



PRESS RELEASE

August 25, 2011

Guyana Exhibits at Annual British Birdwatching Fair for Fifth Consecutive Year

Rutland Water, England – As the second day of the 23rd annual [British Birdwatching Fair](#) (commonly referred to as *Birdfair*) was drawing to a close, the Guyana stand was crowded with people sampling award-winning El Dorado rum and discussing recent trips to Guyana.

One couple told their story of seeing a Harpy Eagle, Giant Anteater, 270 different bird species and a jaguar relaxing in the Iwokrama road for 25 minutes, all on a February 2011 [Naturetrek](#) trip to Guyana.

Mike Weedon, Assistant Editor of *Bird Watching* (the UK's highest-selling bird magazine), said he missed the jaguar seen during his 2008 familiarization trip to Guyana, but remembered his South American journey fondly. "Guyana remains one of my favorite trips," he said with a smile. "It was truly fantastic."

Birdfair serves as an annual three-day pilgrimage for more than 20,000 fanatical birders and nature lovers. They come armed with tote bags and binoculars, ready to talk about past trips and gather information that will help them plan their next nature-based adventure.

At the 23rd Birdfair, which took place at Rutland Water, England from August 19-21, the rare sight and warmth of sunshine proved the perfect elixir for lifting spirits beyond any recession-laden worries: days one and three set all-time attendance records.

The crowds kept the Guyana stand hopping throughout. On hand to share their expertise and distribute materials promoting Guyana were Ron Allicock, freelance birding guide and representative of [Surama Eco-Lodge](#); Paul Waldron, representing [Iwokrama International Centre for Rainforest Conservation and Development](#); Tony Thorne and Claire Antell of [Wilderness Explorers](#); Duane de Freitas of [Rupununi Trails](#); and Kirk Smock with the [Guyana Sustainable Tourism Initiative](#), a joint program of the Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA) and the United States Agency for International Development/Guyana Trade and Investment Support (USAID/GTIS) project, and author of the [Guyana](#) guidebook by Bradt Travel Guides.

More of Guyana's beauty and culture was on display at the Greenheart Trust stand, where members of Guyana's remote Amerindian Wai Wai tribe and representatives of Rupununi Trails were on hand to promote tours to the locally protected [Wai Wai](#) territory.

At Birdfair, the team promoted Guyana to international tour operators, hundreds of potential visitors, and media. Guyana was also featured during two different lectures.

On Friday, Tony Thorne and Kirk Smock gave a well-attended presentation titled, "Ticking and Dipping: Tourism and Twitchers in Guyana." On Sunday, Paul Chekema and Anthony ShuShu gave a talk titled, "Our Land, Our Life," about the flora, fauna and landscape found within their 2300 square-miles of protected lands.

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There were more than 15 international tour operators advertising and selling Guyana trips at this year's Birdfair. Comparing this to the one or two companies that were selling Guyana at Birdfair six years ago demonstrates the progress that Guyana has made over the years.

There were also a few new companies that expressed strong interest in adding Guyana trips to their offerings. The owner of a new company, [Sea Voyager Expeditions](#), visited the Guyana stand to discuss the possibility of bringing their 65-passenger ship to Guyana in 2013. The company feels that Guyana's pristine nature and plentiful wildlife and birds would be a perfect match for their adventurous, nature-loving clients.

[Travel In Depth](#), a tour operator offering tailor-made holidays to Guyana, also met with Wilderness Explorers to discuss new trip itineraries, possibly in partnership with British universities, and consumer events to promote Guyana. The tour operator, [Wild Wings](#), also discussed interest in possibly adding a Guyana trip in 2013 that will combine a mix of birding and mammals.

Guyana's annual presence at Birdfair has helped to solidly plant the destination on the map of birders and nature enthusiasts, a dominant market within tourism.

Guyana's participation at Birdfair was preceded by the annual Guyanese Summer's Evening on 17 August in London. The event's featured speakers were Donald Greig, Managing Director of [Bradt Travel Guides](#), and [John Gimlette](#), acclaimed author of *Wild Coast: Travels on South America's Untamed Edge*.

Greig spoke of his recent trip to Guyana, about which he said, "I haven't felt so inspired by a wildlife destination since I visited Kenya 20 years ago." Bradt Travel Guides also launched the just-released updated second edition of Bradt's [Guyana](#) guidebook, authored by Kirk Smock.

Gimlette recounted some of the adventures that he had while traveling through Guyana to research his new book, *Wild Coast*, which is about his travels in all three Guianas.

For more on birding and tourism in Guyana, visit www.guyanabirding.com, www.guyana.travel and www.guyana-tourism.com. For more information on Birdfair, visit www.birdfair.org.uk.

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