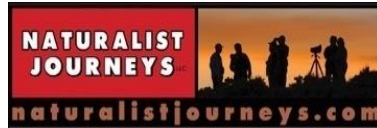


Trinidad & Tobago: Incredible Birds & Wildlife

February 13 – 22, 2025 | Species List

with Naturalist Journeys



Compiled by Naturalist Journeys tour host Stephen Grace with local guides Barry Ramdass, Dave Ramlal, Lester Nanan, Josh, Randell, Giselle, and Mukesh Ramdass on Trinidad; Jason Radix and Desmond Wright on Tobago; and Zolani Frank on Little Tobago Island. Our 10 clients included Kaki, Christy, Bruce, Tim, Norma, Betsy, Melinda, Art, Ed and Irene.

Our tour of Trinidad and Tobago was a spectacular success, offering an unforgettable blend of species diversity and exceptional sightings. The twin-island nation delivered breathtaking birding experiences, from dazzling tropical species to two endemic birds found nowhere else in the world.

One of the most awe-inspiring moments took place at Caroni Swamp, where thousands of Scarlet Ibis arrived at dusk to roost, painting the sky crimson. Little Tobago Island provided another mesmerizing spectacle as Red-billed Tropicbirds soared in front of dramatic sea cliffs, often pursued by Magnificent Frigatebirds. Nesting Red-footed Boobies and Brown Boobies added to the thrill, creating an unforgettable seabird encounter.

At Asa Wright Nature Centre, we ventured into Dunston Cave for a rare look at roosting Oilbirds, nocturnal frugivores that navigate with echolocation. Other highlights included the bizarre hammer-striking-anvil calls of the male Bearded Bellbird, which we watched vocalizing, and the deep croaks of the Channel-billed Toucan, seen perched in plain view. We were also fortunate to observe closely all three species of trogons and manakins found on the islands.

The tour felt like two trips in one, as Trinidad and Tobago differ in geology, culture, and birdlife, each offering unique avian specialties. A particularly memorable hummingbird sighting was the White-tailed Sabrewing, found only on Tobago. Other standouts included the brilliant Ruby-topaz Hummingbird, whose color changes from velvety black to dazzling red and gold when the sunlight shifts; the handsome Little Hermit, with its long bill that fits into the curved corollas of flowers; and the diminutive yet dazzling Tufted Coquette.

Tanagers and honeycreepers provided another colorful highlight. While the common Blue-gray Tanager never fails to impress, the feeders at lodges brought us close views of Purple Honeycreepers, Green Honeycreepers, and Silver-beaked Tanagers. Red-legged Honeycreepers feeding on flame-colored Immortelle flowers were particularly striking, while Bay-headed Tanagers and a radiant male Blue Dacnis left lasting impressions.

Among the vast Tyrant Flycatcher family, the call of the Great Kiskadee provided a near-constant soundtrack, while tracking down more elusive species like the Fuscous Flycatcher and Ochre-lored Flatbill added a fun challenge. The diverse Ovenbird family offered memorable sightings, including Yellow-chinned Spinetail, Streaked Xenops, and Cocoa Woodcreeper.

Antbirds ranged from the abundant Barred Antshrike to more secretive species like the White-bellied Antbird and White-flanked Antwren, which rewarded our patience. A true prize was a rare and excellent view of a Black-faced Antthrush, the only member of its Antthrush family in Trinidad and Tobago.

Parrots and macaws also made a strong impression, especially the sight of Blue-and-yellow Macaws feeding and socializing in palm trees. Most notably, we had the privilege of seeing both of the country's endemic bird species: the critically endangered Trinidad Piping-Guan and the striking Trinidad Motmot.

Among the New World Warbler family, memorable moments included spotting a Golden-crowned Warbler, a resident species, and encountering Neotropical migrants like American Redstart and Northern Waterthrush. Among the Vireo family, the Rufous-browed Peppershrike proved elusive but, when seen well, revealed a beauty to match its melodious song.

Raptors were well-represented, with standout sightings of Tropical Screech-Owl, Yellow-headed Caracara, and two elegant White Hawks soaring low overhead. At Asa Wright, we discovered a Common Potoo roosting during the day, while a night excursion at Cuffie River Lodge treated us to mesmerizing views of a White-tailed Nightjar hunting insects and a ghostly American Barn Owl gliding silently through the darkness. The following morning, we awoke to the raucous calls of Rufous-vented Chachalacas, a fitting finale to an extraordinary adventure.

This journey showcased the remarkable avian diversity of Trinidad and Tobago, leaving us with cherished memories of stunning landscapes, vibrant birdlife, and the thrill of discovery in one of the most exciting birding destinations in the world.

BIRDS: 215 species were recorded, of which 2 were endemic, and 1 was an introduced species.

The eBird link below details the 215 species of birds our group observed during the tour. If you're new to eBird, be sure to click "Show All Details" on the right side of the list to expand the report and reveal where and when each of the birds were seen and how many.

[Trinidad and Tobago | February 12 – 22, 2025 | eBird Trip Report](#)

Following is a list of the mammals, reptiles and amphibians, and other taxa we were fortunate to observe during the trip.

MAMMALS (9):

Southern Opossum *Didelphis marsupialis*—Seen mainly by its eyeshine as this furtive marsupial foraged on flowers atop a tree at Asa Wright.

Northeastern Silky Anteater *Cyclopes didactylus*—Lester Nanan's wife Gale spotted one of these little arboreal anteaters curled into a ball on our Caroni Swamp tour.

Red-tailed Squirrel *Sciurus granatensis*—Observed several times in both Trinidad and Tobago.

Red-rumped Agouti *Dasyprocta leporina*—seen from the verandah at Asa Wright.

Guianan Red Howler *Alouatta macconnelli*—Their booming voices were heard, but these loud primates were not seen.

White-Lined Sac-Winged Bat *Saccopteryx bilineata*—This day-flying bat was observed several times in the rainforests of Trinidad.

Several bat species, such as the following, were identified by using an Echo Meter device attached to Stephen Grace's phone:

Lesser Doglike Bat *Peropteryx macrotis*
Greater Sac-Winged Bat *Saccopteryx bilineata*
Proboscis Bat *Rhynchonycteris naso*

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS (10):

Geckos (Gekkonidae)—Geckos were heard many times and seen on the verandas of lodges but were not identified to the species level.

Green Iguana *Iguana iguana*—A young iguana was seen and photographed by Ed in an Immortelle tree at Cuffie River.

Cryptic Golden Tegu *Tupinambis cryptus*—These large and handsome lizards were seen by several members of our group on the grounds of Asa Wright.

Trinidad Ameiva *Ameiva atrigularis*—Immature ameivas with bright green heads captured the attention of our group, and mature members of this species were seen sprinting across the ground with impressive speed.

Spectacled Caiman *Caiman crocodilus*—Caiman eyes and snouts were seen a few times protruding from water.

Hawksbill Sea Turtle *Eretmochelys imbricata*—Seen by a few members of our group floating at the water's surface among sea swell as we boated toward Little Tobago Island.

Yellow-throated Frog (Trinidad Stream Frog) *Mannophryne trinitatis*—This endemic amphibian was heard and seen at Asa Wright.

Beebe's Toad *Rhinella beedei*—This tiny toad named for famed naturalist William Beebe was observed in a roadside ditch near Hacienda Jacana.

Tobago Racer *Mastigodryas dunnii*—Guide Zolani Frank picked up this slim serpent to show the group on Little Tobago Island.

Shaw's Black-backed Snake *Erythrolamprus melanotus*—This eye-catching snake was picked up by guide Jason Radix at Centre Street Ponds in Tobago to show our group.

FISH (2):

Jumping Guabine *Anablepsoides hartii*—This fascinating fish species that leaps out of the water to move from pool to pool was pointed out by Jason Radix in a tiny stream on the Gilpin Trace Trail of Tobago's Main Ridge Forest.

Reef Fish—Parrotfish, Blue Tang, and many other colorful fish species were seen on Angel Reef from our glass-bottom boat near Goat Island between Little Tobago and Blue Waters Inn.

CRUSTACEANS (1)

Manicou Crab *Eudaniela garmani*—Named for the local word for opossum (manicou), this crab broods its young against its body instead of laying eggs in water. This species has evolved to live separately from the sea, never returning to the ocean, spending its entire life high in the mountains.

ARACHNIDS (3):

Chevron Tarantula *Psalmopoeus cambridgei*—Seen hiding in a pipe at Asa Wright.

Golden Silk Orb-Weavers (*Nephilia spp.*)—Observed hunting insects caught in their webs and consuming the web silk to reuse the valuable material.

Harvestmen—Many dozens of these arachnids were illuminated in a UV light on a night walk at Asa Wright.

INSECTS

Butterflies and Moths (Lepidoptera)—Many beautiful butterfly species were observed, including **Monarch, Scarlet Peacock, White Peacock, Postman, Heliconius Sora, Long-tailed Skipper, Giant Swallowtail, Dirce Beauty, Cattleheart, Flambeau, Disturbed Tigerwing, and White Crescent.**

Caligo (Giant Owl Butterfly) with big false eyes was a group favorite, and the **Blue Morpho** dazzled, as did its similar-looking iridescent blue cousin, **King Shoemaker.**

A **Bee Hawk-moth** nectering on purple vervain at Hacienda Jacana was one of many standout species pointed out by Bruce throughout the tour. A day-flying moth, **Green-banded Urania (White-tailed Page),** was a crowd pleaser at Main Ridge Forest in Tobago.

Leafcutter Ants *Atta cephalotes*—Observed marching in lines that seemed to stretch for miles. The lines contained millions of ants carrying plant matter to feed the fungus that they cultivate in their nests to sustain them, as they have been doing for countless millennia. They developed a form of agriculture long before humans existed on this planet.

PLANTS

Species our group enjoyed observing included many epiphytes, such as **bromeliads** and **Old Man's Beard** *Rhipsalis baccifera* (referred to as mistletoe but not related to other mistletoes and actually a kind of cactus that dangles in thin, spaghetti-like strands); several colorful orchids in Trinidad's Northern Range rainforest such as **Purple Vanda** and *Psychopsis papilio*; the magisterial **Ceiba (Kapok or Silk-cotton Tree)** that has legends and local lore attached to it, as well as serving an important ecological role as an emergent tree in the forest canopy; **Torch Ginger, Shampoo Ginger and Beehive Ginger** at Asa Wright; **Hot Lips; Forest Rose; Soapbox; King Fern; Monkey Ladder; Selaginella Clubmoss; and Wild Guava.**

Our group enjoyed learning about **Miconia** plants that produce berries for Manakins, as well as soft leaves that can be used for toilet paper; **Heliconia** and **Black Pachystachys**, plants with flowers with curved corollas that hermit hummingbirds access with their long, decurved beaks; and **Ficus** trees that have a fascinating history of coevolving with pollinating wasps and were feeding myriad birds with their fig fruits on our tour.

Ethnobotany uses for local plants, such as **Tonka Bean** being used to treat nausea and digestive issues, were shared by Giselelle at Asa Wright and appreciated by our group.