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GUYANA BIRDING

PRESS RELEASE

August 18, 2007

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Barbeque and Lecture Promotes Guyana at the British Birdwatching Fair

Rutland, England – Hundreds of birdwatchers and wildlife enthusiasts have stopped at the Guyana stand at the British Birdwatching Fair (BBWF), but that isn't the only way the pristine beauty of South America's often-overlooked destination is being promoted. On Friday night, about 60 people attended a barbeque event sponsored by Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago, and on Saturday more than 180 people filled a lecture marquee to watch a presentation on Guyana.

Representatives from the Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA) – United States Agency for International Development (USAID) / Guyana Trade and Investment Support (GTIS) Birding Tourism Program and Guyana's tourism sector are currently at the world's largest birdwatching event to promote Guyana as a destination.

In an attempt to stand out in the marketplace and offer a unique trip to travelers, representatives from Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago have created a partnership to market the countries as an ideal combined trip for birdwatchers. On Friday night tourism representatives from the countries hosted a barbeque to highlight their different tourism products. Nearly 60 people from the tourism, media and birdwatching industries attended the event, and were excited by the idea one tour that visits both Caribbean countries.

On Saturday morning, Iwokrama Forest Ranger, Ron Allicock, and Wilderness Explorers Managing Director, Tony Thorne gave a presentation titled, "Guyana: South America's Hot New Birding Destination." The lecture, which was attended by more than 180 people (a near-capacity crowd), gave a brief overview of Guyana and its tourism products, while featuring many sought-after bird species.

As images of jaguars and cock-of-the rocks alternated with pictures of harpy eagles and pristine forests, excited murmurs rumbled through the crowd. Many in the audience were learning about a country that they have never considered as a holiday destination, and were surprised to see the plethora of wildlife and birds that populate Guyana.

After the presentation, the Guyana stand was crowded with those who saw the presentation and wanted to learn more. One couple said, "We went to the lecture and afterward thought, 'We must go to Guyana'". Others who came by the booth after the talk said they believed the it was "inspiring" and that it made Guyana "look absolutely wonderful...a fascinating place."

Guyana is also getting plenty of attention at the booths of international tour operators that are selling and promoting trips to the emerging birdwatching destination. Several tour operators have reported that many of their regular clients are enquiring about trips to Guyana, and Chris Breen, Managing Director of Wildlife Worldwide, said that on Friday, "we had more people asking about Guyana at our stand than any other location."

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