



ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Guyana Birds & Wildlife

23rd October to 3rd November 2014

& Sun Parakeet & Red Siskin Extension

3rd to 8th November 2014



Guianan Cock-of-the-rock by Chris Sharpe

Trip report compiled by tour leader Chris Sharpe

Tour Intro

Guyana is one of the wildest, least developed and best conserved countries in the world. With a population of fewer than one million, 90% of whom live in less than 10% of the land area (predominantly in the coastal zone), and very low growth rates, vast regions remain as pristine rainforest and remote savannas: more than 75% of Guyana remains covered by forest, and huge swathes of the country are largely inaccessible. Of course, there is a sense that this may not last for ever: there are few protected areas and the conflicting interests of forestry, infrastructure development and large-scale agriculture are emerging – the scars of legal and illegal gold-mining are more evident year by year. We are lucky to be able to visit at this time and, perhaps, to lend some support to plans to conserve this unique region, part of the world's largest tropical wilderness. With its endless forested vistas, remote ecolodges, environmentally aware indigenous communities, friendly locals and a commitment to sustainable tourism, it is hard to imagine a more exciting destination for a true wilderness birding adventure.

We were fortunate to work with Gary Sway throughout our trip. As our local guide, his



Grey-winged Trumpeters by Susan Phelon

knowledge and experience ensured that our tour ran smoothly and that we saw as much wildlife as possible. As a member of the Makushi village of Surama, he was also able to share with us key insights into the culture, identity, history and politics of the Guyanese interior.

Our trip was timed to coincide with the dry season. However, in the last couple of decades long-established patterns of rainfall have changed markedly, possibly disrupted

by global climate change. This year the wet season was extremely short and, as a consequence, we found ourselves in conditions of severe drought, which meant that many water bodies were dry, rivers were extremely low, there were no antswarms and bird activity was (according to our guides) inhibited. In the end, the forests gave up their birds reluctantly.

Nonetheless, our persistence was rewarded and there were many unforgettable moments. Highlights of our trip might have been our dozen Rufous Crab Hawks, one of our encounters with characterful Grey-winged Trumpeters, our Guianan Toucanet/Black-faced Hawk experience, the confiding Black-bellied Cuckoos, the beautiful juvenile Spectacled Owl, the family of Rufous-throated Sapphires, fanning Red-fan Parrots, lekking Guianan Cock-of-the-rock, prolonged and close views of Crimson Fruitcrow, saturation looks at Dusky Purpletufts, an unexpected Ocellated Crake, or the Giant Anteater. Our extension gave us great views of Sun Parakeet, Rio Branco Antbird, Hoary-throated Spinetail and a couple of Red Siskins, all of which are threatened species with restricted ranges.



Tour Detail

Our Guyana tour began with an early morning walk up the east bank of the Abary River, a short drive along the coast from Georgetown. The first birds we saw were specialities of the area: the semi-endemic Blood-coloured Woodpecker and Rufous Crab Hawk. We were to encounter a total of four and a dozen of each respectively. In the same spot a Mangrove Cuckoo appeared and began to sing as skeins of juvenile Scarlet Ibis passed overhead. We were supposed to be eating our picnic breakfast, but this proved quite a challenge – we were thankful that our binoculars had coffee-guards. Further along the track we had good looks at Muscovy Duck, Little Cuckoo, American Pygmy Kingfisher, White-bellied Piculet and Bicoloured Conebill. A Black Hawk-Eagle briefly sang and displayed high above us. Migrants included Northern Waterthrush, Yellow Warbler and a couple of Blackpoll Warblers. A stop at Hope Beach produced half a dozen species of migrant shorebirds as well as scope views of Scarlet Ibis, but the tide was low, so most of the birds were beyond our view. Our afternoon visit to Georgetown Botanical Gardens gave us a selection of those Neotropical favourites, the parrots and toucans, with Festive Amazon (Parrot) being a particular hit. Black-capped Donacobius peeked out from the Lotus flowers as we hunted down our Wing-barred Seedeater. After several less than satisfying looks at females, we were rewarded with some excellent views of four males. As night fell a sleepy Great Horned Owl suffered the attentions of a scolding Tropical Mockingbird, while a visiting Peregrine made a fast dash over the palm tops for its supper.



Kaieteur Falls from the air by Chris Sharpe

On our second morning we made the short drive to Ogle Airport for our charter flight into the interior of Guyana. Our pilot skilfully negotiated the clouds on the first leg of the flight, which took us over a vast extension of primary rainforest to Kaieteur Falls. Set in the most impressive mountainous forest landscape, and with a huge volume of tea-coloured water from the Potaro River



Blackish Nightjar by Chris Sharpe

thundering over the drop, this is an unforgettable sight. We are not just here for the scenery though. Heading into the forest, a Guianan Cock-of-the-rock lek gave us the chance to photograph at least five male birds from within seven metres (20 feet), while a roosting Blackish Nightjar allowed a more intimate approach. We admired the cataract from ever closer viewing points before departing for our final destination – Surama – but not before a final aerial pass over the falls.

At Surama we met our local guide, Gary Sway, who took us on an afternoon walk from his village into the forest towards the Burro Burro River. Here we had our first looks at the



spectacular Ferruginous-backed Antbird, several White-crowned Manakins and a Spotted Puffbird. Guianan Red Howler Monkeys moved sluggishly through the canopy. As dusk fell, we managed to whistle in a couple of Great Jacamars. At this point we turned round and enjoyed the nocturnal forest sounds as we walked back to camp: two Rufous-winged Ground Cuckoos, two Tawny-bellied Screech Owls and half a dozen Red-legged Tinamous.

Day three. We boarded our vehicle as the sky turned a succession of extraordinary colours over Surama and bands of Red-and-green Macaws added even more variety to the palette. Along the main road we encountered Caica Parrots, Paradise Jacamars, Guianan Slaty Antshrikes, and Fulvous-crested and Yellow-backed Tanagers. A stop at a clearing got our blood racing as a huge, bright red male Crimson Fruitcrow swooped in, mobbed by other birds. Over a period of fifteen minutes we were treated to repeated close views of this king of cotingas. The bird finally dropped into a small roadside *Cecropia*, providing a photographic opportunity for all. Apart from a wonderful study of a



Crimson Fruitcrow by Chris Sharpe

roosting Long-tailed Potoo and further Ferruginous-backed Antbirds, the Harpy Eagle Trail proved rather quiet and the young eagle is now too old to receive regular feeds. A troupe of noisy Weeping (Wedge-capped) Capuchins provided some distraction. In the afternoon we drove to the Burro Burro River where a Blue-throated Piping Guan fed at eye-level on *Cecropia* fruits and Red-fan Parrots gave a graphic explanation of their name. Walking back through the forest we were treated to a glimpse of a Black-faced Hawk and a spotlight view of Tawny-bellied Screech Owl. Night sounds included Spotted Antpitta, Crested Owl and Long-tailed Potoo.



Long-tailed Potoo by Chris Sharpe

The next morning at dawn we explored the grasslands before breakfast, finding many of the savanna specialities, chief of which was the infrequently-seen Ocellated Crake, which we were fortunate to observe slinking through the grass. As we drove through the Iwokrama Forest Reserve only a couple of birds detained us: a Jabiru, and an adult Ornate Hawk-Eagle perched at eye-level, which unfortunately flushed at the moment we noticed its presence. Arriving just before lunch at Iwokrama River Lodge, we set out to explore our surroundings in the heat of the day. We were fortunate to observe a female Black-bellied Cuckoo soliciting food from her mate, the latter obliging with an enormous stick insect – all from point-blank range. Our afternoon saunter back along the shaded entrance road took place once temperatures had dropped. Pied and Guianan Puffbirds perched in the roadside canopy, while Black Curassows and a Grey-winged Trumpeter patrolled the road itself. A Grey Antbird peeked out of the mid-level vines. Guianan (Black) Spider Monkeys regarded us with curiosity. After dark, we managed quick looks at an Amazonian Pygmy Owl. Our night boat ride on the mighty Essequibo River allowed us to see both species



of Bulldog or Fishing Bats (only the Greater truly fishes), Gladiator Treefrogs, an Amazonian Tree Boa and a couple of large Black Caiman, one of which submerged to appear directly under our boat! The only birds were a Boat-billed Heron and half a dozen Ladder-tailed Nightjars plus two chicks.

Turtle Mountain was our destination the following morning. A 45 minute boat trip added Black-collared Swallow and Capped Heron to our tally. Giant River Otters sported in a lagoon on our arrival at the trail-head. We advanced slowly through the forest listening for sounds, but it was quiet until we began to climb. Here we found a nice male Red-and-black Grosbeak that perched for us in the understorey. The short climb to the top of this “mountain” was worth every drop of sweat for the vista of unbroken forest canopy. At one point a pair of Red-and-green Macaws banked over the forest, providing the quintessential image of pristine South American wilderness. Only the perched Orange-breasted Falcon drew away our gaze. Our descent was punctuated by birding stops, a couple of which included scope views of Amazonian Motmot and Golden-headed Manakins. Band-rumped and Chapman's Swifts appeared to be drinking from the lagoon, allowing us to study both underside and upperside at close range. Our afternoon excursion along the main Georgetown–Lethem road was largely devoid of birds; only at dusk did some of us see a pair of Blue-cheeked Amazons (Parrots) cross the road. Short-tailed Nighthawk and Common Potoo were our nightbird sightings.



Giant River Otter by Chris Sharpe

Driving south from Iwokrama River Lodge the next day, we stopped at the Muri Scrub for some white-sand forest specialities: Black Manakin and Rufous-crowned Elaenia. Our best bird came last, when a Guianan Red Cotinga put in an appearance. We arrived at Atta Lodge close to midday but, despite the heat, managed to find Grey-winged Trumpeters, American Pygmy Kingfisher, Waved Woodpeckers and Rose-breasted Chat. After lunch, the lodge clearing gave us our first looks at Dusky Purpletuft. Losing no further time we headed to the renowned Atta canopy walkway. Besides another pair of eye-level Dusky Purpletufts, we enjoyed a female Golden-green Woodpecker, Black-



Birding from the Atta Canopy Walkway by Chris Sharpe

spotted Barbets and a female Spangled Cotinga. A female Rufous-throated Sapphire shielded her two chicks from the sun on a nest cup at eye-level. After dark, a singing White-winged Potoo refused to show itself, but we did have a great look at an intrepid Bare-tailed Woolly Opossum tight-rope walking along the guy lines.

We returned to the walkway early next morning for a different suite of birds, which included Plumbeous and Ruddy Pigeons, Todd's Antwren, Zimmer's Flatbill and Purple-throated Fruitcrow. The trail below the walkway gave us one of our most memorable experiences: the



sight of male White-throated Manakins displaying to females on a mossy log. The rest of the morning produced another Guianan Red Cotinga and a couple of perched Double-toothed Kites. Atta's forests were frustratingly quiet in the afternoon and even a singing White-winged Potoo remained hidden.

The following morning the canopy walkway gave us improved views of some of the treetop denizens, including a spectacular male Spangled Cotinga, Black-spotted Barbet and Tiny Tyrant-Manakin. Dapper Rufous-bellied Antwrens were found along the trails, and flocks included many commoner species as well as Olive-backed Foliage-gleaner. Woodpeckers were the theme of our lunchtime at the lodge clearing, with Waved, Chestnut and Red-necked all showing well. There were very few birds on our afternoon walk, a few hours of quality rather than quantity: we began with spectacular and prolonged scope views of a close Guianan Toucanet; having obtained saturation looks, and wondering whether we would end up walking away from the bird, there was a commotion and the toucanet was replaced on its perch by a Black-faced Hawk, a scarce denizen of the forest interior, which we duly scoped. After dark we had excellent views of Amazonian Pygmy Owl and a juvenile Spectacled Owl.



Orange-breasted Falcon by Chris Sharpe

The morning of our departure was our last chance for the spectacular Guianan endemic Black-throated Antshrike. We set off in the pre-dawn, homing in on a bird singing in the lessening gloom. With little effort we were able to get absolutely stunning views of both male and female. At one point, both birds perched on a patch of bare ground at the trail side. With extra time in hand, we headed for one last look at the canopy walkway. This time a canopy flock was in evidence and Spot-tailed and Todd's Antwrens, a pair of Black-spotted Barbets and a Guianan Tyrannulet were all in adjacent trees. The first stop on our drive south was the Cock-of-the-rock trail where we found another roosting Long-tailed Potoo as well as a single male Guianan Cock-of-the-rock that we



Giant Anteater by Chris Sharpe

scoped for half an hour. The only other bird during the rest of the morning was a perched immature Black Hawk-Eagle. Lunch at Rock View and our drive to Genip Landing were uneventful, but our three hour boat trip up the Rupununi to Karanambu gave us chance to enjoy some widespread waterbirds as well as some extremely large Black Caiman, several of which were over 4m long! In our last half hour of daylight we managed to find a pair of Aplomado Falcons at Karanambu airstrip. White-tailed Nightjars were seen well – in fact almost crushed underfoot – on our after dinner walk.



After the inactivity of the forest section of our tour, our first full day at Karanambu really was bursting with wildlife. After chancing upon a Savanna Fox just outside camp, we then ran into a Giant Anteater. In finding a vantage point for the scope, we inadvertently put up three Least Nighthawks from their roost on a bare patch of savanna. A drying lake was good habitat for half a dozen Bearded Tachuris. Grassland Yellow Finch, White-tailed Goldenthrout, singing Yellowish Pipits and a covey of Crested Bobwhite. At the next lake, we flushed a Pinnated Bittern, which lumbered over the reeds before becoming invisible once more. Further on, a congregation of Jabiru numbered at least 55 birds. A quick look at a gallery forest patch on our way back unexpectedly produced a highly vocal Black Manakin. After duetting with some Finsch's Euphonias and enjoying Squirrel Monkeys coming to drink at the river, our afternoon boat excursion took us upriver to Mobay Pond. On the way we found a White-rumped Sandpiper. Mobay Pond itself was home to Band-tailed Nighthawks, but the show was stolen by the Amazonian Water Lilies. Ladder-tailed Nighthjars, and Black and Spectacled Caiman were spotlighted on our return trip.



Capuchinbird by Chris Sharpe

Our final morning was devoted to finding some gallery forest birds at the Honey Ponds. We had brief but close looks at a singing Capuchinbird, but he was the sole lekking bird. White-browed Antbirds were vocal and we got looks at a male as well as some Pale-eyed Pygmy Tyrants and yet another American Pygmy Kingfisher. Thus concluded the main tour, Guyana I.

Sun Parakeet & Red Siskin Extension



Sun Parakeets by Chris Sharpe

For those embarking on the Sun Parakeet & Red Siskin Extension, a long drive over roadless – and sometimes entirely trackless! – savanna ensued. There was little time to stop for birds *en route* to Karasabai, but we did see a White-tailed Kite and about 20 Jabirus. A further 40 Jabirus were soaring at high elevation over the Karasabai Guest House, where we also got great looks at a Pearl Kite. Our afternoon excursion gave us insurance views of one of our target birds: two Sun Parakeets glowing in a distant tree. Zone-tailed Hawks, Toco Toucans, Cayenne Jays and Hooded Tanagers rounded off the afternoon.

The following morning we took a boat trip up an abnormally low Ireng River – so low that we kept grounding and could only get as far as the first significant rapids, half an hour upstream. It was enough to secure us fairly good looks at a flock of six Sun Parakeets though – even if we had to stand over in Brazil to do it. The rest of the morning was spent in the foothills, enjoying flocks of dapper dry country birds: Southern



White-fringed Antwren, Hooded Tanager and Chestnut-vented Conebill. In the afternoon we drove an extremely smooth, recently-graded main road to the border town of Lethem.

Two Critically Endangered passerines with highly restricted ranges – an antbird and a furnariid – were on the menu for our Ireng River trip from Lethem; in the event the water level was too low to use a boat, to reach the gallery forest we therefore bumped across the savanna in a couple of Toyotas. Rio Branco Antbird was despatched without too much trouble: excellent views of a cooperative pair that approached repeatedly to within two metres (six feet). Hoary-throated Spinetail proved more of a challenge: we walked the gallery forest without hearing anything (although we did flush a roosting Great Horned Owl), and a second site was also dead quiet. In the end, however, our perseverance paid off, and by judicious use of a machete we were able to get very close views of a single bird in a dense tangle of thorn scrub. Having spent most of the morning tracking down our target birds, we only had a short time in which to enjoy general savanna birding, but we did run into Crested Bobwhite, Buff-necked Ibis, South American Snipe, Neotropical Palm Swift, White-throated Kingbird and Flavescent Warbler. A cold beer at Manaure Ranch tasted like an elixir, a prelude to a delicious lunch. An elusive Orange-backed Troupial was the last noteworthy bird of the day.



Rio Branco Antbird by Chris Sharpe

A 2.30 a.m. start was not to everyone's delight, but Red Siskins demand such sacrifices. Most of the group dosed on our drive in, although there were plenty of nightjars and nighthawks along the dirt road. We reached the Rupununi River in the half-light and the Toyota Hilux easily pulled our minibus across. After a welcome cup of coffee at Dadanawa we set off for the Red Siskin stake-out. Ninety minutes later we were enjoying a *salt-fish and fry-bread* box breakfast in a range of hills. Hawks were in evidence: Zone-, White- and Short-tailed Hawks. A Cliff Flycatcher seemed slightly out of place. In the heat, ground doves and seedeaters kept us on our toes as they came in to drink at the seeping cracks in the rock. It was not until two-and-a-half hours later that our first siskin appeared –



Gary & Leroy awaiting Red Siskins by Chris Sharpe

a female. Half an hour later an immature male showed up. We stayed on-site until after midday, by which time the heat was overpowering and we had to beat a hasty retreat to the ranch. Dadanawa Ranch may be a rather dilapidated affair, but no-one can teach them anything about beef production: we enjoyed an absolutely wonderful steak, and some of us had seconds – and thirds! Our drive back to Lethem was punctuated with a stop just past Shulinab for a scarce bird South American bird: a Short-eared Owl quartering over a roadside meadow at the end of the afternoon. As it got dark, a full moon edged above the horizon in a violet sky behind the Kanuku Mountains.



The following day we flew back to the coast from Lethem. As we watched the Rupununi Savannas and then the seemingly endless vista of unbroken forest canopy slip away below us, we could only speculate on the unseen birds below and the rich biodiversity of these unique forests.



Birding from above the incredible Kaieteur Falls by Chris Sharpe

BIRDS

Taxonomy follows IOC, showing Clements [omissions] and (changes). BirdLife International / HBW Alive departures are noted in the text.

Conservation status (IUCN threat category) is in red.

Tinamous Tinamidae

Great Tinamou

Tinamus major

Heard several times at Iwokrama and Atta: often the 'five o'clock' tinamou. **Near Threatened.**

Cinereous Tinamou

Crypturellus cinereus

Heard at Surama.

Undulated Tinamou

Crypturellus undulatus

Heard several times at Atta and Karanambu.

Red-legged Tinamou

Crypturellus erythropus

Heard at Surama.

Variegated Tinamou

Crypturellus variegatus

Heard frequently at Surama and Atta.



Ducks, Geese & Swans Anatidae**White-faced Whistling Duck***Dendrocygna viduata*

A male at Karanambu and additional score near Lethem on the Extension.

Black-bellied Whistling Duck*Dendrocygna autumnalis*

A female with eight young at Karanambu.

Muscovy Duck*Cairina moschata*

Several sightings of this elegant duck at the Abary River and Iwokrama.

Chachalacas, Curassows & Guans Cracidae**Little Chachalaca***Ortalis motmot*

Small numbers along the Georgetown–Lethem road in the Iwokrama Forest, at Atta, along the Rupununi River and at Karanambu; this is one of the most retiring members of the genus.

Spix's Guan*Penelope jacquacu*

Several really nice views at Surama (including an adult with two chicks), Iwokrama, along the Georgetown–Lethem road and at Atta.

Blue-throated Piping Guan*Pipile cumanensis*

Wonderful views at eye-level of a bird feeding in the canopy along the Burro Burro River, Surama.

Black Curassow*Crax alector*We encountered them at Iwokrama and had excellent views at Atta. **Vulnerable.****New World Quail Odontophoridae****Crested Bobwhite***Colinus cristatus*

Close looks at a flock of birds at Karanambu. Further encounters at Lethem and Dadanawa on our Extension.

Grebes Podicipedidae**Least Grebe***Tachybaptus dominicus*One at Karanambu. Guyanese birds are the resident subspecies *brachyrhynchus* (= *speciosus*).**Storks Ciconiidae****Wood Stork***Mycteria americana*

Four at Karanambu, plus Dadanawa on our Extension.

Maguari Stork*Ciconia maguari*

Two at Karanambu, with another at Karasabai on our Extension.

Jabiru*Jabiru mycteria*

Two adults flew from a sandbar to a nest along the Rupununi River, and 55 were gathered together at Karanambu. At least 40 soaring at very high elevation at Karasabai and several more at Dadanawa on our Extension. These aggregations and movements may be a response to the drought conditions.

Ibises, Spoonbills Threskiornithidae**Buff-necked Ibis***Theristicus caudatus*

Three birds near Lethem and another pair at Dadanawa on our Extension.

Green Ibis*Mesembrinibis cayennensis*

One at Iwokrama, others along the banks of the Rupununi River and gallery forest at Karanambu; found in similar habitat at Karasabai on our Extension.

Scarlet Ibis*Eudocimus ruber*

Some 30 juveniles flying over at the Abary River and about 40, including bright red adults, at Hope Beach.

Hérons, Bitterns Ardeidae

Rufescent Tiger Heron

Tigrisoma lineatum

Along the Rupununi River at Karanambu.

Boat-billed Heron

Cochlearius cochlearius

Several seen after dark at Iwokrama, Atta and Karanambu.

Pinnated Bittern

Botaurus pinnatus

One accidentally flushed at Karanambu.

Black-crowned Night Heron

Nycticorax nycticorax

Along the Rupununi River.

Yellow-crowned Night Heron

Nyctanassa violacea

About 25 adults at Hope Beach.

Striated Heron

Butorides striata

Hope Beach, Iwokrama, Karanambu, as well as Lethem and Dadanawa on our Extension.

Cocoi Heron

Ardea cocoi

Water bodies throughout.

Great Egret

Ardea alba

At water bodies in coastal and savanna areas.

Capped Heron

Pilherodius pileatus

One of these beautiful birds at Iwokrama, along the Essequibo River.

Tricoloured Heron

Egretta tricolor

Hope Beach.

Little Blue Heron

Egretta caerulea

Small numbers at Hope Beach, along the Rupununi River and at Karanambu.

Snowy Egret

Egretta thula

Common at Hope Beach, along the Rupununi River and at Karanambu.

Pelicans Pelecanidae

Brown Pelican

Pelecanus occidentalis

Three over the sea at Hope Beach.

Frigatebirds Fregatidae

Magnificent Frigatebird

Fregata magnificens

A few flying over the Abary River and at Hope Beach.

Cormorants, shags Phalacrocoracidae

Neotropic Cormorant

Phalacrocorax brasilianus

Along the Rupununi River at Karanambu.

Anhingas, Darters Anhingidae

Anhinga

Anhinga anhinga

One along the Georgetown–Lethem road in the Iwokrama Forest and three along the Rupununi River, as well as at the Ireng River near Karasabai on our Extension.



New World Vultures Cathartidae**Turkey Vulture***Cathartes aura*

All coastal areas and southern savannas, and in smaller numbers in some largely-forested areas such as Kaieteur Falls and Atta. All the birds we saw were of the white-naped resident subspecies *ruficollis*.

Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture*Cathartes burrovianus*

A vulture of savannas and marshes, found from Karanambu south.

Greater Yellow-headed Vulture*Cathartes melambrotus*

A vulture of primary forests, we had some excellent views of perched and flying birds at Kaieteur Falls, Surama and Atta.

Black Vulture*Coragyps atratus*

Only seen at Surama and Karanambu, and throughout the Extension; strongly associated with human habitation.

King Vulture*Sarcoramphus papa*

Soaring adults at Iwokrama and Atta.

Ospreys Pandionidae**[Western] Osprey***Pandion haliaetus*

Seen throughout, as well as at the Ireng River near Lethem on our Extension. A bird that passed Turtle Mountain heading southwards along the Essequibo was harassed by an Orange-breasted Falcon. All subspecies *carolinensis*, which breeds in North America.

Kites, Hawks & Eagles Accipitridae**White-tailed Kite***Elanus leucurus*

A single roadside bird at the start of our Extension.

Pearl Kite*Gampsonyx swainsonii*

One at Karanambu; others at Karasabai and Lethem on our Extension.

Black Hawk-Eagle*Spizaetus tyrannus*

An adult displaying over the Abary River on our first day and an immature perched at the roadside in the Iwokrama Forest.

Ornate Hawk-Eagle*Spizaetus ornatus*

An adult perched at eye-level at the edge of the road as we drove to Iwokrama provided a superb view for some of us, but it took flight before we were able to stop. **Near Threatened.**

Double-toothed Kite*Harpagus bidentatus*

Two birds – presumably a pair – perched close together in the canopy at Atta.

Black-collared Hawk*Busarellus nigricollis*

One at Georgetown Botanical Gardens Iwokrama road and another in the Iwokrama Forest; also at Lethem on our Extension.

Snail Kite*Rostrhamus sociabilis*

Common along the coast.

Crane Hawk*Geranospiza caerulescens*

One at Surama.

Rufous Crab Hawk*Buteogallus aequinoctialis*

At least a dozen birds along the Abary River: immatures and adults, perched at point-blank range and in flight, we had every imaginable kind of view. Within the last 2,000 years its range extended into the Caribbean, but it is now restricted to a narrow swathe of mangrove habitat in NE South America; although mangrove clearance is now the principal threat, competition with Common Black Hawk



Buteogallus urubitinga has been suggested as a long-term factor in its range contraction, perhaps borne out by the fact that it is most common in the Guianas where the latter is rather scarce. **Near Threatened.**

Savanna Hawk

Buteogallus meridionalis

The savanna hawk, common at Surama, Karanambu and throughout the Rupununi Savannas on our Extension.

Great Black Hawk

Buteogallus urubitinga

One perched at Ogle Airport, another at Atta, and more at Karasabai on our Extension.

Roadside Hawk

Rupornis magnirostris

Throughout, adapting to life as a riverside hawk in the absence of roads.

White-tailed Hawk

Geranoaetus albicaudatus

A bird of savannas, we had some nice looks at Karanambu, and at Dadanawa on our Extension.

Black-faced Hawk

Leucopternis melanops

One perched at the side of the trail at dusk on the way back from the Burro Burro River at Surama; another at Atta gave extraordinary views when it landed on the exact perch occupied seconds earlier by a Guianan Toucanet – frame-filling views with no need to move the scope!

Grey-lined Hawk

Buteo nitidus

Georgetown Botanical Gardens and the Rock View area.

Short-tailed Hawk

Buteo brachyurus

A light phase at Kaieteur Falls and several seen at Karasabai and Dadanawa on the Extension.

Zone-tailed Hawk

Buteo albonotatus

At least half a dozen individuals on our Extension at Karasabai (there were always at least two in the sky over the hills) and Dadanawa.

Sunbittern Eurypygidae

Sunbittern

Eurypyga helias

One at Iwokrama and two along the Rupununi River at Karanambu.

Finfoots Heliornithidae

Sungrebe

Heliornis fulica

One along the Ireng River near Karasabai on our Extension.

Rails, Crakes & Coots Rallidae

Ocellated Crake

Micropygia schomburgkii

A bird more often heard than seen, normally these tiny birds skulk about in long grass, or else beneath the earth in *Cavia* (guinea pig) burrows. We were lucky to see a bird creeping through the savanna just a few feet away from us at Surama.

Grey-necked Wood Rail

Aramides cajaneus

Iwokrama and along the Rupununi River to Karanambu.

Purple Gallinule

Porphyrio martinicus

Fairly common at Karanambu, especially on Amazonian Water Lilies at Mobay Pond.

Trumpeters Psophiidae

Grey-winged Trumpeter

Psophia crepitans

Daily encounters with flocks of this characterful species at Iwokrama and Atta. **Near Threatened.**



Limpkin Aramididae**Limpkin***Aramus guarauna*

Karanambu, plus Lethem and Dadanawa on our Extension.

Plovers Charadriidae**Southern Lapwing***Vanellus chilensis*

A couple at Rock View Lodge; a common bird of the South Rupununi Savannas on our Extension.

Grey (Black-bellied) Plover*Pluvialis squatarola*

Two at Hope Beach.

Semipalmated Plover*Charadrius semipalmatus*

Six at Hope Beach.

Pied Plover (Lapwing)*Hoploxypterus cayanus*

A striking plover frequently seen on the sandbanks of the larger rivers: Essequibo and Rupununi rivers. Close looks on the lawns at Iwokrama River Lodge.

Jacanas Jacanidae**Wattled Jacana***Jacana jacana*

Conspicuous at non-forest wetlands along the coast (including Georgetown Botanical Gardens) and in the interior.

Sandpipers, Snipes Scolopacidae**South American Snipe***Gallinago paraguayana*

One flushed from a marsh at near Lethem on our Extension.

Whimbrel*Numenius phaeopus*

Half a dozen at Hope Beach.

Greater Yellowlegs*Tringa melanoleuca*

Four flew over the Abary River, c.15 at Hope Beach and heard at Karanambu, as well as several near Lethem on our Extension.

Solitary Sandpiper*Tringa solitaria*

One at the Abary River.

Willet*Tringa semipalmata*A few at Hope Beach. Presumably all 'Eastern' birds of the nominate race, although there is at least one specimen record of 'Western' *inornata* for Guyana (and another for Surinam).**Spotted Sandpiper***Actitis macularia*

Freshwater throughout.

Ruddy Turnstone*Arenaria interpres*

Several at Hope Beach.

Semipalmated Sandpiper*Calidris pusilla*Two adults and four juvenile / 1st winter birds at Hope Beach. **Near Threatened.****White-rumped Sandpiper***Calidris fuscicollis*A juvenile / 1st winter bird feeding on a sandbar along the Rupununi River at Karanambu.**Gulls, Terns & Skimmers Laridae****Black Skimmer***Rynchops niger*

Two at Hope Beach and another two along the Essequibo River at Iwokrama.

Gull-billed Tern*Gelochelidon nilotica*

Three at Hope Beach.



Yellow-billed Tern*Sternula superciliaris*

One along the Essequibo River at Iwokrama.

Pigeons, Doves Columbidae**Feral Pigeon (Rock Dove)***Columba livia*

Urban areas throughout.

Scaled Pigeon*Patagioenas speciosa*

Two of these attractive pigeons at Surama.

Pale-vented Pigeon*Patagioenas cayennensis*

The common pigeon of non-forest areas, seen at Georgetown Botanical Gardens, Surama and along the Rupununi River.

Plumbeous Pigeon*Patagioenas plumbea*

Heard at Iwokrama, seen from the canopy walkway at Atta. A distinctive voice in closed-canopy humid forests.

Ruddy Pigeon*Patagioenas subvinacea*Heard at Iwokrama, seen from the canopy walkway at Atta. Despite being fairly common over a very large range it is now considered **Vulnerable**.**Eared Dove***Zenaida auriculata*

The common dove of the Rupununi Savannas (Karanambu, plus Karasabai, Lethem and Dadanawa on our Extension).

Common Ground Dove*Columbina passerina*

A few at the Abary River and Iwokrama, but most common in the Rupununi Savannas (Surama and Karanambu, plus Lethem and Dadanawa on our Extension).

Plain-breasted Ground Dove*Columbina minuta*

A bird of natural savanna, it was abundant in the Rupununi Savannas (Karanambu, but especially Karasabai, Lethem and Dadanawa on our Extension).

Ruddy Ground Dove*Columbina talpacoti*

Seen on the coastal plain, along the Georgetown–Lethem road, as well as at Karasabai and Lethem on our Extension.

White-tipped Dove*Leptotila verreauxi*

Commonly seen at Surama and Karanambu, as well as at Karasabai and Dadanawa on our Extension.

Cuckoos Cuculidae**Greater Ani***Crotophaga major*

Flocks at Iwokrama, and at Karasabai on our Extension.

Smooth-billed Ani*Crotophaga ani*

A common bird of open areas along the coast and in the interior.

Rufous-winged Ground Cuckoo*Neomorphus rufipennis*

Two birds heard only one evening at Surama.

Little Cuckoo*Coccyua minuta*

One showed very well at the Abary River.

Squirrel Cuckoo*Piaya cayana*

Iwokrama.

Black-bellied Cuckoo*Piaya melanogaster*

Normally a bird of the forest canopy, we were very lucky to observe a pair at eye-level during our first lunchtime at Iwokrama River Lodge: a female began soliciting food from her mate, and the latter obliged with an enormous stick insect, the body of which was at least 20 cm (8 inches) long – all just a few metres from us! Such large insects do not appear to have been recorded previously in



its diet.

Mangrove Cuckoo

Coccyzus minor

Two at the Abary River.

Owls Strigidae

Tawny-bellied Screech Owl

Megascops watsonii

Heard after dark on our first evening's walk at Surama; spotlighted at the side of the trail the following night. Birds north of the Amazon are assigned to the nominate subspecies and have a slower song than their southern counterparts (subspecies *usta*).

Great Horned Owl

Bubo virginianus

One on a day roost in Georgetown Botanical Gardens; another flushed from a roost along the Ireng River near Lethem, and yet another on our early morning drive to Dadanawa on our Extension.

Crested Owl

Lophotrix cristata

Heard at Surama.

Spectacled Owl

Pulsatrix perspicillata

An unfamiliar vocalisation at Atta turned out to be the mournful call of a beautiful juvenile Spectacled Owl, presumably in search of parental food and comfort.

Amazonian Pygmy Owl

Glaucidium hardyi

Poor views at Iwokrama, compensated with nice looks in roadside vines at Atta.

Ferruginous Pygmy Owl

Glaucidium brasilianum

One in gallery forest at Karanambu; another heard at Dadanawa on our Extension.

Potoos Nyctibiidae

Long-tailed Potoo

Nyctibius aethereus

Superb views of two birds on day roosts atop dead tree trunks in the Iwokrama Forest: one on the Harpy Eagle Trail, the other on the Cock-of-the-rock Trail. Heard at Surama.

Common Potoo

Nyctibius griseus

One along the main Georgetown–Lethem road at Iwokrama, another at Atta.

White-winged Potoo

Nyctibius leucopterus

Twice heard only at Atta.

Nightjars Caprimulgidae

Least Nighthawk

Chordeiles pusillus

Three flushed from a day roost on bare ground in the savannas of Karanambu.

Lesser Nighthawk

Chordeiles acutipennis

One roosting in a Sandpaper Tree near the lodge at Surama.

Short-tailed Nighthawk

Lurocalis semitorquatus

One along the main Georgetown–Lethem road at Iwokrama.

Band-tailed Nighthawk

Nyctiprogne leucopyga

About 15 leaving their roosts at Mobay Pond, Karanambu.

Blackish Nightjar

Nyctipolus nigrescens

One roosting on bare rock at Kaieteur Falls.

Pauraque

Nyctidromus albicollis

Common on our night excursions at Surama, and dozens sitting on the road on our early morning drive to Dadanawa on our Extension.

White-tailed Nightjar

Hydropsalis cayennensis

Excellent views of about five spotlighted at Karanambu.



Ladder-tailed Nightjar*Hydropsalis climacocerca*

Half a dozen adults and a couple of downy young on our night boat ride at Iwokrama.

Swifts Apodidae**White-collared Swift***Streptoprocne zonaris*

Half a dozen from the Turtle Mountain lookout at Iwokrama.

Band-rumped Swift*Chaetura spinicaudus*

The common *Chaetura* swift of forested areas: Surama, Iwokrama and Atta, plus Karasabai on our Extension.

Chapman's Swift*Chaetura chapmani*

Good looks at a dozen birds swooping down to drink from a lagoon at Iwokrama, allowing us to study both underside and upperside at close range. This is one of the rarer Neotropical swifts.

Guyanese birds pertain to the nominate subspecies.

Short-tailed Swift*Chaetura brachyura*

One of the most easily identifiable *Chaetura* swifts, commonly found in non-forest areas: Georgetown Botanical Gardens and Surama.

Neotropical Palm Swift*Tachornis squamata*

In Moriche Palm swamps at Lethem and Dadanawa on our Extension.

Hummingbirds Trochilidae**Long-tailed Hermit***Phaethornis superciliosus*

Surama.

White-necked Jacobin*Florisuga mellivora*

Several birds along the main Georgetown–Lethem road at Iwokrama and Atta.

Black-throated Mango*Anthracothonax nigricollis*

Atta and along the Rupununi River.

Blue-chinned Sapphire*Chlorestes notata*

A nice study of a perched bird along the Ireng River near Lethem on our Extension.

Blue-tailed Emerald*Chlorostilbon mellisugus*

A male at Karasabai on our Extension.

Fork-tailed Woodnymph*Thalurania furcata*

Fairly common in forested areas: Surama, Iwokrama and Atta.

Rufous-throated Sapphire*Hylocharis sapphirina*

A female brooding young on a nest at eye-level from the Canopy Walkway at Atta on our first visit. By our second morning the nest was empty and the two fledglings were being attended by both male and female. Male parental care is unusual in hummingbirds, the female usually incubating and raising young alone. By our third morning, the family had left.

White-chinned Sapphire*Hylocharis cyanus*

A lek of three males singing at Iwokrama and a female at Atta.

White-tailed Goldenthrout*Polytmus guainumbi*

A couple of birds showed very nicely as they followed their trap-lines of orange flowers at Karanambu.

White-chested Emerald*Amazilia brevirostris*

One at Georgetown Botanical Gardens.

Glittering-throated Emerald*Amazilia fimbriata*

The common hummingbird outside humid forests: Georgetown, Surama, along the Rupununi River, Karanambu.

Black-eared Fairy*Heliothryx auritus*

Several really nice looks at this elegant wisp of a bird at from the Atta Canopy Walkway.

Trogons Trogonidae

Green-backed (White-tailed) Trogon *Trogon viridis*

Surama.

Guianan (Violaceous) Trogon *Trogon violaceus*

Good views at Atta and Karanambu. Guiana Shield endemic.

Kingfishers Alcedinidae

American Pygmy Kingfisher *Chloroceryle aenea*

Seen four times during the trip, at the Abary River, Atta (in the forest interior, well away from any water) and Karanambu.

Green Kingfisher *Chloroceryle americana*

A common kingfisher, seen at the Abary River and along the Rupununi River, as well as at Karasabai and along the Ireng River on our extension.

Amazon Kingfisher *Chloroceryle amazona*

Common along the Rupununi River and at Karanambu.

Ringed Kingfisher *Megaceryle torquata*

At water bodies throughout.

Motmots Momotidae

Amazonian (Blue-crowned) Motmot *Momotus momota*

One on our way down from Turtle Mountain at Iwokrama.

Jacamars Galbulidae

Rufous-tailed Jacamar *Galbula ruficauda*

Two birds seen along the Ireng River near Lethem on our Extension. These pertain to the nominate subspecies, which is common in much of northern South America (although it is only found in this tiny corner of Guyana).

Green-tailed Jacamar *Galbula galbula*

The common jacamar, replacing Rufous-tailed east of the Rio Branco watershed: seen at Surama.

Paradise Jacamar *Galbula dea*

The most elegant of the jacamars, and we were able to enjoy it to the full with multiple views at Surama and Atta.

Great Jacamar *Jacamerops aureus*

Two in the mid-levels at Surama.

Puffbirds Bucconidae

Guianan (White-necked) Puffbird *Notharchus macrorhynchos*

One at Iwokrama our first afternoon. Guiana Shield endemic.

Pied Puffbird *Notharchus tectus*

One at Iwokrama our first afternoon and another at Atta.

Spotted Puffbird *Bucco tamatia*

Singles seen twice at Surama.

Black Nunbird *Monasa atra*

Seen at Atta. Guiana Shield endemic.

Swallow-winged Puffbird *Chelidoptera tenebrosa*



A common sight in the interior, teed up at the top of the canopy along the forest edge.

New World Barbets Capitonidae

Black-spotted Barbet

Capito niger

Multiple encounters at Atta, especially from the canopy walkway. Guiana Shield endemic.

Toucans Ramphastidae

Green Aracari

Pteroglossus viridis

Seen at Surama and Atta. Guiana Shield endemic.

Black-necked Aracari

Pteroglossus aracari

Common at Surama and throughout the Iwokrama Forest.

Guianan Toucanet

Selenidera piperivora

A spectacularly close scope-view of a perched individual at Atta – and, had it not been chased off by a Back-faced Hawk, we would have had to walk away from it. The genus *Selenidera* comprises seven gorgeously-coloured toucanets and this Guiana Shield endemic is no exception.

Channel-billed Toucan

Ramphastos vitellinus

Common at Surama and Atta. Guiana Shield endemic. **Vulnerable**.

Toco Toucan

Ramphastos toco

Three at Karasabai on our Extension.

White-throated Toucan

Ramphastos tucanus

The commonest large toucan, found in forested areas throughout, including the Georgetown Botanical Gardens. Guiana Shield endemic. **Vulnerable**.

Woodpeckers Picidae

White-bellied Piculet

Picumnus spilogaster

At least five at the Abary River provided us with some nice looks. The coastal Guyanese birds pertain to the nominate subspecies, which is boldly scalloped black on the throat and breast and streaked on the flanks. A Guiana Shield endemic, although the taxonomic status of these birds (indeed of many *Picumnus*) is not well understood. **Vulnerable**.

Little Woodpecker

Veniliornis passerinus

One scoped at Surama.

Blood-coloured Woodpecker

Veniliornis sanguineus

Our first birds at the Abary River, with four seen in all. A Guiana Shield endemic restricted to a narrow band of forest habitat along the coast of the Guianas.

Golden-collared Woodpecker

Veniliornis cassini

Heard several times at Atta; one along the Rupununi River on our way to Karanambu. Guiana Shield endemic.

Golden-green Woodpecker

Piculus chrysochloros

A female on two occasions from the canopy walkway at Atta. The Golden-green Woodpecker complex comprises perhaps half a dozen species; this taxon is *capistratus*.

Waved Woodpecker

Celeus undatus

The most common of a spectacularly plumaged genus, we had repeated views of up to three at Atta.

Chestnut Woodpecker

Celeus elegans

One in the lodge clearing at Atta.

Lineated Woodpecker

Dryocopus lineatus

Throughout in all habitats with trees, except for closed humid forests.

Red-necked Woodpecker

Campephilus rubricollis



A low-density resident of humid forests, we saw a pair at Surama and singles at Atta, and heard the characteristic double rap of others.

Crimson-crested Woodpecker

Campephilus melanoleucos

More of a bird of forest edge and lighter woodland than its congener, we found them at Surama.

Caracaras, Falcons Falconidae

Red-throated Caracara

Ibycter americanus

Flocks of these noisy birds at Atta and Surama.

[Northern] Crested Caracara

Caracara cheriway

The Rupununi River and Karanambu, as well as Karasabai and Dadanawa on our Extension.

Yellow-headed Caracara

Milvago chimachima

Throughout the coast (including our Georgetown guest house) and at Surama and Karanambu, as well as Karasabai and Dadanawa on our Extension.

Laughing Falcon

Herpetotheres cachinnans

One along the Georgetown–Lethem road in the Iwokrama Forest; nice views of a perched bird along the Ireng River at Karasabai and more at Dadanawa on our extension.

Barred Forest Falcon

Micrastur ruficollis

A singing bird at Atta could not be located.

Collared Forest Falcon

Micrastur semitorquatus

One singing at Atta.

American Kestrel

Falco sparverius

Karanambu; abundant on our Extension with literally dozens of birds seen each day – often pairs.

Aplomado Falcon

Falco femoralis

A pair at dusk on our first evening at Karanambu.

Bat Falcon

Falco rufigularis

One at Surama and one along the road through the Iwokrama Forest, with another Karasabai on our Extension.

Orange-breasted Falcon

Falco deiroleucus

One perched for over an hour on a dead snag at the Turtle Mountain lookout at Iwokrama. It only left its perch to see off a passing Osprey. One of the world's rarest falcons, it is assessed as **Near Threatened**.

Peregrine Falcon

Falco peregrinus

One perched on an antenna at Georgetown Botanical Gardens. At dusk it made a lightning low pass over the palm tops. Peregrines in Guyana at this time of year are boreal migrant subspecies *anatum* or *tundrius*, the latter making an annual migratory round trip of 15,000 km to winter as far south as Tierra del Fuego.

Parrots Psittacidae

Blue-and-yellow Macaw

Ara ararauna

The least common large macaw, eight flew over us on our way down from Turtle Mountain at Iwokrama.

Scarlet Macaw

Ara macao

Pairs and small flocks throughout the Iwokrama Forest.

Red-and-green Macaw

Ara chloropterus

The most common macaw, seen at Kaieteur Falls, throughout the Iwokrama Forest, at Surama, and at Karasabai on our Extension.

Red-shouldered Macaw

Diopsittaca nobilis

Georgetown Botanical Gardens provided our best viewing opportunities, but they seemed more at



home at Karasabai and throughout the South Rupununi Savannas on our Extension.

Sun Parakeet

Aratinga solstitialis

A Roraima–Rupununi Savanna endemic, found only in SW Guyana and adjacent NE Brazil and one of the target birds of the Extension. A tantalising scope view of two birds at Karasabai our first afternoon was followed by a flock of six along the Ireng River the next morning – we set up a scope on a sandbank across the border in Brazil! Due to trapping for the cagebird trade, populations have declined markedly since the immense flocks of the 1840s. Fewer than 2,000 birds are thought to remain, with Guyana accounting for only a tenth of these. **Endangered.**

Brown-throated Parakeet

Eupsittula pertinax

The common open country parakeet in the savannas of the interior.

Painted Parakeet

Pyrhura picta

Seen at Iwokrama and Atta, with a large flock at Karasabai on our Extension.

Golden-winged Parakeet *Brotogeris chrysoptera*

The common parakeet of humid forests throughout the Guiana Shield, we saw them at Surama and Atta.

Black-headed Parrot

Pionites melanocephalus

Fairly common throughout the Iwokrama Forest. An endearing parrot with smart plumage, electronic synthesizer calls, and wings that whirr in flight!

Caica Parrot

Pyrilia caica

Seen at Surama and Atta. Guiana Shield endemic. **Near Threatened.**

Blue-headed Parrot

Pionus menstruus

Common and seen several times each day at Surama and Atta.

Dusky Parrot

Pionus fuscus

A few at Iwokrama and Atta.

Blue-cheeked Amazon (Parrot)

Amazona dufresniana

Heard only a couple of times, we had to be content with two flying across the road at Iwokrama and two more in flight from the canopy walkway at Atta. **Near Threatened.**

Festive Amazon

Amazona festiva

Three at Georgetown Botanical Gardens. This taxon is 'Northern' *bodini*, which is split from 'Southern' *festiva* by HBW / BirdLife International as a **Near Threatened** Guiana Shield endemic.

Yellow-crowned Amazon

Amazona ochrocephala

Small numbers at Georgetown Botanical Gardens and Karanambu, as well as Dadanawa on our Extension.

Orange-winged Amazon

Amazona amazonica

The most common *Amazona* parrot, seen at Georgetown Botanical Gardens and on most days throughout the Iwokrama Forest.

Mealy Amazon

Amazona farinosa

Small numbers at Surama, Iwokrama and Atta. This taxon is 'Southern' *farinosa*, which is split from 'Northern' *virenticeps* and *guatemalae* by HBW / BirdLife International to become **Near Threatened.**

Red-fan Parrot

Derophtus accipitrinus

Three scoped in nearby treetops at the Burro Burro River at Surama really showed off for us by fanning their crests and mutually preening; also at Iwokrama.

Ovenbirds Furnariidae

Hoary-throated Spinetail

Synallaxis kollari

Found only along major tributaries of the Rio Branco in SW Guyana and adjacent NE Brazil and one of the target birds of the Extension. It took us quite some time checking several stretches of gallery forest along the Ireng River near Lethem to find this bird. In the event, it was the only one we heard



and was not easy to see at first, although despite some impromptu trail cutting it did eventually approach to within two metres (six feet). Only 200 km² (77 mi²) of its gallery forest habitat remain, much of that threatened by rice cultivation and burning, making this species **Critically Endangered**.

Yellow-chinned Spinetail*Certhiaxis cinnamomeus*

Seen at the Abary River as well as the Lethem area on our Extension.

Olive-backed Foliage-gleaner*Automolus infuscatus*

One rummaging in a tangle of dead leaves, accompanying a modest understory flock at Atta.

Plain Xenops*Xenops minutus*

One at Atta.

Wedge-billed Woodcreeper*Glyphorhynchus spirurus*

One at Atta.

Black-banded Woodcreeper*Dendrocolaptes picumnus*

Two at Atta.

Straight-billed Woodcreeper*Dendroplex picus*

A woodcreeper of open country, we saw them at the Abary River and Karanambu, as well as at Karasabai on our Extension.

Chestnut-rumped Woodcreeper*Xiphorhynchus pardalotus*

One at Atta. Guiana Shield endemic.

Buff-throated Woodcreeper*Xiphorhynchus guttatus*

Several views at Surama, Atta and Karanambu.

Antbirds Thamnophilidae**Black-throated Antshrike***Frederickena viridis*

A pair showed extremely well on our final morning at Atta, even dropping to the ground to give us an unobstructed view as they foraged on bare earth at the side of the trail. Guiana Shield endemic.

Black-crested Antshrike*Sakesphorus canadensis*

Common in gallery forests at the Abary River and Karanambu, as well as at Karasabai on our Extension.

Mouse-coloured Antshrike*Thamnophilus murinus*

A pair at Atta.

Northern (Guianan) Slaty Antshrike*Thamnophilus punctatus*

A pair along the main Georgetown–Lethem road near Surama. This is the nominate species, which is restricted to the Guiana Shield.

Cinereous Antshrike*Thamnomanes caesius*

This understory flock leader seen every day at Atta.

Rufous-bellied Antwren*Isleria guttata*

Brief looks at a pair of these striking antwrens hugging the forest floor as they crossed the trail and then a spectacular study of another pair at Atta. Guiana Shield endemic.

Pygmy Antwren*Myrmotherula brachyura*

Iwokrama.

[Guianan] Streaked Antwren*Myrmotherula surinamensis*

A male along the Burro Burro River at Surama and a pair at Atta. Guiana Shield endemic.

Vulnerable.

White-flanked Antwren*Myrmotherula axillaris*

Seen several times at Surama, Iwokrama and Atta. Significant differences in vocalisations over its range suggest that it will eventually be split into several distinct species, nominate *axillaris* being a Guiana Shield endemic.

Long-winged Antwren*Myrmotherula longipennis*

Atta.

Spot-tailed Antwren

Herpsilochmus sticturus

Good views of a pair from the canopy walkway at Atta, in the same flock as Todd's Antwrens. Guiana Shield endemic.

Todd's Antwren

Herpsilochmus stictocephalus

A common voice of the Iwokrama Forest around Atta, we saw them every day from the canopy walkway. Guiana Shield endemic.

[Southern] White-fringed Antwren

Formicivora grisea

Great looks at beautiful pairs at Karasabai and at the Ireng River near Lethem on our Extension.

Grey Antbird

Cercomacra cinerascens

A male in vines at Iwokrama.

Dusky Antbird

Cercomacra tyrannina

A pair along the main Georgetown–Lethem road near Surama and another pair at Karanambu.

Rio Branco Antbird

Cercomacra carbonaria

Found only along the mid Rio Branco and its major tributaries in SW Guyana and adjacent NE Brazil, this was one of the target birds of the Extension. At least two birds were singing when we arrived at the Lethem section of the Ireng River and it proved to be quite easy to get exceptional views of a pair that approached us repeatedly to within two metres (six feet). Over 700 km² (270 mi²) of its gallery forest habitat remain and the population has been crudely calculated at 15,000 birds. Nevertheless, with habitat damaged by rice cultivation and burning, the species was uplisted from Near Threatened to **Critically Endangered** in 2012 based on projections of future habitat loss.

White-browed Antbird

Myrmoborus leucophrys

A male on our final morning at Karanambu.

White-bellied Antbird

Myrmeciza longipes

Half a dozen heard only on our last morning's excursion at Karanambu.

Ferruginous-backed Antbird

Myrmeciza ferruginea

One along the Burro Burro River trail at Surama and a fabulous pair along the Harpy Eagle Trail. Guiana Shield near endemic.

Tyrant Flycatchers Tyrannidae

Sooty-headed Tyrannulet

Phyllomyias griseiceps

It was quite a surprise to hear the unmistakeable song of Sooty-headed Tyrannulet from the canopy walkway at Atta, since this is usually a forest edge species. One of the pair was briefly seen.

Yellow-crowned Tyrannulet

Tyrannulus elatus

Common by voice throughout the Iwokrama Forest, we had nice looks at a bird in guava trees at Iwokrama River Lodge and again at Atta.

Forest Elaenia

Myiopagis gaimardii

Another common song throughout the Iwokrama Forest, we saw one at Iwokrama River Lodge.

Yellow-bellied Elaenia

Elaenia flavogaster

The common *Elaenia* of semi-open areas, we found them at Georgetown Botanical Gardens and Karanambu.

Plain-crested Elaenia

Elaenia cristata

The *Elaenia* of natural savannas, we had two pairs at Karanambu.

Lesser Elaenia

Elaenia chiriquensis

Two in the savanna at Surama.

Rufous-crowned Elaenia

Elaenia ruficeps

A species typical of stunted white-sand forest, we had one in the top of a small tree in the Muri Scrub. Guiana Shield endemic.



Southern Beardless Tyrannulet*Camptostoma obsoletum*

Two at Georgetown Botanical Gardens.

Mouse-coloured Tyrannulet*Phaeomyias murina*

Over a dozen singing and three seen at the Abary River with more at Hope Beach; also at Karasabai on our Extension.

Yellow Tyrannulet*Capsiempis flaveola*

A pair in gallery forest along the Ireng River on our Extension.

Bearded Tachuri*Polystictus pectoralis*About five female plumaged birds at Karanambu. Uncommon, local, and at risk from over-grazing, burning and habitat conversion throughout its range, it is considered **Near Threatened**.**Guianan (Slender-footed) Tyrannulet***Zimmerius acer*Calling frequently from the canopy walkway at Atta, where we saw single birds on two mornings. Most authorities have accepted the proposal that the Guianan Shield endemic taxon *acer* is a full species, distinct from the more widespread Slender-footed Tyrannulet *Z. gracilipes* that is found elsewhere in the Amazon basin.**Northern Scrub Flycatcher***Sublegatus arenarum*

One in bushy savanna at Karanambu.

Pale-tipped Inezia (Tyrannulet)*Inezia cuadata*

A common species of gallery forests, we heard them at the Abary River (a dozen or so) and Karanambu.

Helmeted Pygmy Tyrant*Lophotriccus galeatus*

Often heard throughout the Iwokrama Forest, we saw one at Atta.

Pale-eyed Pygmy Tyrant*Atalotriccus pilaris*

Three at Karanambu.

Spotted Tody-Flycatcher*Todirostrum maculatum*

Common at the Abary River, with several seen.

Common Tody-Flycatcher*Todirostrum cinereum*

It does not live up to its name in Guyana and the only ones we encountered were at Georgetown Botanical Gardens and Rock View Lodge, although there were more at the Ireng River near Lethem on our Extension.

Olivaceous Flatbill*Rhynchocyclus olivaceus*

One in a small flock at Atta.

Zimmer's Flatbill (Yellow-margined Flycatcher) *Tolmomyias assimilis*

Its characteristic hoarse song heard a number of times in the Iwokrama Forest, but seen only twice: singles along the main Georgetown–Lethem road near Surama and (at eye-level) from the Atta canopy walkway.

Grey-crowned Flatbill*Tolmomyias poliocephalus*

A singing bird at eye-level from the canopy walkway at Atta.

Ochre-lored Flatbill (Yellow-breasted Flycatcher) *Tolmomyias flaviventris*A common *Tolmomyias* of gallery forests along the coast and the Rupununi Savannas, we saw them at the Abary River, as well as along the Ireng River near Lethem on our Extension. The relationship between the taxa that currently comprise *T. assimilis* is uncertain due to vocal and plumage differences. The Guyanese birds are subspecies *collingwoodi* (sometimes included within *aurulentus*).**Cliff Flycatcher***Hirundinea ferruginea*One at the Red Siskin stake-out at Iquitau near Dadanawa on our Extension. This is the Pantepui endemic subspecies *ferruginea*. Plumage varies markedly between disjunct populations.**Vermilion Flycatcher***Pyrocephalus rubinus*

Several at Karanambu.

Pied Water Tyrant

Fluvicola pica

Found at water bodies in open country along the coast and in the Rupununi Savannas: Abary River, Hope Beach, Karanambu and throughout the extension.

White-headed Marsh Tyrant

Arundinicola leucocephala

This attractive little bird was found at Karanambu and throughout the Extension.

Rusty-margined Flycatcher

Myiozetetes cayanensis

Common throughout.

Great Kiskadee

Pitangus sulphuratus

Common throughout. Nesting in our Georgetown guest house.

Lesser Kiskadee

Philohydor lictor

Common along rivers and creeks.

Streaked Flycatcher

Myiodynastes maculatus

One, of the resident subspecies *tobagensis*, along the Abary River. Austral migrant *solitarius* (found in Guyana during the austral winter) may be a separate species.

Boat-billed Flycatcher

Megarynchus pitangua

Only seen at Rock View Lodge, as well as most of the places on our Extension.

White-throated Kingbird

Tyrannus albogularis

One on our way back from the Ireng River near Lethem and another at Dadanawa on our Extension.

Tropical Kingbird

Tyrannus melancholicus

Throughout.

Fork-tailed Flycatcher

Tyrannus savana

Several at Karanambu, as well as most of the places on our Extension.

Grey Kingbird

Tyrannus dominicensis

One at Georgetown Botanical Gardens.

Greyish Mourner

Rhytipterna simplex

One of the characteristic dawn songs throughout the forests of the Guiana Shield, the bird itself is not so often seen. We had one from the Atta canopy walkway.

Short-crested Flycatcher

Myiarchus ferox

Seen along forest edge at the Abary River.

Brown-crested Flycatcher

Myiarchus tyrannulus

Another bird of the forest edge along the coast; also at Karasabai and the Lethem area on our Extension.

Cotingas Cotingidae

Guianan Cock-of-the-rock

Rupicola rupicola

Half a dozen showy males at Kaieteur Falls lekking perhaps six or seven metres (20 feet) away, and another male at the Cock-of-the-rock Trail. Guiana Shield endemic.

Guianan Red Cotinga

Phoenicircus carnifex

A chance encounter with a female at the Muri Scrub and a slightly more wary female at Atta. Guiana Shield endemic.

Spangled Cotinga

Cotinga cayana

Males, females or pairs seen every day from the canopy walkway at Atta.

Screaming Piha

Lipaugus vociferans

Heard throughout the Iwokrama Forest, we had a look at the bird itself on our Turtle Mountain excursion.

Purple-throated Fruitcrow

Querula purpurata

Seen around fruiting trees on a couple of occasions at Atta.



Crimson Fruitcrow*Haematoderus militaris*

We could not have asked for better views of a female along the main Georgetown–Lethem road near Surama. Initially seen when it flew into a canopy tree at the edge of a clearing, where we enjoyed superb views as it perched, hopped through the canopy and flew to neighbouring trees. All this time it was mobbed by passerines, belying the fact that this giant cotinga has only recently been found to eat fruit. We subsequently obtained much closer looks when it reappeared six or seven metres (20 feet) up in a *Cecropia* tree at the roadside. Guiana Shield near endemic.

Capuchinbird*Perissocephalus tricolor*

A single male displaying above us in the low canopy at Karanambu on our last morning. Guiana Shield endemic.

Manakins Pipridae**Tiny Tyrant-Manakin***Tyranneutes virescens*

Seen twice perched very quietly at eye-level from the canopy walkway at Atta. Guiana Shield endemic.

White-throated Manakin*Corapipo gutturalis*

A male on the Harpy Eagle Trail and a lek on a mossy log at Atta; the latter comprised an adult male, an immature male and two females and we were treated to the full display, in which the male shuffles backwards, shivering his wings to expose the white inner webs of the flight feathers. Guiana Shield endemic.

Blue-backed Manakin*Chiroxiphia pareola*

Three females at Karanambu.

Black Manakin*Xenopipo atronitens*

One male and ten female-plumaged birds in the Muri Scrub and excellent view of a male coming in to mob a pygmy owl at Karanambu.

White-crowned Manakin*Dixiphia pipra*

Very common by voice throughout the Iwokrama Forest, we saw three males and two females at Surama.

Golden-headed Manakin*Dixiphia erythrocephala*

Heard throughout the Iwokrama Forest, we saw a single male on our way down from Turtle Mountain, Iwokrama.

Tityras, Becards Tityridae**Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher***Terenotriccus erythrurus*

Two of these endearing little flycatchers at Atta.

Black-tailed Tityra*Tityra cayana*

Singles and pairs at Surama and Atta.

Dusky Purpletuft*Iodopleura fusca*

A total of six birds (three pairs) at Atta, beginning with a pair at the lodge clearing just after we arrived, and including great views of another pair from the canopy walkway. Guiana Shield endemic.

Cinereous Becard*Pachyramphus rufus*

One at the Abary River.

White-winged Becard*Pachyramphus polychopterus*

One at the Abary River.

Vireos, Greenlets Vireonidae**Red-eyed Vireo***Vireo olivaceus*

Heard throughout and seen at Surama and Iwokrama. These were all singing birds of the resident subspecies *vividior*, which forms part of the South American 'chivi' complex, which diverged from nominate Red-eyed Vireo about 370,000 years ago.

Lemon-chested Greenlet*Hylophilus thoracicus*

Seen at Surama, from the canopy walkway at Atta (our best views) and Karanambu.

Ashy-headed Greenlet*Hylophilus pectoralis*

A gallery forest greenlet, seen at the Abary River.

Buff-cheeked Greenlet*Hylophilus muscicapinus*

Singles and pairs at Surama and Atta.

Crows, Jays Corvidae**Cayenne Jay***Cyanocorax cayanus*

Flocks at Kaieteur Falls and Surama, as well as at Karasabai on our Extension. Guiana Shield endemic.

Swallows, Martins Hirundinidae**White-winged Swallow***Tachycineta albiventer*

On the larger rivers and water bodies throughout.

Grey-breasted Martin*Progne chalybea*

Throughout.

Brown-chested Martin*Progne tapera*

Common in non-forest areas: Surama and Karanambu, and at Dadanawa on our Extension. These are birds of the resident subspecies *tapera*.

White-banded Swallow*Atticora fasciata*

About five along the Burro Burro River at Surama.

Black-collared Swallow*Atticora melanoleuca*

A couple on the Essequibo River at Iwokrama.

Southern Rough-winged Swallow*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*

Small numbers along the Rupununi River and at Karanambu.

Barn Swallow*Hirundo rustica*

Small numbers along the Rupununi River and a flock of a dozen wintering at Karanambu.

Black-capped Donacobius Donacobiidae**Black-capped Donacobius***Donacobius atricapilla*

Four at Georgetown Botanical Gardens, and a couple at Dadanawa on our Extension.

Wrens Troglodytidae**Bicoloured Wren***Campylorhynchus griseus*

One at Karanambu; more near the Ireng River at Lethem and at Dadanawa on our Extension.

Coraya Wren*Pheugopedius coraya*

A couple at Atta.

Buff-breasted Wren*Cantorchilus leucotis*

A couple keeping inside the bamboo along the Burro Burro River at Surama.

House Wren*Troglodytes aedon*

Often seen at the cabins at Karanambu. This is subspecies *clarus*, which forms part of the 'Southern' *musculus* group.



Gnatcatchers Polioptilidae**Tropical Gnatcatcher***Poliophtila plumbea*

Seen at Karanambu, and along the Ireng River near Lethem and at Dadanawa on our Extension.

Mockingbirds, Thrashers Mimidae**Tropical Mockingbird***Mimus gilvus*

In drier, open areas throughout.

Thrushes Turdidae**Pale-breasted Thrush***Turdus leucomelas*

Small numbers at Surama, Rock View Lodge and Karanambu, and near Lethem on our Extension.

Wagtails, Pipits Motacillidae**Yellowish Pipit***Anthus lutescens*

Excellent view of about eight feeding in the grass and singing at a dried out lake at Karanambu.

Finches Fringillidae**Hooded Siskin***Spinus magellanica*

A quick view of a flock that we drove past on the road; about ten at Karasabai on our Extension.

Red Siskin*Spinus cucullata*

One of the target birds of the Extension. After a long vigil at Iquitau near Dadanawa, we saw a female, followed by an immature male. Prior to the discovery of the Guyanese population in 2000, the stronghold was Venezuela, where it is Critically Endangered with just a few hundred birds in four states. The Guyanese population has not been quantified with any precision, but there are unlikely to be more than 2,000 wild birds left in the world. **Endangered.**

Finsch's Euphonia*Euphonia finschi*

Seen at Surama, but our best views were of two males at the Karanambu dock; more at Karasabai on our Extension. Guiana Shield endemic.

Violaceous Euphonia*Euphonia violacea*

Two pairs at Georgetown Botanical Gardens and more at Iwokrama.

New World Warblers Parulidae**Northern Waterthrush***Parkesia noveboracensis*

One at the Abary River.

[American] Yellow Warbler*Setophaga aestiva*

Common along the coast and at Rock View Lodge. These birds are all boreal migrant subspecies *aestiva*.

Blackpoll Warbler*Setophaga striata*

Two at the Abary River, two more at Hope Beach and one at Georgetown Botanical Gardens.

Flavescent Warbler*Myiothlypis flaveola*

One in gallery forest along the Ireng River near Lethem on our Extension.

Oropendolas, Orioles & Blackbirds Icteridae**Crested Oropendola***Psarocolius decumanus*

Seen occasionally at Surama and Karanambu.

Green Oropendola*Psarocolius viridis*

Small numbers at Iwokrama, along the main Georgetown–Lethem road and at Atta.



Yellow-rumped Cacique*Cacicus cela*

A busy colony at the Surama lodge; also seen at Iwokrama.

Orange-backed Troupial*Icterus croconotus*

A shy bird at Manaure Ranch, near Lethem on our Extension.

Epaulet Oriole*Icterus cayanensis*

About eight at Surama. These were yellow-crowned 'Morange Orioles' *Icterus (cayanensis) chryscephalus*. Moriche Oriole overlaps with 'Epaulet Oriole' *Icterus (cayanensis) cayanensis* further east, but the two do not hybridise in Guyana, even though there is only 0.6% genetic divergence.

Yellow Oriole*Icterus nigrogularis*

Easy to see on the coast; also along the main Georgetown–Lethem road.

Yellow-hooded Blackbird*Chrysomus icterocephalus*

One along the main Georgetown–Lethem road near Rock View Lodge.

Giant Cowbird*Molothrus oryzivorus*

A few seen at Iwokrama and Rock View Lodge.

Shiny Cowbird*Molothrus bonariensis*

Common along the coast.

Carib Grackle*Quiscalus lugubris*

Flocks along the coast, particularly in Georgetown.

Red-breasted Blackbird*Sturnella militaris*

A flock of about ten at Karanambu; encountered frequently on our Extension at Karasabai, near Lethem and at Dadanawa.

Eastern Meadowlark*Sturnella magna*

Quite a few at Karanambu, and scattered throughout the South Rupununi Savannas on our Extension. These birds are resident subspecies *praticola*.

Bananaquit Coerebidae**Bananaquit***Coereba flaveola*

A few along the coast, and plenty more on our Extension at Karasabai and Dadanawa.

Buntings, New World Sparrows & Allies Emberizidae**Grassland Sparrow***Ammodramus humeralis*

Good views of one at Surama and another three at Karanambu.

Tanagers and Allies Thraupidae**Red-capped Cardinal***Paroaria gularis*

Common along the banks of the Essequibo and Rupununi Rivers, and especially at our lodgings at Karanambu; also along the Ireng River at Karasabai on our Extension.

Hooded Tanager*Nemosia pileata*

Several views at Karasabai and along the Ireng River on our Extension.

Fulvous-crested Tanager*Tachyphonus surinamus*

A male in the canopy along the main Georgetown–Lethem road near Surama.

Silver-beaked Tanager*Ramphocelus carbo*

Common in the interior.

Blue-grey Tanager*Thraupis episcopus*

Fairly common throughout.

Palm Tanager*Thraupis palmarum*

The commonest tanager throughout.

Turquoise Tanager

Tangara mexicana

One at Atta.

Spotted Tanager

Tangara punctata

Two along the main Georgetown–Lethem road near Surama.

Bay-headed Tanager

Tangara gyrola

Two from the canopy walkway at Atta. This is the nominate subspecies, which has green underparts with a blue centre and forms part of the 'gyrola group'.

Burnished-buff Tanager

Tangara cayana

This dry country tanager was at Rock View Lodge, and common at Karasabai and Dadanawa on our Extension. Our birds are the nominate subspecies, which has predominantly buff underparts, part of the 'cayana group'.

Blue Dacnis

Dacnis cayana

Seen daily at Surama and Atta.

Green Honeycreeper

Chlorophanes spiza

Small numbers at Surama and Atta.

Guira Tanager

Hemithraupis guira

One in the canopy along the main Georgetown–Lethem road near Surama.

Yellow-backed Tanager

Hemithraupis flavicollis

One in the canopy along the main Georgetown–Lethem road near Surama.

Chestnut-vented Conebill

Conirostrum speciosum

A pair at Karasabai on our Extension.

Bicolored Conebill

Conirostrum bicolor

About ten at the Abary River. Recently uplisted to **Near Threatened** based on modelling of the future extent of its mangrove habitat.

Grassland Yellow Finch

Sicalis luteola

About ten at Karanambu.

Wedge-tailed Grass Finch

Emberizoides herbicola

One or two in the savanna at Surama.

Blue-black Grassquit

Volatinia jacarina

A few at Karasabai on our Extension.

Plumbeous Seedeater

Sporophila plumbea

Nice studies of this dapper little seedeater at Karanambu; also at the Ireng River near Lethem and providing distraction at the Red Siskin stake-out at Dadanawa on our Extension.

Wing-barred Seedeater

Sporophila americana

An uncommon species with a curious distribution, it is easiest to see in Guyana; we saw four males and ten females at Georgetown Botanical Gardens.

Ruddy-breasted Seedeater

Sporophila minuta

A few along the road to Genip Landing.

Cardinals, Grosbeaks & Allies Cardinalidae

Rose-breasted Chat

Granatellus pelzelni

A female at Atta.

Red-and-black Grosbeak

Periporphyrus erythromelas

A male seen well on our way up Turtle Mountain. A scarce bird, found at low density within a restricted range, it was recently uplisted to **Near Threatened**.

Buff-throated Saltator

Saltator maximus

Karanambu.



Greyish Saltator*Saltator coerulescens*

A couple at Georgetown Botanical Gardens, and near Lethem on our Extension.

MAMMALS**Opossums Didelphidae****Bare-tailed Woolly Opossum***Caluromys philander*

A really nice view of one that came right up to the platform along the guy lines of the canopy walkway at Atta.

Anteaters Myrmecophagidae**Giant Anteater***Myrmecophaga tridactyla*An adult at Karanambu. **Vulnerable**.**New World Monkeys Cebidae****Guianan Red Howler Monkey***Alouatta macconnelli*

Groups at Surama, Iwokrama and Atta. Guiana Shield endemic.

Guianan (Red-faced or Black) Spider Monkey*Ateles paniscus*Several groups – some consisting two dozen individuals – at Iwokrama and Atta. Guiana Shield endemic. **Vulnerable**.**Common Squirrel Monkey***Saimiri sciureus*

A couple of groups at Karanambu, one of which was in the trees all around us.

Weeping (Wedge-capped) Capuchin*Cebus olivaceus*

About eight along the Harpy Eagle Trail.

Bats Chiroptera**Proboscis Bat***Rhynchonycteris naso*

Half a dozen at the Turtle Mountain landing, Iwokrama.

Lesser Bulldog Bat*Noctilio albiventris*

Common on our night boat ride along the Essequibo River at Iwokrama. These bats catch insects close to the water surface.

Greater Bulldog (Fishing) Bat*Noctilio leporinus*

A few along the Essequibo River at Iwokrama and along the Rupununi River at Karanambu. These bats snatch a fish from the water surface.

Brazilian Free-tailed Bat*Tadarida brasiliensis*

The common bat in the rooms at Karanambu.

Agoutis Dasypodidae**Red-rumped Agouti***Dasypodactylus leporinus*

Seen frequently: at the Abary River, Surama, Iwokrama, Atta and Karanambu.

Capybara Hydrochaeridae**Capybara***Hydrochaeris hydrochaeris*

Karanambu.



Racoons and allies Procyonidae

Kinkajou

Potos flavus

One on our way back from the Burro Burro River at Surama and another at Atta.

Otters and allies Mustelidae

Giant River Otter

Pteronura brasiliensis

A family sporting at a lagoon on our way to Turtle Mountain at Iwokrama. Diane McTurk was recuperating an orphaned animal at Karanambu, which allowed much closer looks as it swam in the Rupununi River. **Endangered.**

Dogs, Wolves, Foxes and allies Canidae

Savanna (Crab-eating) Fox

Cerdocyon thous

One briefly surprised just outside our lodgings at Karanambu.

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