

# TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO



*"There is something wonderful about seeing Red-billed Tropicbirds and enormous Magnificent Frigatebirds so close - they can be just a few feet away on our trip to Little Tobago and they are fantastic! Add good views of Brown and Red-footed Boobies and this is a brilliant experience." Roy Atkins*

**Dates** Sun 8 - Fri 20 April 2018  
**Price** £4,895  
**Deposit** £950    **Single Supp** £900

**Leaders** Roy Atkins plus local guides

**Flights** British Airways, scheduled  
 Outbound: Morning, Gatwick-Port of Spain  
 Inbound: Overnight, Port of Spain-Gatwick  
 Internal flights:  
 Port of Spain-Tobago-Port of Spain

**Weather** It's the dry season, but it will be humid with occasional showers or downpours (20-30°C)

**Walking** At Asa Wright all the trails are on sloping ground and some may be muddy after rain, but the paths are generally in good condition with easy walking. The visit to the Oilbirds is a good trail, but with lots of steps. All are taken at a slow pace making them easy for most people

**Meals** All included from dinner on Day 1 to lunch on Day 12. Delicious local food at hotels and restaurants, with buffets at Asa Wright and a menu at Blue Waters

**Insects** On occasion biting insects can be a nuisance - bring repellent

**Boat trips** One trip through sheltered channels to a lagoon to see Scarlet Ibis. The other is a 20 minute crossing to Little Tobago on a glass-bottomed boat, with a diversion to spend time over the reefs, which sometimes can be less calm

**Accom** Twin and single rooms all ensuite

**Group** 12

Just some of what we hope to see:

Oilbird	Red-billed Tropicbird
Scarlet Ibis	Tufted Coquette
Bearded Bellbird	Rufous-tailed Jacamar
White-bearded Manakin	Red-bellied Macaw
Channel-billed Toucan	Blue-backed Manakin
Magnificent Frigatebird	Black-faced Antthrush

Relaxed and easy Caribbean birdwatching based at the famous Asa Wright Centre and Blue Waters Inn - the perfect introduction to South America's bird and wildlife riches.

- Morning coffee with the veranda hummingbirds, tanagers and honeycreepers
- Watch Scarlet Ibis come to roost from our boat - rum punch in hand!
- Frigatebirds, tropicbirds, boobies and terns on Little Tobago
- Leatherback Turtles laying eggs on a white sand beach
- Mysterious Oilbirds in forest caves, plus manakins, toucans, parrots and more
- Optional reef snorkelling or boat trip for Masked Boobies
- Two islands, two great hotels, one relaxing holiday

**1-8** Gazing out over Caribbean rainforest from the Asa Wright veranda, a coffee in hand, the feeders come alive with Bananaquits, Red-legged Honeycreepers, Crested Oropendolas, Blue-crowned Motmots and Silver-beaked Tanagers. Agoutis pick up the crumbs and hummingbird feeders draw several species to within inches! We'll check the tree tops for White-tailed Trogon, Orange-winged Parrot and Channel-billed Toucans and all before breakfast!

The forested trails yield more new birds - Chestnut and Golden-olive Woodpeckers, Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, Great Antshrike, Collared Trogon, Golden-headed Manakin and Squirrel Cuckoo. Bearded Bellbirds 'clang' above our heads and White-bearded Manakins 'snap' and dance at their lek. Vervain flowers attract Tufted Coquettes - tiny hummingbirds with amazing red crests.

Late afternoon, rum punch is served, as we watch more birds and there is a chance of fly-by Oilbirds at sunset! One morning we shall visit the famous caves where the Oilbirds nest, to see them making their eerie clucks and screams in the darkness.

Mixed feeding flocks occur in forest along the road to Blanchisseuse in the Northern Range. Cocoa Woodcreeper, Violaceous Trogon and Turquoise Tanagers are here, whilst fruiting trees attract Channel-billed Toucan, orioles and raucous flocks of parrots. Raptors such as Black Hawk, Plumbeous Kite and White Hawk may be here, whilst beaches on the north coast have Magnificent Frigatebirds and Brown Pelicans riding the waves.

We'll visit mangroves and marshy wetlands to search out Silvered Antbird and American Pygmy Kingfisher, Pied Water-tyrant, Wattled



"Asa Wright is the perfect place to be based for this trip - the bird life is simply astounding!! Just sitting on the veranda you can see colourful tanagers, honeycreepers, euphonias, parrots, toucans, hummingbirds and a range of exciting raptors and that before you even start investigating the trails or going out on day trips!" Roy Atkins



Jacana and Yellow-hooded Blackbird. Where coconut palms line the coast, we'll search for Gray Hawk, Pearl Kite, Yellow-headed Caracara and Yellow-crowned Parrots. Scrubby grassland in the central lowlands, is home to Red-breasted Blackbird, White-headed Marsh Tyrant, Green-rumped Parrotlet, Yellow-rumped Cacique and Savannah Hawk. We'll return at dusk to watch Red-bellied Macaws coming to roost and hope to see Sulphury Flycatcher, before searching at dusk for Pauraque, White-tailed Nightjar and Tropical Screech Owl.

One evening we'll witness the moving sight of huge Leatherback Turtles as they haul themselves up the beach to lay their eggs. We'll watch the whole process from digging their nest hole at the top of the beach, to laying their eggs before they return, exhausted, to the water - a real highlight of the trip.

Coastal sites are teeming with shorebirds, plus Large-billed and Royal Terns and bizarre looking Black Skimmers - we may even see them skimming! Cruising slowly through the mangrove lined channels of Caroni Swamp, we'll look for Common Potoo, Greater Ani, Red-capped Cardinal, Tree Boas and with luck, a Silky Anteater asleep in the trees. Snowy Egrets and Tri-coloured and Little Blue Herons feed amongst the arching roots and Yellow-crowned Night-Heron peer from the branches. Then, with rum punch in hand, we'll enjoy the spectacle of hundreds of Scarlet Ibis coming to roost, brilliant red in the setting sun, another real highlight.



**9-11** It's a short flight to Tobago and our beachfront hotel where there'll be time to relax in the sun, stroll on the sand, or snorkel over the coral reefs, but there'll be excellent birding too!

Beautiful trails through the rainforest of the northern ridge provide the chance of Olivaceous Woodcreeper, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Yellow-legged Thrush and the endangered White-tailed Sabrewing. Great Black Hawk soar above the forest and we may see dancing Blue-backed Manakins!

The crossing to Little Tobago, by glass-bottomed boat, is a glimpse into a world of coral reefs and multi-coloured fish. From viewing platforms we'll enjoy Red-billed Tropicbirds just feet away, spectacular Magnificent Frigatebirds and nesting Brown and Red-footed Boobies. We can sometimes arrange an extra boat trip to St Giles Island, where Masked Boobies and thousands of frigatebirds nest.

Wetland sites hold White-cheeked Pintails, Black-bellied Whistling Ducks, Least Grebes and Anhingas and we'll search the overgrown gardens of the Grafton Estate for Red-crowned Woodpecker, Barred Antshrike, White-fringed Antwren and raucous Rufous-vented Chachalacas.

**12-13** We fly back to Port of Spain for our overnight flight to the UK, arriving on Day 13.



### Outline Itinerary

- Days 1-8** Fly to Port of Spain then a 1 hour transfer to Asa Wright. Birdwatching and wildlife exploration on the trails at Asa Wright plus visits to Coroni Swamp, Waterloo, Blanchisseuse, Nariva Swamp, Arena/Aripo and Matura Beach 8 nights at Asa Wright Centre
- Days 9-11** A 45 minute flight to Tobago then 1 ½ hour transfer to our hotel, with verandas and sea views. Birdwatching and wildlife exploration including a boat trip to Little Tobago, Grafton Estate and Gilpin Trace in the northern rainforest 3 nights at Blue Waters Inn
- Days 12-13** We return to Port of Spain for our overnight flight back to London, arriving in the UK on the morning of Day 13

**Roy Atkins:** Red-billed Tropicbird, Scarlet Ibis, Purple Honeycreeper, White-chested Hummingbird, Oilbird, Wattled Jacana