjar.

Sat., Oct. 14

Birding on Little Tobago Island / Tobago's Main Ridge Forest Reserve

Today is a very full, but rewarding day! A short morning drive takes us

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across the island to the town of

Speyside, where we board a glass-bottom boat for a pleasant jaunt to Little Tobago Island. The island, one of the country's most significant wildlife sanctuaries, offers incredible views of plentiful and rare seabirds, both from the boat and by walking a trail up to cliffs and a lookout point on the island where Tropical Dry Forest occurs. This trail is not long but rather steep.

Leaving the island (if sea conditions are right), the captain pauses to look for colorful fish and possible Hawksbill Sea Turtle as we pass a former coral garden off Goat Island. The Atlantic side of the island has experienced extensive coral bleaching and while still excellent for divers, snorkeling is not what it once was. Since we still have lunch (and some great birding) ahead, there is not time for snorkeling today.

Try local food! Enjoy a delicious lunch at the Birder's Restaurant, owned by the family of our boat company. Again, it is fresh and takes some time, so enjoy watching the water, or step out to browse the small shops of Speyside as you wait. After lunch, you drive to Tobago's Main Ridge Forest Reserve to a trail at Gilpin Trace for a bit of birding before we return to Cuffie River. This is the world's oldest legally protected forest, put aside in 1776.

This hike can be muddy, so you may want to rent



some rubber

boots from locals at the trailhead. This is a narrow trail, so be prepared to help each other with both footing and bird sightings. We then make our way back to Cuffie River for a final, relaxed evening.

Little Tobago Bird Highlights

Brown Noddy; Red-billed Tropicbird; both Red-footed and Brown Boobies; Sooty Tern; Chivi Vireo; Brown-crested Flycatcher; Pale-vented Pigeon; Roseate and Bridled Tern; and Scaly-naped Pigeon. If lucky, an Audubon's Shearwater sitting in its burrow.

Main Ridge Forest Reserve Bird Highlights

Trinidad Motmot; Collared Trogon; White-tailed Sabrewing; Blue-backed Manakin; Yellow-legged Thrush; Red-crowned Woodpecker; White-fringed Antwren; Plain Antvireo; White-throated Spadebill; Olivaceous Woodcreeper; Stripe-breasted Spinetail; Golden-olive Woodpecker; Rufous-breasted Hermit; and Rufous-breasted Wren.

Sun., Oct. 15 Return to Port of Spain & Departures

A special event on Tobago today is the Bloody Bay Blue Food festival, featuring foods made with dasheen (taro). This festival is in its 18th year, and features music and other cultural events, as well as food.

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If you are going to be on the late night United flight today, you might consider going to nearby Bloody Bay today (additional charges apply). Or, consider staying another night!

Today you return to Port of Spain in Trinidad to catch international flights. Your departure from Cuffie River is timed accordingly; your guide confirms this with you the day before. If you have a later flight, we arrange lunch and if possible, a late checkout (additional expense). There are flights back to Port of Spain almost every hour; we schedule the best one to match up with your departing flight. If your home-bound flight leaves before 10:00 AM, you must spend an additional night at an airport hotel before flying out the next day. Please discuss this with a travel planner.

Itinerary is subject to change due to weather, road condition, access and other real-world factors. The order of the trips may also change. Should a location or region become unavailable, we make every effort to visit an equivalent location or region.

Photo Credits

Green-backed Trogon, Sandy Sorkin (SS); Copper-rumped Hummingbird, Buck Snelson; Tufted Coquette, Rich Wagner | WildNaturePhotos; Channel-billed Toucan, Robert Martinez; Purple Honeycreeper, Peg Abbott (PA); Blue-gray Tanager, Mike Boyce (MB); White-necked Jacobin, PA; Trinidad Motmot, MB; Asa Wright Nature Centre's Verandah, PA; Scarlet Iis, Karen Chisson; Common Potoo, MB; Ruby Topaz Hummingbird, Dave Ramdass; Red-billed Tropicbird, SS; Copper-rumped Hummingbird, Rich Wagner | WildNaturePhotos.

