

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 5, 2008

U.S. Tour Operator Completes Birdwatching Trip to Guyana

GEORGETOWN – EcoVentures Travel, a U.S. tour operator that specializes in birdwatching and wildlife trips to Africa and Central and South America, recently brought their first group of birdwatchers to Guyana. From February 15-24, guide and company director Ken Klotz led a group of six to some of Guyana’s premier birdwatching destinations. The trip was designed after Mr. Klotz visited Guyana as part of the November 2006 birdwatching product familiarization trip sponsored by the Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) / Guyana Trade and Investment Support (GTIS) project Birding Tourism Program.

During their ten days in Guyana, guide and President of the Guyana Amazon Tropical Birds Society (GATBS) Andy Narine led the group to several birdwatching locals including Georgetown Botanical Gardens, Iwokrama Field Station, Iwokrama Canopy Walkway, Surama Village, Rock View Lodge, Wowetta Village, Karanambu Ranch and Kaieteur Falls. Mr. Klotz said Andy was “extremely knowledgeable about the birds of Guyana.” Of other local guides that joined the group he said Iwokrama Ranger Ron Allicock was “very enthusiastic and capable,” and Huxley Moses from Wowetta village, “did an excellent job.”

After returning to the U.S., Mr. Klotz said, “The trip was fantastic and everyone had a great time birding in Guyana.” Reflecting on the birds, Klotz said that Guyana’s potential for attracting birdwatchers is great. On South American competitors, he said, “Some species that are hard to find in other countries are relatively abundant here...even birders who have birded extensively in countries like Ecuador, Peru and Panama can easily add a significant number of new species to their life lists. One man who had birded most in the tropics of Latin America added 90 life birds to his list.”

Key bird species spotted on the trip included many species of Cotingas, including the Guianan Red-Cotingas, Dusky Purpletuft, Crimson Fruitcrow and Purple-throated Fruitcrow. Other highlights included 17 species of Tanagers and Euphonias and a variety of Macaws and Toucans. Mammal highlights included five species of monkeys, a family of giant river otters and a mouse opossum.

Mr. Klotz said he had been harboring a keen interest in Guyana for many years because he “understood it to be a little known and little disturbed part of the earth.” But it was also his understanding that it was a difficult destination to maneuver with a group. But after visiting Guyana personally, he immediately designed a tour to sell.

In regards to his expectations of Guyana as a tourism and birdwatching destination, Klotz reported that, “It is incredible to be able to find so much relatively untouched tropical wilderness in the world today and the wildlife it harbors is rich and varied.” He continued by saying that EcoVentures will definitely come to Guyana on future birdwatching trips. And his best advice for helping tourism to grow in Guyana: “Continue to protect what you have and [tour companies] will come.”

The Birding Tourism Program is receiving support from GTIS, a joint project of the Government of Guyana and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). For more information, please visit www.guyanabirding.com.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Indranauth Haralsingh
Director, Guyana Tourism Authority
P: 592-223-6351
E: haralsingh@yahoo.com

Kirk Smock
GTIS Public Affairs
P: 592-223-7144
E: ksmock@carana.com

With support from

