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GUYANA BIRDING

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 15, 2006

Guyana Tourism Authority and Guyana Trade and Investment Support Take Guyana's Birding Tourism Program to the British Birdwatching Fair in Rutland, England



GEORGETOWN—Representatives from Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA), Guyana Trade and Investment Support (GTIS), and Guyana's tourism suppliers will be attending this week's British Birdwatching Fair (BBWF) in Rutland, UK from August 18-20. With more than 18,000 visitors and 300 exhibitors, the BBWF is seen as the ideal place to spread the word of Guyana as a new destination for birders worldwide.



At the BBWF the GTA will be sharing an exhibition booth with Greenheart Trust, an organization dedicated to conservation issues in Guyana. GTA, with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), is also hosting two special events. On Friday, August 18 there will be a barbeque to familiarize tour operators and key birding media with Guyana's natural history, with particular focus on Guyana's 800-plus species of birds. On Monday, August 21 a Guyana Evening is planned at the Canning House in London. Diane McTurk will speak about her work rehabilitating Giant River Otters at Karanambu Lodge, Duane DeFreitas will discuss the South Rupununi Conservation Society and life at Dadanawa ranch, and GTA Director, Indira Anandjit, will speak about Guyana's tourism offerings.

The trip is part of the GTA-GTIS birding tourism program targeting the travel trade as well as media and consumers. It includes birding guide training, development of birding tourism marketing materials including a website, www.guyanabirds.com, media relations and PR activities, and development of partnerships with international birding tour operators. Representatives from Guyana also attended the American Birding Association Annual Convention in June.



Birding tourism in Guyana is seen as beneficial on many levels. It contributes to conservation by focusing on unique places, sustainable activities and small groups of people highly interested in nature and preservation. The typically small-scale operations do not have high impacts on the environment and give local people opportunities to obtain employment and business benefits, while encouraging communities to conserve and protect their natural heritage. Birders are also generally well-educated middle aged and older people with the time and money to travel far and wide in search of the Neotropical birds on their checklists, many of which are found in Guyana.

The Birding Tourism Program is receiving support from GTIS, a joint project of the Government of Guyana and USAID. The birding initiative's success relies on the involvement of several partners, including GTA and the Government of Guyana and Guyana's tourism private sector, represented by THAG and its members. USAID provides assistance to private sector firms and organizations and government institutions to assist Guyana to become more competitive and develop export market opportunities.

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