



**GUYANA**  
Naturally

# GUYANA BIRDING

## PRESS RELEASE

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### Guyana's Beauty and Tourism Products to be on Display

**GEORGETOWN** – From November 15-25, three international tour guides, three journalists, and two representatives from a leading optics company will be in Guyana on a tourism familiarization (fam) trip that will allow them to sample and evaluate the country's sustainable tourism experience. The familiarization tour is part of the Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA) – United States Agency for International Development (USAID) / Guyana Trade and Investment Support (GTIS) Guyana Sustainable Tourism Initiative (GSTI).

Tour participants include: Mike Weedon, Assistant Editor of *Bird Watching* magazine; Erica Gies, freelance environmental reporter who has written for *The New York Times* and *International Herald Tribune*; Julie Zickefoose, natural history writer and artist who is a frequent contributor to *Bird Watcher's Digest*; Terry Moore, Vice President, Leica Camera Sport Optics Division; Judy Moore, Leica Camera Sport Optics Product Specialist; Barry Walker of Manu Expeditions Birding Tours; Kevin Loughlin of Wildside Nature Tours; and Andrew Mitchell of Island Holidays Plus.

While on the trip, the participants will be learning about Guyana's birds, flora and fauna, culture and history from local guides based at each destination. Judy Karwacki of GTIS and Tony Thorne of Wilderness Explorers will be leading the tour. Also accompanying the group are local birding guides Asaph Wilson and Luke Johnson, local photographer David Fernandes, and GTIS writer and author of the Bradt *Guyana* guidebook, Kirk Smock.

Participants on this familiarization trip will spend time in and around Georgetown, Kaieteur Falls, Karanambu Ranch, Caiman House at Yupukari Village, Rock View Lodge, Aranaputa Village, Surama Village, Fair View Village, and Iwokrama Field Station and Canopy Walkway.

As a result of previous fam trips, some 30 international tour operators are currently selling, designing and bringing birdwatching and natural history trips to Guyana. Thanks to the journalists that were also on the trips, Guyana has been featured in numerous international magazines and newspapers. It is expected that the participants on this fam trip will produce similar results.

Leica is one of the top optics and camera companies in the world and they will be looking at the possibility of developing a multi-faceted partnership with Guyana, involving digiscoping (using digital cameras with spotting scopes) and dealer and media tours. Ms. Geis plans to develop several articles on green travel to Guyana, the work of Conservation International, and Iwokrama's Canopy Capital initiative. *Bird Watching* magazine and *Birder's Digest*, which will likely feature articles, are two of the most important publications for birdwatchers in the UK and North America.

The FAM tours would not be possible if local tourism suppliers were not pledging their full support. For this program, GTA-USAID/GTIS is grateful for the generous contributions from Wilderness Explorers, Caribbean Airlines, Trans Guyana Airways, Cara Lodge, Grand Coastal Inn, Le Meridien Pegasus, Surama Ecolodge, Iwokrama International Centre, Rock View Lodge, Karanambu Ranch, Community and Tourism Services (CATS), Caiman House at Yupukari village, Aranaputa village, and Fair View village.

The Guyana Sustainable Tourism Initiative is receiving support from GTIS, a joint project of the Government of Guyana and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

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