



GUYANA
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GUYANA BIRDING

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***A Guyana Evening* Caps Off a Successful Trip to England for the GTA – GTIS Birding Tourism Programme**

London, England—On Monday evening, after spending three days at the British Birdwatching Fair (BBWF) in Rutland, England, partners of the Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA) and Guyana Trade and Investment Support (GTIS) Birding Tourism Programme hosted a special event at London’s historic Canning House.

The event, titled *A Guyana Evening*, received support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and was well-attended by the UK’s leading wildlife and birding tour operators, media, and dignitaries alike. Guyana’s High Commissioner to the UK, Rajnarine Singh, was in attendance, as was Mrs. Sarah Wheeler wife of Fraser Wheeler, the British High Commissioner to Guyana. Representatives from select UK media included representatives from *Cricket World* and *Conde Nast Traveler*.

The event was chaired by Tony Thorne of Wilderness Explorers, and featured a welcome to Guyana by High Commissioner Singh. The Director of the GTA, Indira Anandjit, shared an overview of Guyana’s tourism offerings and the GTA-GTIS birding initiative was briefly discussed by Judy Karwacki, a niche tourism-marketing specialist working on the project. But the real stars of the evening were two of Guyana’s icons, Diane McTurk and Duane de Freitas.

Diane spoke about the history of Karanambu Ranch, her work rehabilitating orphaned wild giant otters, and The Karanambu Trust, which is focused on developing a nature reserve and research centre to help conserve and protect the eco-system around Karanambu.

Duane de Freitas then painted a picture of life on Dadanawa Ranch, before discussing the tours offered by Rupununi Trails, his tourism operation that runs tours into the Rupununi. He also discussed the South Rupununi Conservation Society, which is run by his son Justin. The group is dedicated to protecting and monitoring the rare population of this Red Siskins in Guyana.

The evening was the finale to a very successful trip to England. At the BBWF, Greenheart Trust, a UK charity dedicated to conservation issues in Guyana, sponsored the Guyana booth. From the booth Ms. Anandjit, Diane, Duane, and other Guyanese in attendance addressed hundreds of visitors’ questions.

Mr. Thorne and Ms. Karwacki met with roughly 30 tour operators who expressed interest in organizing trips to Guyana for their clients. Two operators also said that over the three days, Guyana received more enquiries than any other destination at their booths. Combined trips with established birding destinations such as Trinidad and Tobago were also planned.

The GTA-GTIS Birding Tourism Programme is a three-year market driven program. The partners include the GTA, the USAID-sponsored GTIS project, and Guyana’s market-ready tourism suppliers.

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