

Discovery Tours is Thrilled to Announce:

A Trinidad and Tobago Adventure with Kenn and Kim Kaufman! July 11-21, 2011

**This trip is also a fund raiser for
Black Swamp Bird Observatory**

Cost: \$3190 per person, \$875 single supplement

Participants: Minimum 8 and maximum 16 participants

Deposit deadline: \$400 required by February 28, 2011

For reservations: Call 800 590-2669

Join us as we explore the tropical wonders of the two Caribbean Islands of Trinidad and Tobago. Because of their close proximity to the South American continent, these islands provide the widest range of habitats of all the Caribbean Islands. Trinidad (35 by 50 square miles) offers savannah lowlands, mangrove swamps, tropical rainforests and drier mountain ranges. These habitats support up to 430 species of birds, 108 mammals, and 2300 flowering plants. Tobago (26 by 7.5 square miles) is situated 20 miles northeast in the Atlantic Ocean and is drier and windier. It offers typical Caribbean habitats and is home to 200 species of birds including 12 not found on Trinidad.



The accommodations on this trip are first class, with cell phone and internet coverage available at nearly all locations. The Asa Wright Nature Centre, our base of operations for 5 nights and 5 days on Trinidad, is situated a pleasant 1300 feet up the Arima Valley. Birding here is one of the world's most exciting ornithological experiences. Formerly a cocoa-coffee-citrus plantation and now a second growth forest and a wildlife sanctuary, it offers several miles of easy, walkable trails and a veranda world renowned for viewing the hundreds of birds that visit every day. As the sun rises, grab a cup of coffee and watch Tufted

Coquette hummingbirds, Purple Honeycreepers, and Blue-gray Tanagers come in to the feeders. Exploring this 200-acre preserve includes stops at Golden-headed and White-bearded Manakin leks and a visit to the world famous Oilbird Cave.

We continue with 4 nights on Tobago, with 2 nights each at the intimate Cuffie River Lodge set in a lush river valley and beautiful beachfront lodgings at the Blue Waters Inn.

Itinerary

Monday, July 11

Day 1 : Arrival and transfer to Asa Wright Nature Centre

Today we arrive at Piarco International Airport in Port of Spain, Trinidad. It is a warm tropical evening and our guides meet us at the airport for transfer to the cooler mountains and Asa Wright Nature Centre. Arriving late, we settle in for the evening. **Lodging at Asa Wright Nature Centre**

Tuesday, July 12

Day 2: Orientation of Centre and Grounds with Local Guides



Awaken to the sound of Bananaquits chattering on the flowering plants outside your room. It's a tradition to gather at dawn on the veranda for a cup of locally grown coffee and watch the sunrise over the valley. As the valley awakens, waves of hummingbirds and honeycreepers arrive at the feeders and nearby nectar producing plants that surround the veranda. First time visitors can start adding life birds to their list before breakfast.

This day is dedicated to getting to know Asa Wright. After our breakfast, we meet our guides for orientation and a guided walk through the grounds. Our walk will take us past the courtship display areas (leks) of two species of manakins as well as Bearded Bellbird. Arriving back in time for lunch, we have some free time to enjoy the veranda or take a walk around the grounds.

Late in the afternoon we leave the grounds for Matura Beach to witness the spectacle of the Loggerhead Sea-Turtles on their nesting beaches. We'll enjoy a picnic dinner in the field and return to Asa Wright after dark.

Lodging at Asa Wright Nature Centre (B-L-D)

Wednesday, July 13

Day 3: Blanchisseuse/Caribbean Coast

Today we make another excursion off the grounds of Asa as we venture through Trinidad's northern range on our way to the coastal town of Blanchisseuse on the Caribbean coast. Habitats change along the drive from the highest forests as we search for White-tailed and Collared Trogons, Tropical Pewees and Speckled Tanagers, to the wetland/beach coastline searching for waterbirds and Green Kingfishers.

Enjoy a beachside lunch in the small working beach town of Blanchisseuse, and take a swim in the blue Caribbean and watch for Magnificent Frigatebirds and Brown Pelicans patrolling the offshore waters.

We return to Asa Wright in time to partake in the traditional rum punch service before dinner and of course bird from the veranda.

Lodging at Asa Wright Nature Centre (B-L-D)



Thursday, July 14

Day 4: Aripo Savanna and Arena Forest – Night Birding

This morning, we depart early and drive down to lower elevations to bird the Aripo Savanna before the heat of the day. The savanna surrounds the Agriculture Research station and the loop drive through the savanna provides good looks at birds of prey, including Savanna Hawk, Common Black-Hawk, and Zone-tailed Hawk. The open fields and available water also make this drive productive for spotting such birds as Southern Lapwing and Wattled Jacana.



Next, we drive to the Arena Forest for a picnic lunch and birding this unique lowland rain forest. This can be a very productive birding location and many birds such as Little Tinamou, Plumbeous Kite, White Hawk and Blue-headed Parrots are probable species here.

Return to Asa for a short break and depart in the late afternoon for night birding at the Ag Research Station. We enjoy a picnic dinner at the research station and look for Peregrines, Merlins, and Bat Falcons as the sun sets. After dark the roads and open meadows of the station are prime locations to see White-tailed Nightjars and Common Pauraques, Barn Owls and Common Potoos. Tropical Screech-Owls and Ferruginous Pygmy-Owls also utilize this area.

Lodging at Asa Wright Nature Centre (B-L-D)

Friday, July 15

Day 5: Oilbird Cave / Caroni Marsh - Scarlet Ibis and night birds

This will be a leisurely morning as we bird the veranda after breakfast. Mid-morning, we join our guide for the hike down to the Oilbird colony in the Dunstin Cave, a grotto on the Guacharo River. As we enter the cave we hear the haunting calls that gave this large night bird the local "Devil Bird" moniker. In a family by itself, the Oilbird is a unique night-flying, fruit-eating, sonar-using bird, and this is one of the best places in the world to see it. Once satisfied we return to the main trails and revisit the manakin and Bearded Bellbird leks and return to the Centre for lunch.



We depart in late afternoon for the Caroni Marsh for a boat ride through the beautiful mangrove channels of the marsh and make our way to the roosting islands of the Scarlet Ibis. Along the way, we search for Greater Anis, Pied Water-Tyrants and chance sightings of nocturnal Boat-billed Herons.

As the sun sets we'll witness the spectacular flight of the Scarlet Ibis coming to roost, some from as far away as Venezuela (okay, it's only a 7 mile gap to the mainland). **Lodging at Asa Wright Nature Centre (B-L-D)**

Saturday, July 16

Day 6: Flight to Tobago / Bon Accord Marsh/Grafton Estate/Cuffie River

Today we depart early to Piarco International Airport to catch a transfer flight to Tobago, an island with a strong Caribbean flair. Our local guide (with a very comfortable bus) will drive us across the island, making birding stops en route. We'll lunch at a local beach diner and stop at the historic Grafton Estate where Blue-crowned Motmots and other spectacular species come in for a regular afternoon feeding. We then check in to the wonderful Cuffie River Nature Retreat, a delightful inn tucked into the valley of the Cuffie River. We relax before our evening meal, enjoy the pool, and listen to the evening chorus of Rufous-vented Chachalacas as they settle into their roosts.

Lodging at Cuffie River Lodge (B-L-D)

Sunday, July 17

Day 7: Cuffie River Lodge



We spend this day exploring the rainforest trails of the Cuffie River Nature Retreat. Our local guide will lead us around the grounds in search of White-tailed Sabrewing hummingbirds, Blue-backed Manakins, Rufous-tailed Jacamars, Yellow-legged Thrushes, and other Tobago specialties. The inn is well stocked with hummingbird feeders and Ruby Topaz hummingbirds should be seen here.

Time after lunch is free for you to read on the porch, enjoy the pool, or scan the many hummingbird feeders. Dinner here is always a treat. Evening is on your own. **Lodging at Cuffie River Lodge (B-L-D)**

Monday, July 18

Day 8: Gilpen Trace/ Transfer to Blue Waters

Today we depart Cuffie River Retreat and cross Tobago's mountains to the other side of the island at Speyside, with sightseeing stops and a hike in Tobago's rainforest en route. We hike the trails at Gilpen Trace, the world's oldest forest preserve which was established by the British Crown in 1765. Hurricane damage is frequent here and the recovering forest is rich in palms and tree-ferns.



We arrive at Blue Waters Inn, located on a secretive cove of the Caribbean near Speyside. The ocean here is very welcoming and the beach here is great for swimming, kayaking, and snorkeling. The birds here are laid back as well and Ruddy Turnstones feed on the crumbs of the floor of the beachfront restaurant. We may hear the raucous calls of the Rufous-vented Chachalaca again as we turn in for the evening.

Lodging at Blue Waters Inn (B-L-D)

Tuesday, July 19

Day 9: Little Tobago Seabird Colony / optional snorkeling

This morning we board a glass bottom boat and cross over coral reefs to visit Little Tobago Island. Little Tobago is drier and more rugged than the big island and cactus and arid shrubs dominate the windward side of this island.



Once on the where we hike up a gradual trail to the cliffs overlooking nesting seabird colonies of Red-billed Tropicbirds, and Red-footed and Brown Boobies. Sooty and Bridled Terns and Brown Noddies can be seen here as well.

Upon return to Blue Waters, those that are interested can snorkel after lunch. This is a weather dependant activity and some may prefer to relax on the beach or venture off to explore Speyside. **Lodging at Blue Waters Inn (B-L-D)**

Tuesday, July 20

Day 10 Relax / transfer back to Trinidad

We'll have the morning free until our bus arrives to take us back across the island to the airport. We'll drive the Atlantic side of the island for this trip and will of course make stops at convenient birding locations. We transfer back to Trinidad mid afternoon and stay in a Holiday Inn Express located very near the airport to facilitate our early departure in the morning. We'll dine at a local establishment to review our trip, double check our bird check lists and say our goodbyes.

Lodging at Holiday Inn Express (B-L-D)

Wednesday, July 21

Day 11: Shuttle to Airport and departure

While the tour is officially over on Tuesday evening, it's likely that we'll all be transferring to the airport at the same time to catch the early morning flights to the mainland. Breakfast is available at the airport.

Enjoyable and safe flights home for everybody.