



# Ron Allicock

## BIRDING TOURS

SURAMA VILLAGE - REGION 9, GUYANA

## GUYANA: Wilderness Paradise

2014 - 2015

### DAY 1 ARRIVE IN GUYANA

Your flight (depending upon your airline) will arrive either early in the morning or late in the evening. The best means of travel to Cara Lodge is by taxi. If you have arrived early in the day, you can visit the Georgetown Botanical Gardens late in the afternoon to watch a stunning array of tropical birds in this semi-urban oasis. (200 species have been recorded in this location) The tour will begin this evening with a pre-dinner orientation meeting with our guide Ron Allicock. Dinner this evening will be at our hotel Cara Lodge.

*Overnight at Cara Lodge. (D)*

### DAY 2 GEORGETOWN, MAHAICA RIVER, ABARI RIVER



Scarlet Ibis, herons and egrets roost in the mangrove trees at high tide  
(photo by Ron Allicock)

This morning we will leave our hotel at 5:00 am and head eastward along the Atlantic coast to the Mahaica and Abari Rivers. This is where you will have your only chance on this tour of seeing Guyana's national bird, the "Hoatzin". This pre-historic bird is found in abundance along these river systems along with many other species including the Blood-coloured Woodpecker. The rare and elusive Blood-coloured Woodpecker is a species most birdwatchers visiting Guyana wish to see. This woodpecker is

restricted to the narrow coastal plains and is considered a Guianan Shield endemic.

Other birds we often see along these rivers include Black-collared Hawk, Black Hawk Eagle, Barred Antshrike, Silvered Antbird, Striped Cuckoo, Mangrove Cuckoo, Long-winged Harrier and a host of flycatchers and seedeaters. Additional birds we will be looking for include Rufous Crab Hawk and Scarlet Ibis. This is also a chance to see "wintering" shorebirds in the coastal mudflats. We will return to Georgetown at the end of the day where we will enjoy dinner at a restaurant of our choice.

*Overnight at Cara Lodge. (B, L, D)*



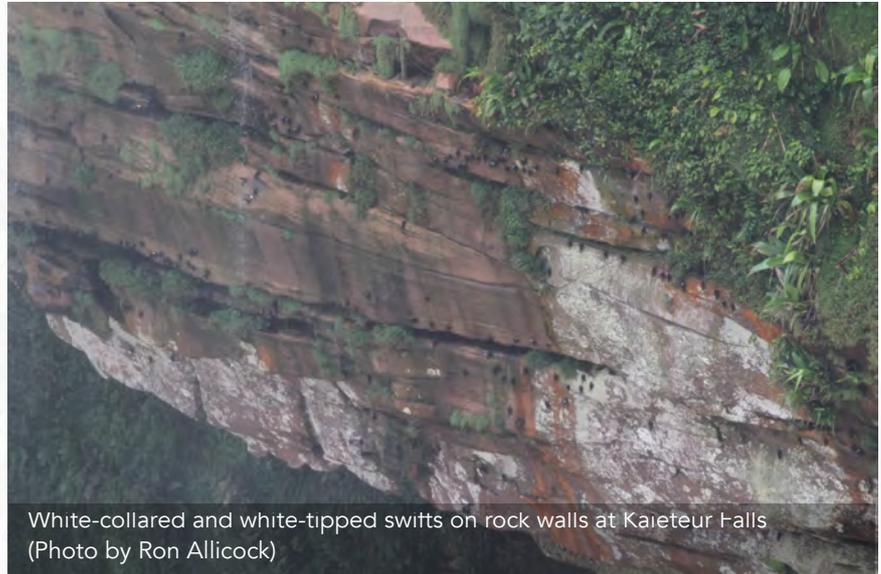
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### DAY 3 FLY TO KAITEUR FALLS AND IWOKRAMA RIVER LODGE

After breakfast this morning we transfer to Ogle International Airport for our flight to Kaieteur Falls and then on to Iwokrama River Lodge. Kaieteur Falls is the world's highest free-falling waterfall. Though Venezuela's Angel Falls are greater in total height, their filamentous drop occurs by stages whereas Kaieteur is a single, massive, thundering cataract 100 meters wide, created as the Potaro River makes a sheer drop of 228 meters / 742 feet, nearly five times the height of Niagara Falls. The spectacle is more impressive



White-collared and white-tipped swifts on rock walls at Kaieteur Falls  
(Photo by Ron Allicock)

for its remoteness and it is altogether possible that we'll be the only persons viewing it. During our visit here we hope to find White-chinned and White-tipped Swifts swirling over the gorge, and perhaps we'll be lucky enough to have a sighting of the astonishingly colorful Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock at its lek or to see Orange-breasted Falcon hunting White-tipped Swifts.

After a two-hour stop at the falls our flight will continue to Iwokrama River Lodge. Upon arrival at the airstrip we will be met and driven a short distance to the lodge. Iwokrama River Lodge is located on the banks of the Essequibo River. The lodge is a part of the Iwokrama Field Station, located in the Iwokrama Rainforest, a vast wilderness of one million acres. This protected area was established in 1996 as the Iwokrama International Centre for Rainforest Conservation and Development. After our arrival we will bird along the extensive trail systems that allow good access into the forest and its inhabitants. After dark we will take a boat trip out onto the Essequibo River in search of caiman, other night animals and nocturnal birds such as Ladder-tailed Nightjar and Boat-billed Heron.

*Overnight at Iwokrama River Lodge. (B, L, D)*

### DAY 4 TURTLE MOUNTAIN



Harpies are often seen feeding on green iguanas along the Essequibo River

After an early morning excursion on the Essequibo River where Giant River Otters are possible, we will continue our journey to Turtle Mountain and explore the trails here, climbing to an elevation of about 900 feet for a spectacular view of the forest canopy below. The trail to Turtle Mountain winds its way through beautiful primary forest where we will look for Red and Black Grosbeak, Golden-sided Euphonia, Orange-breasted Falcon, Scarlet Macaw, Ornate Hawk Eagle, Cream-coloured Woodpecker and Ringed Woodpecker. The trail up the mountain is well designed with sturdy handrails to help



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you to walk up at your own pace. To get to the top of Turtle Mountain is challenging but the view from the top is indeed breathtaking, a once in a lifetime opportunity for you to enjoy nature at its best. We may see a fly-by of King Vulture, Swallow-tailed Kite, Short-tailed Hawk and Red and Green Macaw. Mammals that can be seen here include Red Howler Monkey and Black Spider Monkey.

*Overnight at Iwokrama River Lodge. (B, L, D)*

### DAY 5 ATTA RAINFOREST LODGE AND CANOPY WALKWAY



After an early breakfast, we will drive to Atta Rainforest Lodge and the Canopy Walkway. This road is one of the best areas for seeing White Bellbird, Pompadour Cotinga, Purple-breasted Cotinga, Blue-cheeked Amazon and Blue-backed Tanager. During our drive to Atta we will be looking for Tapir and the very elusive Jaguar. This much sort after animal is sometimes seen walking along the road. Our accommodations will be private rooms with comfortable beds.

*Overnight at Atta Lodge. (B, L, D)*

### DAY 6 ATTA RAINFOREST LODGE / CANOPY WALKWAY

Today we will walk the trails around the lodge and the Canopy Walkway searching for the many remarkable birds that make this area home. Birding from our vantage point in the canopy, 30 meters/100 feet above the forest floor, we will look for White Bellbird, Purple-breasted Cotinga, Spangled Cotinga, Dusky Purpletuft, Guianan Puffbird, and Red-necked Woodpecker. Other birds we will be looking for include Todd's Antwren, Spot-tailed Antwren, Guianan Toucanet, Guianan Puffbird, Dusky Purpletuft, Paradise Tanager, Opal-rumped Tanager, Golden-sided Euphonia, Green Honeycreeper and Black-faced Dacnis. Spix's Guan and Black Currawong are often seen on the lodge grounds.



Crested eagle near Surama Village. (Photo by Ron Allicock)

*Overnight at Atta Lodge. (B, L, D)*



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### Day 7 ATTA RAINFOREST LODGE, CANOPY WALKWAY, and SURAMA VILLAGE



Black hawk eagle near Surama Village. (Photo by Ron Allicock)

We will begin this day with additional birding around Atta before driving to a Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock Lek in hopes of watching the displays of the outstanding Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock. After satisfying our-selves with this beautiful bird (we have been successful on all previous trips) we will drive on to Surama, an Amerindian village, home to the Makushi people, lying amidst a rich rainforest punctuated by the rugged Pakaraima Mountains. Surama has become a model for Amerindian Ecotourism by creating an innovative system of locally designed natural and cultural conservation. Upon

arrival we will be greeted by the lodge staff who will invite us to freshen up, enjoy the beautifully landscaped grounds, relax in a hammock, and dine together in the central Benab.

Accommodations at Surama are comfortably rustic, with a mix of traditional en-suite Benab-style huts and a newer (also en-suite) brick guest building. On one of the evenings we spend in Surama Village we will be treated to the musical and story-telling skills of the Surama Cultural Group.

This afternoon will be spent time birding on a trail known as the Great Potoo Trail. Here we often see a pair of Great Potoo roosting in good light. After our walk on this trail and if time permits we will search for the Rufous-winged Ground Cuckoo, a highly desirable bird most often found in the vicinity of Army Ant incursions. Additional species that can be found here include Black-spotted Barbet, Green Aracari, Black-necked Aracari, Yellow-throated Flycatcher, Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner, Amazonian-barred Woodcreeper, Black-banded Woodcreeper, Olivaceous Woodcreeper, Chestnut-rumped Woodcreeper, Eastern Slaty-Antshrike, Tiny Tyrant Manakin, Rufous-throated Antbird, White-plumed Antbird, Scaled-backed Antbird, Wing-banded Antbird, Spotted Antpitta, and Rufous-winged Ground Cuckoo.

*Overnight at Surama Eco-Lodge. (B, L, D)*



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### DAY 8 HARPY EAGLE TRAIL AND BURRO-BURRO RIVER



Today we will spend the entire morning in a forested area known as the Harpy Eagle Trail. The Harpy Eagles have begun their nesting cycle again so we have a good chance of seeing them at the nest site. Other birds we are likely to see along the trail include, Long-tailed Potoo, Grey-winged Trumpeter, Painted-Tody Flycatcher, Capuchinbird, Blue-crowned Motmot, Cinnamon-rumped Foliage-gleaner, Rufous-winged Ground Cuckoo, Yellow-billed Jacamar Short-billed Leaf-tosser, Guianan Red Cotinga, White Bellbird and White-plumed Antbird. Wedge-capped

Capuchin Monkey is a possibility here.

This afternoon, we will walk for about one hour through the forest to the Burro-Burro River for a quiet and skillfully guided paddle along the river, searching the banks for river-edge birds including Silvered Antbird, Black-chinned Antbird, White-browed Antbird, Coraya Wren, Buff-breasted Wren, White-banded Swallow, Amazon Kingfisher, Green Kingfisher, Green and Rufous Kingfisher, American Pygmy Kingfisher, Blue-throated Piping Guan, Guira Tanager, Crane Hawk and Grey-headed Kite. Additional birds we hope to find include Agami Heron, Capuchinbird, Boat-billed Heron and Rufous-winged Ground Cuckoo. After spending about two hours on the river, we will make our way back to the lodge by walking the trail, the walk will enable us to have more time exploring this seldom-birded part of the Surama territory.

*Overnight at Surama Eco-Lodge. (B, L, D)*

### DAY 9 SURAMA VILLAGE/DRIVE TO CAIMAN HOUSE LODGE

This morning we will drive to Caiman House Lodge birding along the way. The road we follow skirts numerous gallery forests and wetland areas offering great views of a variety of water birds including Cocoli Heron, Maguari Stork, Jabiru and possibly Pinnated Bittern, Azure Gallinule, Double-striped Thick-knee, Bicoloured Wren, Gray Seedeater, Grassland Yellow Finch, Yellowish Pipit, Crested Bobwhite, Green-rumped Parrotlet, Yellow-hooded Blackbird and the agile Aplomado Falcon. Savanna Hawk, Great Black Hawk, White-tailed Hawk, Northern Caracara and Lesser Yellow-headed Vultures are also possible. With luck we will encounter Giant Anteater and Savannah Fox. The open grasslands eventually take us to a small area of forest and to the Village of Yupukari that houses the Caiman Research Station. We will settle into our traditional clay brick and thatched cabins before lunch and then in the afternoon we will take a leisurely boat trip on the Rupununi River. Here we are likely to find kingfishers including both Green-and-Rufous and American Pygmy, the superb Agami



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Heron, Capped Heron, Sungrebe, Sunbittern, Pied Lapwings, Boat-billed Herons, Large-billed Tern, Black Skimmer, Pale-legged Hornero and with luck, Bare-necked Fruitcrow, Spot-breasted Woodpecker and with even more luck we may come across the secretive Crestless Curassow. In addition we may be fortunate enough to see Black and Spectacled Caiman, Giant River Otter, Capybara and many species of monkeys. As a relaxing finale to our day we will enjoy "sundowners" while lazily floating around watching Band-tailed Nighthawks and possibly Nacunda Nighthawk and Common Potoo. Our sunset boat expedition wraps up with a delicious and hearty dinner back at the Lodge.



South American snipe. (Photo by Ron Allicock)

*Overnight at Caiman House (B, L, D)*

## DAY 10 SEARCH FOR THE CRESTED DORADITO

This morning after an early breakfast we will go on a quest in search of several seldom seen birds namely the Crested Doradito and Bearded Tachuri, both of which like to keep low down in short grasses close to water. The rare and localized Crested Doradito was only recently discovered here and we have a very good chance of finding it. Other species on our morning hit list include Sharp-tailed Ibis, Yellowish Pipit, Pinnated Bittern, Brazilian Teal, White-tailed Goldenthrout, Vermilion Flycatcher, Bicoloured Wren, Double-striped Thick-knee, Burrowing Owl, Maguari Stork and Savanna Fox. This is another chance to see the remarkable Giant Anteater.

Later this afternoon we will return to the river looking for anything we may have missed the day before.

*Overnight at Caiman House (B, L, D)*

## DAY 11 YUPUKARI TO GEORGETOWN

Today depending on the time of our schedule flight we, will do final birding around the environs of Caiman House Lodge before having breakfast and then will pack and be ready for a transfer to Karanambu Airstrip for our schedule flight back to Georgetown.

*Overnight at Cara Lodge (B)*



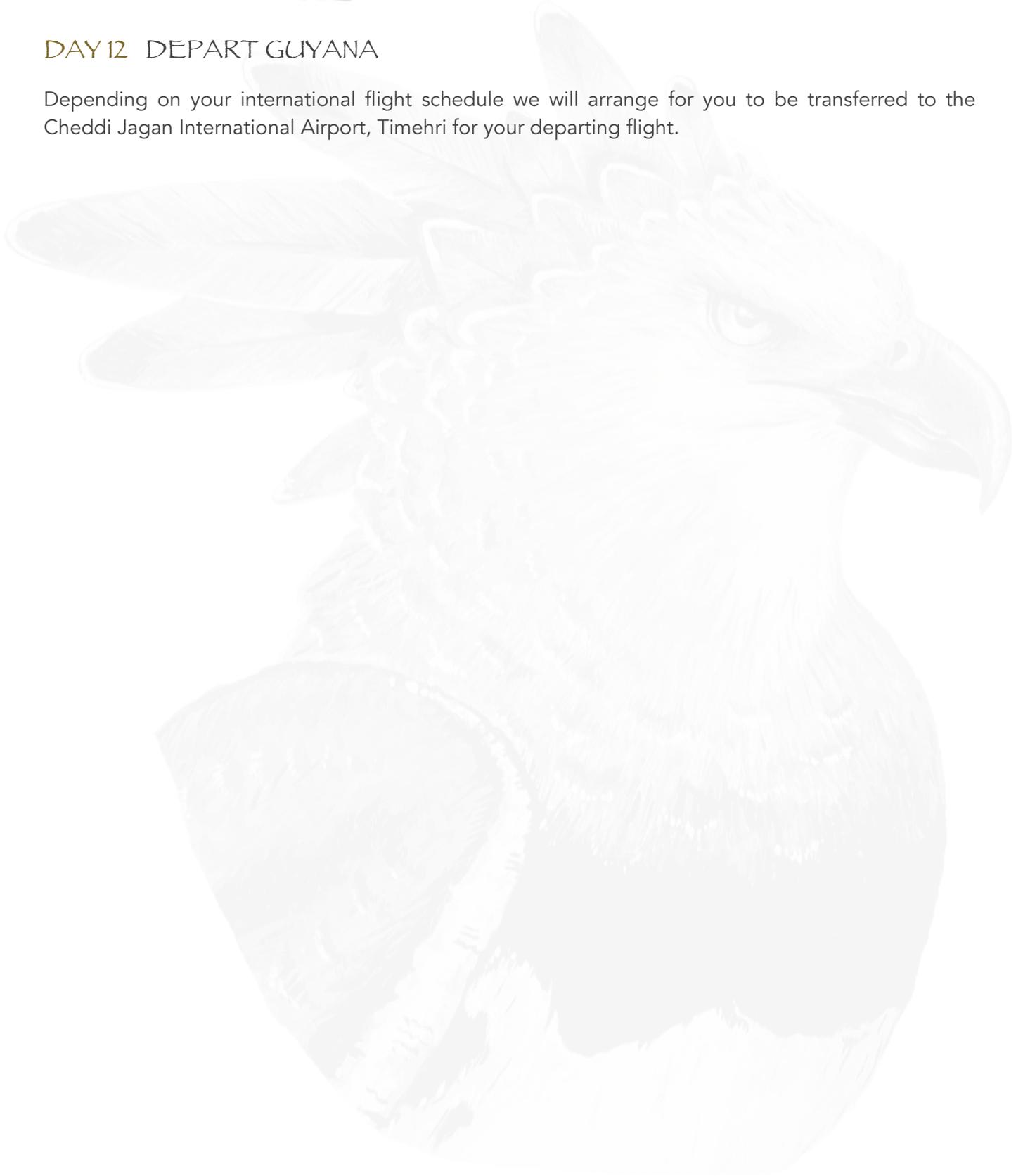
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### DAY 12 DEPART GUYANA

Depending on your international flight schedule we will arrange for you to be transferred to the Cheddi Jagan International Airport, Timehri for your departing flight.





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### **TOUR PRICE**

**USD \$3,400** per person sharing as twin or double,

**USD \$300** single supplement applies to solo travelers not wishing to share lodge accommodation. Single accommodation is subject to availability.

### **Tour cost includes:**

- Airport transfers
- Double or twin accommodation
- Meals as listed on itinerary as Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner (BLD)
- Snacks and water daily
- All road and river transfer
- Internal flights in Guyana
- Activities as described
- Local guides
- VAT
- Iwokrama Forest User Fee
- Iwokrama Canopy Walkway fee
- Kaieteur National Park Fee
- Local birding guide

### **Tour price does not include:**

- Items of a personal nature
- Alcoholic drinks
- Departure tax
- International flights
- Visa
- Emergency evacuation insurance
- Excess weight on the internal scheduled flight.

### **INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS**

The cost of this tour does not include the price of your international flight to and from Guyana. You are responsible for arranging these flights to and from Georgetown. I recommend that you arrive a day early to a rest and adjust to the time zone before our early morning departure on day two.

### **TRIP INSURANCE**

The purchase of trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. Ron Allicock Birding Tours (RABT) cannot accept liability for airline cancellations or delays or penalties incurred by the purchase of non-refundable airline tickets or other expenses incurred by tour participants in preparing for this tour.



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### **GROUP SIZE**

Trips require a minimum of four guests (plus guide) to operate. Maximum group size is 11 guests plus guide.

### **WEIGHT LIMITS FOR INTERNAL FLIGHTS**

Small aircraft flying into Guyana's interior must observe strict weight limits. There is a 20-lb luggage limit per passenger on internal flights. Excess luggage weight is charged at USD \$0.74 per pound. On past trips we have been able to leave any personal items and luggage not needed on the tour at Cara Lodge in Georgetown.

All customers must provide us with body weights of passengers booked to travel. Failure to provide us with this information or the incorrect information can cause delays to flights and inconvenience to other passengers and in some cases either passengers and/or luggage being taken off the flight. To ensure a tour that is enjoyable and hassle free, it is imperative that passengers provide us with this information. We appreciate some people are sensitive about providing their body weights, but all customers and their baggage are weighed at check-in. This is a procedure by the airline to ensure that the weight of the load is within the payload limit for the aircraft, and neither they nor Ron Allicock Birding Tours (RABT) will compromise on safety. All passengers are subject to removal of themselves or luggage from the flight if they are over the weight they provided and/or over the baggage allowance. Passengers are advised to provide a body weight with clothing similar to that which they would expect to travel in on the flight. Ron Allicock Birding Tours (RABT) cannot be held responsible for any passenger denied boarding or luggage not transported if they are over the weight provided. Weights supplied are provided to the airline in advance to ensure the flight is within the allowable payload.



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### CAIMAN HOUSE AND RESEARCH CENTER



At the edge of Yupukari Village in the Central Rupununi is Caiman House Field Station; a combination guest-lodge and education center focused on research and conservation projects along the nearby Rupununi River. The Field Station is the hub of several participatory development projects, including the introduction of classroom libraries in all three village schools and an Internet-enabled public library.

The black caiman research project is a convergence of professional herpetology and local knowledge. Its immediate purpose is to develop a full understanding of black caiman natural

history and ecology in Guyana, still a relatively neglected topic. This project is proving to be an excellent model and vehicle for indigenous capacity building, training and education: an immersion approach that transfers skills in wildlife study and monitoring.

Other ongoing projects include the identification of Important Bird Areas (IBA) in association with the Guyana Amazon Tropical Bird Society, training local residents in field research techniques and natural resource management strategies, and a tree identification inventory to merge taxonomic indexes with indigenous knowledge and experience.

Visitors have many opportunities to observe - or become involved with - the projects at Caiman House. A popular nighttime excursion allows guests to observe caiman capture and assist in data collection while caiman are weighed, measured, sexed, and tagged. Visitors also have the opportunity to meet local craftspeople, including the furniture builders at Yupukari Crafters, a nonprofit venture to create sustainable jobs and revenue for the village.

Caiman House Field Station and the Guest House are powered 24hrs a day by a large solar array. Standard U.S. electrical outlets are located in all rooms so charging equipment is easy. The entire station is served by wireless Internet access. ([Facebook](#) | [Trip Advisor](#) | [website](#))



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### SURAMA VILLAGE AND ECO-LODGE



Accommodation at Surama Eco-Lodge is simple, basic, clean, and comfortable. Set at the western edge of the main village, Surama Eco-Lodge is perched atop a meadow facing a thick forest wall, creating a perfect opportunity to view birds, monkeys, and even the occasional jaguar. The majestic Pakaraima Mountains, often shrouded in mist, rise above the canopy and strike a brilliant contrast against the pure forest air.

Other than the full-time lodge manager, the staff of our lodge

is comprised of village residents who spend part of their week tending to the lodge and the hospitality needs of visitors. You will be treated like a guest in our home, enjoying food prepared by local villagers and getting to know the ways of our world as each day of village life passes right in front of your room.

Surama Village is a small Amerindian community of the Makushi people living in the north Rupununi region # 9. The word Surama, originally *Shuramata*, means the place of spoiled bar-b-que (or where bar-b-que spoiled). The name derived during a tribal conflict between the Makushi and Carib people many years ago.

Surama Village is situated in 5 square miles of savannah land surrounded by forest, hills and the Pakaraima mountain range. The life of the people is in the art and understanding of how to live with nature. It is a simple and basic way of life, living according to the laws of nature.

The population of 287 people lives off the knowledge of the land. Although Surama has seen many, many moons, it was only in 1974 when R.F. Allicock and T.V Allicock invited a group of friends from Kwatamang and Wowetta to join 4 families in Surama to organize a proper village system. Those first 86 souls envisioned a cooperative system which allowed better management of natural resources and harmony amongst neighbors. That system exists to this day. ([Facebook](#) | [Trip Advisor](#) | [website](#))