



# MAGICAL GUYANA

Rainforest & Savanna

&

# KAIETEUR FALLS EXTENSION

*October 4 - 14, 2026*  
*October 14 - 15, 2026*

***“Travel stripped of adventure is almost inevitably an exercise imbedded in monotony.”***

**Caskie Stinnett**



*Red Siskin, Guyana © David Ascanio*

Overlooked, unfamiliar, and largely removed from the world’s public and political eye, the small tropical nation of Guyana is a biological treasure-trove home to some of the most prized birds and vaunted wildlife in South America. On this new tour—our first to Guyana in several years—we will travel to the Rupununi region of southwestern Guyana, one of the last great wildernesses on Earth, known for its stunning biodiversity, rich Indigenous culture, and remarkably varied landscapes.

Our itinerary promises exposure to a vast region of rainforests and savannas, home to a fantastic variety of birds and wildlife. We have included visits to some of the last strongholds of the spectacular Sun Parakeet and Red Siskin. A marvelous array of other standout birds beckons, including the

ground-dwelling Gray-winged Trumpeter, bizarre Capuchinbird, and the gorgeous Guianan Cock-of-the-rock.

Our adventure begins in Georgetown, where a day on the coast presents a pleasing introduction to Guyana, with our sights set on observing a range of special birds, including Rufous Crab Hawk, Festive Amazon, and Blood-colored Woodpecker. A private flight into the interior takes us to Rock View Lodge, in the heart of the North Rupununi Savanna. Here among rolling grasslands and tropical rainforest, we will seek such prized species as Maguari Stork,



*Capuchinbird © David Ascanio*

Painted and Golden-winged parakeets, Red-and-green Macaw, Guianan Red-Cotinga, Guianan Trogon, the noisy Red-throated Caracara, and Orange-backed Troupial. A day at Atta Rainforest Lodge in the heart of the protected Iwokrama Forest Preserve may yield an impressive mix of birds highlighted by Black Curassow, Red-necked Woodpecker, and Guianan Warbling-Antbird.

Among the scrubby vegetation, scattered wetlands, and grasslands that characterize the Rupununi Savanna, we will have opportunities to observe a marvelous selection of wildlife from Jabiru to Giant Anteater. Among the many alluring birds possible here are Aplomado Falcon, Double-striped Thick-knee, Blue-and-yellow and Red-shouldered macaws, Toco Toucan, and Blue-backed Manakin.

Joining VENT tour leader David Ascanio in guiding this trip is Leon Moore, Guyana's top birder, who combines superb birding knowledge with great people skills. We will also meet the people who made the South Rupununi Conservation Society a reality. The SRCS is a local NGO that has been

instrumental in safeguarding the last healthy population of Red Siskins and other iconic species in the wild.

Those interested in maximizing their time in Guyana are encouraged to join our optional one-day extension to incomparable Kaieteur Falls, the world's largest single-drop waterfall by volume.

Please note that although this departure is regarded as a wilderness trip, because of simple (but clean!) accommodations and 4x4 transportation, there are no high elevations or unusually strenuous activities scheduled.

## October 4, Day 1: Travel to Georgetown, Guyana

Participants should plan to arrive into Georgetown's Cheddi Jagan International Airport (airport code GEO) any time today. Outside the baggage claim area you will be met by a representative of our ground agent and transferred to the **Grand Coastal Hotel**, where a room has been reserved in your name. Due to late-arriving flights, dinner tonight is on your own. The hotel dining room offers a delicious selection of both Guyanese and international cuisine.

**Travel note:** Both American Airlines and Caribbean Airlines offer non-stop service to Georgetown from Miami while Caribbean Airlines offers non-stop service from New York (JFK). Non-stop service from Panama City, Panama is available through COPA Airlines, which will connect with flights to and from various airports in the USA. All flight information is subject to change. We will meet for the first time as a group early the next morning. Those with late-arriving flights should consider arriving in Georgetown a day or more before the start of the tour in order to feel properly rested.

**NIGHT:** Herdmanston Lodge, Georgetown

## October 5, Day 2: A day in Georgetown

Our trip begins in casual fashion with a 6:00 a.m. meeting for a trip welcome and orientation followed by breakfast. At this time, you will have a chance to meet your fellow travelers and trip leaders, who will outline the exciting events of the coming days. After breakfast we will spend an easy day around

Georgetown visiting several bird-rich areas, which together offer a superb introduction to the birdlife of Guyana, not to mention a look at Guyana's capital city. Our intended itinerary includes a visit to coastal wetlands, a short boat trip on the Mahaica River, and a visit to the Guyana Botanical Gardens. Our ability to visit all of these sites will be determined by weather conditions and timing, and our schedule will remain flexible.

Located in the far north of the country, Georgetown sits on the coast, where a mosaic of aquatic and forest habitats supports a mix of common and widespread birds and species restricted to the swamp forest and mangrove stands that once blanketed the Atlantic coast of the Guianas. We will sample these habitats. Our day likely begins with a visit to coastal mudflats where the restricted distribution Rufous Crab Hawk occurs. Here, we also may be delighted by brightly-colored Scarlet Ibis, Mangrove Rail, diminutive White-bellied Piculet, and Plain-bellied Emerald, a hummingbird found close to mangrove stands. Next, we will enjoy a boat trip on the tree-lined Mahaica River, where we will look for the bizarre and largely vegetarian Hoatzin. This activity brings the prospect of many birds; among the possibilities are Great Black-Hawk, Snail Kite, Green-tailed Jacamar, Wing-barred Seedeater, Epaulet Oriole, and probably a roost of Boat-billed Heron (a typically crepuscular and nocturnal species). We will also stay vigilant for pairs of the entertaining Black-capped Donacobius, an elegant bird known for its unique display choreography.



*Scarlet Ibis © David Ascanio*

Our itinerary includes a visit to the Guyana Botanical Gardens. Within the lovely grounds of the gardens are fine examples of well-known neotropical plants such as Copernicus Palm (*Copernicia sp.*), Sand-box tree (*Hura crepitans*), Silk-cotton tree (*Ceiba pentandra*), and the lovely flowering Cannonball tree (*Couroupita spp.*). Among the bird specialties, we will focus on finding the gorgeous and range restricted Blood-colored Woodpecker. We may also see Pale-vented Pigeon, Striated Heron, Gray-lined and Roadside hawks, Wattled Jacana, Red-shouldered Macaw, Orange-winged and Yellow-crowned parrots, Rufous-breasted Hermit, Plain-bellied Emerald, Green Kingfisher, Black-crested Antshrike, White-winged Becard, Silver-beaked and Hooded tanagers, Yellow-rumped Cacique and much more.

**NIGHT:** Herdmanston Lodge, Georgetown

## October 6, Day 3: Flight to Lethem; transfer to Rock View Lodge

After breakfast, we will transfer to the airport in time for a one-hour flight south to the town of Lethem, on the Brazilian border. Upon arrival we'll immediately find ourselves in one of the wildest regions of Guyana. Still small and low in population, Lethem is something of a frontier town. Beyond city limits, the natural surroundings are dominated by grasslands, patches of forest, and shrubby thickets.

From Lethem we will commence the journey to Rock View Lodge, an overland trip requiring about three hours to complete. We will not simply pile into the vehicles and drive without stops. Our plan is to traverse the country at a reasonable pace with occasional stops for birds and other wildlife. The journey will actually feel like an adventure as it provides our first opportunity to spot Giant Anteater, certainly one of the premier animals of the region. Borrow-pits along the roadside should yield an array of birds new to the trip. Stops at a few of these may reveal Crested Bobwhite, Plain-breasted Ground-Dove, Jabiru and Maguari Stork, King Vulture, Savanna and White-tailed hawks, Red-shouldered Macaw, Aplomado Falcon, Plumbeous Seedeater, and Orange-backed Troupial.

**Travel note:** For domestic flights, the weight restriction for hand-luggage is 20 pounds per person.

**NIGHT:** Rock View Lodge, North Rupununi

## October 7, Day 4: North Rupununi Savanna and Rock View Lodge

Rock View Lodge is located at the edge of the North Rupununi Savanna, close to the Pakaraima Mountains and the Iwokrama Forest. This position creates a savanna–rainforest ecotone, meaning species from both ecosystems overlap. Over the course of the day, we will sample some or all of the following ecosystems: North Rupununi Wetlands, recognized for its near-natural state and diversity of aquatic life; Rupununi Savanna Grasslands, open grasslands and scattered bush islands home to Giant Anteater, raptors, and an array of open-country birds; Iwokrama Rainforest; and Pakaraima Foothills, a region of rolling hills and rocky outcrops with dry forest patches and gallery forest.

With such ample diversity of landscapes and habitats, birds will be plentiful. The list of species possible today is lengthy. Among the many possibilities are Crested Bobwhite, Pied Plover, Savanna Hawk, Red-bellied Macaw, Toco Toucan, Golden-collared Woodpecker, Fork-tailed Flycatcher, White-headed Marsh-Tyrant, White-winged Swallow, Yellow Oriole, Green Oropendola, and much more!

**NIGHT:** Rock View Lodge, North Rupununi



*Giant Anteater © David Ascanio*

## October 8, Day 5: A day at Atta Rainforest Lodge and Cock-of-the-rock trail

Following our day of birding the savanna lands around Rock View Lodge, we will enjoy an entirely different experience today. Our destination is Atta Rainforest Lodge, situated amid the famous and vast Iwokrama Rainforest Preserve a couple of hours northeast. Our goal is to provide exposure to the deep forest, a clear contrast to the open savanna of North Rupununi. Our departure from Rock View will be early—possibly before dawn—as it is important to reach Atta Rainforest Lodge at the most productive time of the day.

As we get started, it is useful to keep in mind the comparison of life in the Neotropical forest to the stratified life of large cities, with skyscraper life being different from that in the tumultuous streets. While mixed species flocks rumble through the forest understory, other types of flocks remain high in the canopy. Also, as some birds prefer life in the upper floors (such as the Paradise Jacamar), others have a preference for the ground level. Examples of the latter include Gray-winged Trumpeter and Black Curassow, large birds now rare in many areas of Amazonia due to hunting pressure, but still reported frequently in Guyana. Over the course of the day, we will be searching for birds at all levels of the forest, with many of the birds of each strata different from the last.

The richness of birds here is impressive; among the many species possible in a variety of habitats we will likely sample are Red-fan, Dusky, Orange-winged and Caica parrots; Black Manakin; Bronzy Jacamar; and Pelzelin's Tody-Tyrant. Up high we may spot Capuchnbird and other cotingas, toucans, and woodpeckers.

Lower down, mixed species flocks may contain Dusky-throated and Cinereous antshrikes, White-flanked and Gray antwrens, Brown-bellied Stipplethroat and Chestnut-rumped or Buff-throated woodcreepers. If we are fortunate enough to encounter a swarm of army ants, we'll watch for White-plumed and Rufous-throated antbirds, specialist species adapted for life in association with the ants.

In the early afternoon we will pay a visit to a lek of Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock. The display of this species is mostly silent (as opposed to that of the Andean Cock-of-the-Rock, which is quite vocal) and we hope to see males coming close to the forest floor to show their incredible orange plumage. After this unique experience, we will continue our birding. We may come across Gray-winged Trumpeters running along

the roadsides, with their hunched backs and long necks held against their breasts. Other birds found in this general region are the secretive Blue-backed Tanager and an array of tyrant flycatchers and seedeaters.

We will return to Rock View Lodge in the late afternoon.

**NIGHT:** Rock View Lodge, North Rupununi



*Guianan Cock-of-the-rock © David Ascanio*

## October 9, Day 6: Across the savanna to Karasabai for Sun Parakeet; continue to Lethem

The day will begin with a very early breakfast and departure from the lodge ahead of a morning drive to Karasabai, an Amerindian village in the foothills of the Pacaraima Mountains. Karasabai is a very important destination in this part of Guyana as this is where the Sun Parakeet is found. The trip will take at least a couple of hours and will be completed more or less directly as we want to give ourselves plenty of time to search for this special bird.

Seeing the Sun Parakeet is significant for more reasons than one. Certainly, it is an amazingly beautiful bird and always a delight to see. Yet, it is also a very rare bird, a species once almost wiped out of the region by intense trapping for the pet trade, and now serves as a good example of a bird conservation project hosted by a local community. The population of the parakeet has begun to rebound under the protection of this indigenous community. We are likely to spend some time learning from the local community about this successful conservation program.



*Sun Parakeet © David Ascanio*

Seeing the parakeet is the day's top objective, but our time in the field will yield an array of birds, among these, the distinctive subspecies of White-bellied Piculet and Yellow-hooded Blackbird, which may soon be elevated to full species status. After lunch, we will bird our way back across the North Rupununi Savanna, looking for open country birds including Pearl Kite, White-tailed Hawk, Double-striped Thick-Knee, Maguari Stork, Azure Gallinule, Jabiru, and Aplomado Falcon.

In the afternoon we will continue on to Lethem for hotel check-in and dinner. Toward dusk we'll watch the skies for Lesser, Least, and Nacunda nighthawks leaving their roosting sites for their foraging grounds.

**NIGHT:** Takutu Hotel, Lethem

## October 10, Day 7: Departure to Wichabai Ranch and the South Rupununi Savanna

Following our night in Lethem, we'll depart after breakfast for our next destination: the South Rupununi Savanna. Our destination is Wichabai Ranch, where we will seek the inimitable Red Siskin the following day. Our journey south will undoubtedly bring us into contact with a variety of other birds today new for the trip.

We will leave Lethem early this morning to allow time for birding stops. Along the road we will pass by ponds containing Brazilian Teal and Sharp-tailed Ibis while in areas of drier ground we may find pairs of the attractive Buff-necked Ibis and Jabiru. As we continue on, we will encounter an open country avifauna rich in tyrant-flycatchers that includes Plain and Lesser elaenias, Southern Scrub Flycatcher and Mouse-colored Tyrannulet. Also, this is a key area to look for the unique White-naped Xenopsaris, a member of the *becard* and *tityra* family with an odd distribution in South America. We'll reach Wichabai Ranch in time for lunch.



*Jabiru © David Ascanio*

Underscoring the wilderness aspect of this trip is the fact that most birding tours don't go further south from Lethem into Guyana. Given that finding the Red Siskin is our top priority here, our adventure takes us deep into the remote South Rupununi region.

After a deserved break, we will bird the surroundings of the newly built Wichabai Guest Houses and then enjoy the sunset over these expansive savannas.

**NIGHT:** Wichabai Ranch and Guest Houses, South Rupununi

## October 11, Day 8: Sand Creek and the search for Red Siskins

Today we'll focus our efforts on seeing the endangered Red Siskin. Once widespread in northern Venezuela, Trinidad, and eastern Colombia, this charismatic species has been decimated due to intense trapping for the pet trade, despite decades of legal protection. Hope for its survival and recovery in the wild was rekindled when a previously unknown population of the species was discovered here in the South Rupununi. Imagine the excitement the ornithologists experienced on the day of the discovery, at a site more than 900 kilometers from any known locality for the bird, in a country where the species had never before been recorded! Smithsonian scientist and past VENT tour leader Mike Braun was the co-leader of that expedition. The immediate actions he and his colleagues took to protect the bird, and the steady development of a vision for species recovery shared by the many individuals and organizations, now comprise the Red Siskin Initiative.

Today's plan will depend on recent siskin sightings. For that, the assistance of the rangers of the South Rupununi Conservation Society will be invaluable.



*Red Siskin © David Ascanio*

Siskin populations exist near the communities of Sand Creek and Rupunau, but there may be other locations to check. Participants must be ready to leave the ranch before dawn if necessary for a lengthy drive. We have a reasonably high chance of seeing the bird, but of course, nothing is assured. Regardless, our time in the field brings chances of seeing other birds including Little Chachalaca, Black-collared Hawk, Crane and Gray hawks, and the unique White-naped Xenopsaris. Likewise, we might come across White-bellied Antbird and Rufous-winged Antwren at the forest edge, and Plumbeous and Gray seedeaters,. Also, we might see Double-striped Thick-Knee, Burrowing Owl and

Aplomado Falcon. In ponds at the side of the road, we will have the opportunity to add Muscovy Duck, whistling-ducks and the distinctive Jabiru. A special target species in these savannas will be the diminutive and adorable Bearded Tachuri (tyrant-flycatcher family).

**NIGHT:** Wichabai Ranch and Guest Houses, South Rupununi

## October 12, Day 9: Return to Lethem; afternoon at Ireng River

Today's activities will depend on the previous day's success in locating the siskins. If we are satisfied with the siskin experience, we will likely spend the morning making the return journey to Lethem. We will spend the afternoon birding the scrub forest along the Ireng River.

Our day will begin with a pre-breakfast outing to enjoy the chorus of birds welcoming a new day in the savanna. Some of the species possible are Red-bellied and Red-shouldered macaws, Pale-bellied Tyrant-Manakin, White-barred Piculet, Ruby-topaz Hummingbird, Pale-eyed Pygmy-Tyrant, and Finsch's Euphonia.

After lunch, we will spend the remainder of the day birding the dry forest along the Ireng River, which partially forms Guyana's southwestern boundary with Brazil. Our target species will be two poorly known and very local endemic species: Hoary-throated Spinetail and Rio Branco Antbird. Another possibility is the spritely Chestnut-vented Conebill, which travels in small but active groups through the riverine forest. We will also watch for Pearl Kite, Aplomado Falcon, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, White-throated Kingbird, and Flavescent Warbler.

**NIGHT:** Takutu Hotel, Lethem

## October 13, Day 10: Morning at Moca-Moca Trail; afternoon flight to Georgetown

On this, our final day together, we will spend a morning in the field followed by a flight back to Georgetown in the afternoon.

Our day will begin with a visit to Moca-Moca Trail near the Kanuku Mountains. Also known as Sky Valley, the Moca-Moca Trail is a blend of savanna grasslands and lush foothill forest. A couple of hours here can produce an outstanding diversity of birds. Species possible here include Fork-tailed Palm-Swift, Black-eared Fairy, Blue-tailed Emerald, Greater Yellow-headed Vulture, Limpkin, Green-backed Trogon, Amazonian Motmot, White-throated Toucan, Brown-throated Parakeet, White-browed Antbird, Riverbank Warbler, Gray Seedeater, and more.

After lunch, we will catch the one-hour commercial flight to Georgetown. This evening we will gather for a final field checklist session and dinner in the hotel.

**NIGHT:** Grand Coastal Hotel, Georgetown

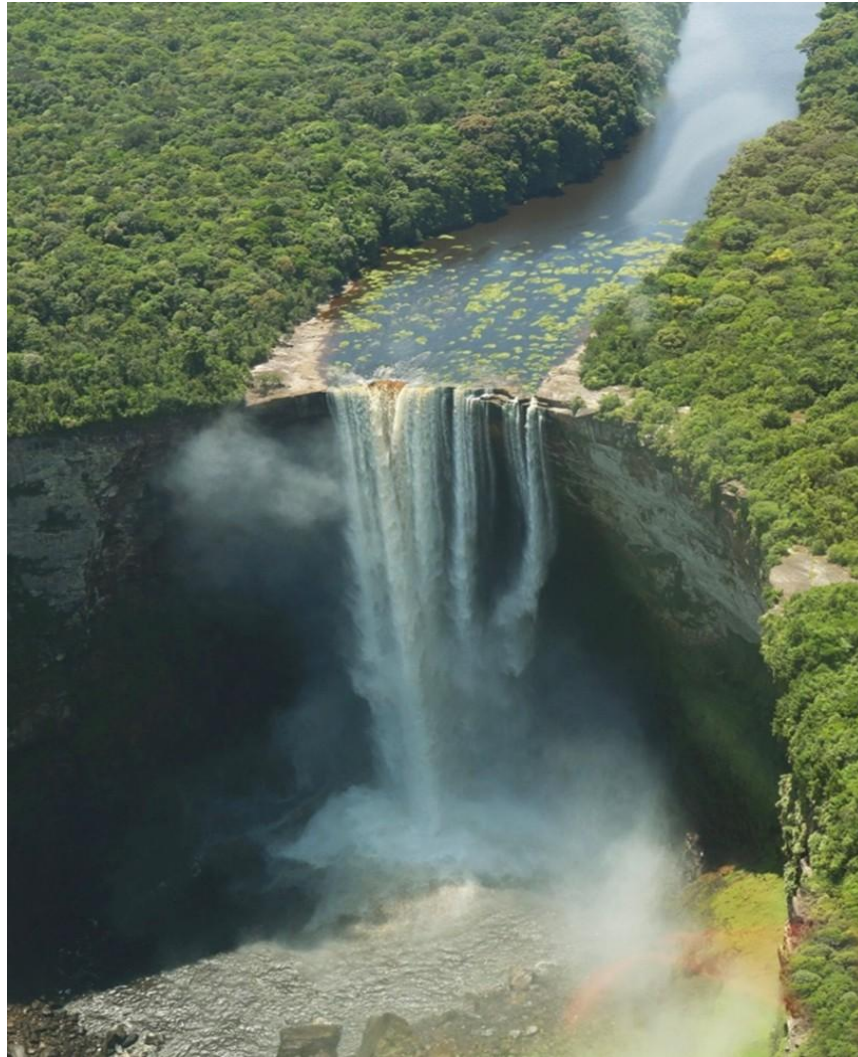
## October 14, Day 11: Departure for home

A group transfer to the airport will be provided in time for the 7:320 a.m. departure of American Airlines Flight 1512 which is scheduled to arrive into Miami at 12:00 p.m., enabling homeward connections (subject to change). Separate transfers can be arranged for participants leaving on a later flight.

Those continuing on to the extension will also be transferred to the airport early this morning.

# KAIETEUR FALLS EXTENSION

*October 14–15, 2026*



*Kaieteur Falls © David Ascanio*

Kaieteur Falls is one of the great natural wonders of the world and certainly among the planet's most spectacular waterfalls. Renowned for its height, width, and flow rate, Kaieteur Falls epitomizes raw, remote nature.

On this one-day extension, we will travel to Kaieteur Falls by plane, taking in the breadth of the falls from above, before birding the near-pristine forest that blankets the surrounding plateau.

## October 14, Day 1: Full day in Kaieteur Falls

After breakfast, we will transfer to the airport to take a one-hour flight to visit Kaieteur Falls, accessible only by aircraft and foot.

Kaieteur Falls are without question the scenic highlight of Guyana. Plunging a heart-stopping 741 feet into a deep gorge, Kaieteur Falls is the world's largest single-drop waterfall by volume. It's far taller than Niagara Falls and remains one of the least commercialized major waterfalls on Earth. Kaieteur National Park, in which the falls are the centerpiece, is remarkably pristine and little visited; no roads link it to the outside world. Perhaps this is part of the lure of this magnificent region. The falls are situated where the Potaro River drops off the eastern edge of an ancient uplifted plateau, which forms the Pan-Tepui or Guianan Highlands region of western Guyana, southern Venezuela and northern Brazil. The spectacular mesas (tepui) carved by millions of years of erosion of this plateau are the home of many endemic plants and animals. The vertical cliffs and inaccessible tops of these tepuis inspired the famous novel *The Lost World* by Arthur Conan Doyle. At about 1,320 ft. (400 meters), Kaieteur is the only region on the trip where we are high enough to encounter a few of the higher elevation species including Blue-cheeked Parrot, White-chinned Swift, White-tipped Swift, Black-eared Fairy, Cliff Flycatcher, Orange-bellied Manakin, and possibly Roraiman Antbird.

In the afternoon we will reboard our aircraft and return to Georgetown. We will gather this evening for a field checklist session and dinner.

**NIGHT:** Grand Coastal Hotel, Georgetown

## October 15, Day 2: Departure for home

A group transfer to the airport will be provided in time for the 7:20 a.m. departure of American Airlines Flight 1512 which is scheduled to arrive into Miami at 12:00 p.m., enabling homeward connections (subject to change). Separate airport transfers can be arranged for participants leaving on later flights.

## Essential Tour Information

**TOUR SIZE:** The main tour and pre-trip will each be limited to 10 participants.

**TOUR LEADER(s):** This tour is led by **David Ascanio** and **Leon Moore**.



**David Ascanio**, a Venezuelan birder and naturalist, has spent over 39 years guiding birding tours throughout his native country, Colombia, Brazil, Peru, Costa Rica, the Orinoco and Amazon River basins, Trinidad & Tobago, Suriname, the Guianas, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, the Lesser Antilles, Cuba, Chile, and Panama. He is especially interested in bird vocalizations and has a private library containing voices of more than 70% of all the birds of Venezuela. David combines superb birding

skills with an astonishing command of bird vocalizations. He has published a book for children about bird songs and coauthored the descriptions of two new species, the Rio Orinoco Spinetail and the Delta Amacuro Softtail. David has also published numerous papers about the birds of the *llanos* (plains), Orinoco River Island species, and the pan-tepui endemic species on which he has become an authority. He is the senior author of the *Field Guide to the Birds of Venezuela* (2017). David is an excellent communicator, has a great sense of humor, and is tireless in helping others find birds and wildlife. These traits have made him one of the most popular naturalists/guides in the Neotropics.

**Leon Moore** is one of Guyana's most accomplished bird guides and conservation advocates. A graduate of Linden Foundation Secondary School and a former military soldier, Leon transitioned his discipline and field skills into a distinguished career in wildlife conservation, birding, and ecotourism. Leon is an expert birder and naturalist guide and is widely recognized as Guyana's top eBirder, serving as a regional reviewer for eBird Guyana. With observations of over **700 bird species**, he currently holds the **highest eBird ranking in the country**, making him a trusted authority in Guyana's birding community.

In recognition of his outstanding contributions to tourism and conservation, Leon received the Tour Guide of the Year award from the Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA) in 2013, followed by a second Tour Guide of the Year honor from the Tourism and Hospitality Association of Guyana (THAG) in 2024. Widely respected for his deep local knowledge and exceptional skill in identifying birds by both

vocalizations and field marks, Leon is held in high regard by birders, researchers, and tour operators alike.

Committed to advancing birding and conservation in Guyana, Leon volunteers as a regional reviewer for eBird Guyana, actively promoting the development and use of accurate bird checklists. He strongly advocates for strengthening local guide training and encourages tourism partners to incorporate these resources into their planning and marketing to elevate visitor experiences. This passion for education led Leon to serve as an Assistant Instructor for bird and tour guide training at the Iwokrama International Centre for Rainforest Conservation and Development, where he helps build the next generation of professional guides.

Today, Leon operates Leon Moore Nature Experience, a tour company specializing in birding, wildlife, and photography tours across Guyana, Suriname, and soon French Guiana. He also leads tours for international operators such as Birding the Islands (UK). Beyond guiding, Leon conducts biodiversity surveys, environmental impact assessments, and wildlife monitoring for organizations including Guyana Goldfields, U.S. Shorebird Services, BirdLife International, and Environmental Resource Management (ERM).

### **TOUR COSTS & PAYMENT INFORMATION**

**TOUR FEE:** The fee for the main tour is **\$9,250** per person based on double occupancy. This includes all meals from breakfast on Day 2 through dinner on Day 10, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, all ground transportation during the tour, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does **not** include airfare to nor from the starting/ending city; however, flights within the tour (if any) are included. The fee also excludes laundry, personal expenses, alcoholic beverages, and other items of a personal nature. For information about gratuities, please see the “TIPPING” sub-section below. If the minimum group size is not met, each participant will be charged a small-group supplement—shared equally and communicated in advance—to allow the tour to proceed.

The fee for the extension is **\$1,290** per person based on double occupancy. This includes all meals from breakfast on Day 2 through dinner on Day 2, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, all ground transportation during the tour, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does **not** include airfare to nor from the starting/ending city; however, flights within the tour (if any) are included. The fee also excludes laundry, personal expenses, alcoholic beverages, and

other items of a personal nature. For information about gratuities, please see the “TIPPING” subsection below. If the minimum group size is not met, each participant will be charged a small-group supplement—shared equally and communicated in advance—to allow the tour to proceed.

**SINGLE SUPPLEMENT:** If you request single accommodations for the main tour, a single supplement of **\$450** will be added to your tour fee. If you request single accommodations for the extension, a single supplement of **\$150** will be added to your tour fee.

**REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT:** You may register for these tours through the VENT [website](#) or by calling our office (512-328-5221). The deposit for the main tour is **\$1,000** per person. The deposit for the extension is a separate **\$1,000**. A second deposit of **30% of the remaining tour fee** is due 180 days prior to departure (April 7, 2026 for main tour, April 17, 2026 for extension tour). We accept MasterCard and Visa for both deposits.

**PAYMENTS:** All tour payments may be made by credit card (MasterCard or Visa), check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). These include initial deposits, second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc. Full payment of the main tour fee is due 120 days (June 6, 2026) prior to the tour departure date. Full payment of the extension tour fee is due 120 days (June 16, 2026) prior to the tour departure date.

**EXTRA ARRANGEMENTS:** Should you wish to make arrangements to arrive early or extend your stay, please contact the VENT office at least two months prior to your departure date. We can very easily make hotel arrangements and often at our group rate, if we receive your request with enough advance time.

**EXCHANGE RATE SURCHARGES:** Tour prices are based on the rate of exchange at the time of itinerary publication. If rates change drastically, it may be necessary to impose a surcharge. If a surcharge is necessary, every effort will be made to minimize the amount. In many cases, these additional foreign exchange rate surcharges have been passed on to VENT by its vendors and suppliers.

**FUEL SURCHARGES:** Our prices are based on fuel prices at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

**TIPPING:** An important part of the value of a VENT tour is knowing that tips for local service providers at our destinations—restaurant staff, hotel staff, drivers, local guides, and various other support staff—are included in your tour fee. If you would like to offer any of your local guides an additional tip, \$5 to \$10 a day is a common amount.

Tips for your VENT tour leader(s) are **not** included, but it is customary to tip one or both if you feel that you have received exceptional service. To assist in your planning, we recommend tipping your VENT tour leader(s) \$15 to \$20 per day, or the equivalent of approximately 2–4% of the tour fee.

If you plan to give tips by cash, they should be given directly to your tour leader at the end of the tour and **not** sent to the VENT office. Some of our tour leaders use mobile payment applications such as Venmo, PayPal, and Wise. If you would like to use this method, please ask your tour leaders directly whether they can accept tips through such an application.

We emphasize that tipping is optional and that these amounts are only recommendations. The amount you decide to tip is based entirely on your experience and at your discretion.

## **CANCELLATION & REFUNDS**

### **CANCELLATION BY PARTICIPANT:**

- **More than 120 days prior to the tour start date:** A refund of all monies paid will be issued, less 50% of the deposit (including initial and second deposit)
- **120 days or fewer prior to the tour start date:** No refund will be provided.
- **Optional add-ons:** Some tours offer optional add-ons that are designated as non-refundable. Any such add-ons are clearly identified as non-refundable at the time of booking. By selecting and purchasing an optional add-on, the participant acknowledges and accepts its non-refundable status. Fees paid for non-refundable add-ons are not refundable under any circumstances, regardless of when the tour is cancelled.

This cancellation policy applies to all participants and all tours (Pre-Tours and Extensions are considered self-contained tours separate from the main tour). Because unexpected events can occur, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance.

### **CANCELLATION BY VENT:**

If VENT cancels a tour prior to departure without cause or good reason, VENT will provide the participant a full refund, which will constitute full settlement to the participant.

If VENT cancels or delays a tour or any portion of a tour as a result of any Force Majeure event, VENT will use its reasonable best efforts to refund any payments on the balance of the tour fee to participant; provided that, VENT will have no obligation to provide a participant with a refund and will not be liable or responsible to a participant, nor be deemed to have defaulted under or breached any applicable agreement, for any failure or delay in fulfilling or performing any term of such agreement. A ***“Force Majeure”*** event means any act beyond VENT’s control, including, without limitation, the following: (a) acts of God; (b) flood, fire, earthquake, hurricane, epidemic, pandemic or explosion; (c) war, invasion, hostilities (whether war is declared or not), terrorist threats or acts, riot or other civil unrest; (d) government order, law or actions; (e) embargoes or blockades; (f) national or regional emergency; (g) strikes, labor stoppages, labor slowdowns or other industrial disturbances; (h) shortage of adequate power or transportation facilities; and (i) any other similar events or circumstances beyond the control of VENT.

This VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy does not apply to air tickets purchased through VENT or to any special arrangements, such as additional hotel nights, that fall outside of the services described in the tour itinerary.

**Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of \$50,000. CST #2014998-50.**

### **TRAVEL INSURANCE**

**MEDICAL EVACUATION INSURANCE/PROTECTION REQUIREMENT:** This tour visits remote locations where immediate access to primary medical care may not be available. **For this reason, travel insurance/travel protection which covers you for emergency evacuation is required for**

**participation on this tour.** This coverage is included in the **Ripcord Rescue Travel Insurance™** program. Alternatively, comparable service can be obtained through **Medjet** and its **MedjetAssist** plan. If you choose not to purchase insurance/travel protection through Ripcord or Medjet, you are required to obtain it through another provider. Please refer to the TRAVEL INSURANCE/TRAVEL PROTECTION section for additional information.

**SUGGESTED OPTIONS:** To safeguard against losses due to illness, accident, or other unforeseen circumstances, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance as soon as possible after making a deposit. VENT has partnered with **Redpoint Travel Protection** as our preferred travel insurance provider. Through Redpoint, we recommend its comprehensive **Ripcord** plan, which includes a medical evacuation benefit. With this in mind, it is important to note that medical evacuation is not offered by Redpoint as a stand-alone policy or benefit. For travelers not interested in comprehensive travel insurance, VENT recommends **Medjet** and its **MedjetAssist®** plan. Medjet is not an insurance company, and Medjet Assist is not an insurance product; rather, Medjet is a membership-based air-medical transport company specializing in moving hospitalized travelers from an admitting hospital to a medical facility of choice. Medjet does not provide medical evacuation service from the point of injury or illness; yet the MedjetAssist plan offers robust enough travel protection to satisfy the medical evacuation insurance requirement in place for many VENT tours.

### **About Redpoint Travel's Ripcord Plan**

Ripcord is a completely integrated travel insurance program with single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims. Critical benefits include comprehensive travel insurance for trip cancellation/interruption, medical evacuation from your point of injury or illness to your hospital of choice; medical expense coverage, death of pet, and much more. Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as evacuation coverage in case of a natural disaster or political or security reasons, waiver for pre-existing medical conditions exclusion, and a "Cancel for Any Reason" benefit. Ripcord is available to U.S. and non-U.S. residents.\*

For a price quote or to purchase travel insurance, please visit: [Ripcord Travel Insurance](#); or click the **Ripcord** logo on our website (click Help > Preparation and Insurance > Trip Insurance); or call +1-415-481-0600. Pricing is based on age, trip cost, trip length, and level of coverage.

\*To be eligible for the pre-existing medical condition exclusion waiver and the optional Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR) upgrade, you must purchase your policy within 15 days of making your first trip payment. The CFAR benefit provides reimbursement for 75% of covered costs, and increases the policy premium by approximately 50%. Policies may be purchased either for the full value of the tour fee at the time of deposit or in segments as individual tour payments are made (deposit, second deposit, final balance, additional arrangements, etc.). The “pay as you go” approach reduces up-front expense and ensures that the amount paid toward your full policy premium is in proportion to the amount paid toward the full tour fee. If you choose to “pay as you go,” you must cover each deposit or payment within 15 days, and insure all non-refundable trip costs in order to maintain the CFAR benefit. Please refer to the policy for a full description of coverage.

Redpoint considers COVID-19 illness as any other seasonal respiratory illness. Providing only a positive Covid-19 test result will likely not be considered a covered event per the terms and conditions of the company's policy. Redpoint maintains a [Coronavirus FAQ page](#) on its website that addresses questions and concerns travelers may have regarding COVID-19 and Redpoint's policy. We strongly recommend that you visit the page for an overview of relevant topics.

### **About Medjet’s MedjetAssist Plan**

MedjetAssist is a membership program that functions like AAA for motorists. The company’s primary service is air medical transport. Critical benefits of MedjetAssist include a staff on call and ready to provide assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; all-expenses-paid air medical transport in the United States and internationally to medical facility of choice, regardless of medical necessity; repatriation of remains; and no exclusions for pre-existing conditions.

For travelers under 75, MedjetAssist may be purchased as Short-Term Memberships of 8, 15, 21, and 30 days, or Regular Annual Memberships from 1 to 5 years. For travelers 75–84, Medjet offers a Diamond Membership that is the same program but with a few additional conditions.

For a price quote or to purchase MedjetAssist, please visit: [Medjet.com/VentBird](https://www.Medjet.com/VentBird) or call 1-800-527-7478. Pricing is based on type and term of membership.

## **GETTING THERE & REQUIRED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS**

**AIR TRAVEL:** Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. Per person fees apply for each set of travel arrangements: \$50 domestic; \$75 international.\* Many of our travelers choose to make their own air travel arrangements, but we emphasize the benefits to using our services. If you book your air arrangements yourself, Victor Emanuel Travel is unable to provide support in managing any flight delays and/or cancellations that could occur before and during a tour. When you purchase air tickets through Victor Emanuel Travel, our staff has ready access to your air ticket record and can provide assistance as problems arise. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements. **Please be sure to check with the VENT office prior to purchasing your air ticket to confirm that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. VENT cannot be held responsible for any air ticket penalties.**

\*An air ticket will be purchased by Victor Emanuel Travel on behalf of the traveler with the traveler's consent. A purchase is considered final upon receipt of payment. If a ticket is subsequently reissued at the behest of the traveler (i.e. voluntary change of plans), the same fee rates apply for the reissue process, in addition to any fees that may be charged by the airline.

**BAGGAGE:** Please limit baggage to one piece of luggage and one carry-on. The airlines now strictly enforce baggage regulations. Excess baggage charges, which can be substantial, are the personal responsibility of each participant. Please consult your pre-departure materials and/or airline to find out specific weight restrictions.

As a precaution against lost luggage, we suggest that you pack a change of clothes, toiletries, medications, important travel documents, optics, and any other essential items in your carry-on bag. Due to ever-changing circumstances in the government's attempts to improve airport security, we recommend that you check the website of [the Transportation Security Administration \(TSA\)](https://www.tsa.gov) for information pertaining to permissible carry-on items.

**Travel note:** The main tour includes a commercial round-trip domestic flight. The extension includes a charter round-trip flight.

## **TRAVEL DOCUMENTS:**

**PASSPORTS:** A passport valid for at least six months beyond your planned departure from Guyana is required. You must also have at least two blank pages in your passport for stamps. Please check the expiration date on your passport.

If you need a passport, you should get it well in advance of your trip departure date. For additional fees, a passport can be issued on an expedited basis. In the United States this can be done at the nearest passport office, most post offices, or the county clerk's office. You may also visit [www.state.gov/travel/](http://www.state.gov/travel/) for information on how to get or renew a passport.

As a safety measure, photocopy the first two pages of your passport. Keep the photocopies in a safe place, so if your passport is lost you will have proof of identification. Your passport should be signed and easily available at all times. You will need it for check-in at the airport on your first day of departure, so **do not pack it in your checked luggage.**

**VISAs:** Tourist visas are not required for U.S. citizens traveling to this destination. If you hold a passport from another country, please check with your consulate or embassy for the most accurate guidance.

**IMPORTANT:** The visa details above are current for U.S. citizens as of January 16, 2026. Because entry requirements can change without notice, we kindly remind all participants to double-check the latest information before traveling. Travelers using non-U.S. passports are responsible for confirming any entry requirements that apply to their home country.

## **WHAT TO BRING**

**CLOTHING:** October falls in the dry season in Guyana, but rain, usually in the form of showers, is always possible. This trip operates mostly in the lowlands where we'll expect high heat and humidity, although it should be considerably drier in the south. Daytime temperatures will be quite warm, but nights are comfortably mild. Lightweight clothing is the rule. Clothing that you can self-wash and that dries quickly is preferred.

- **Field Clothing:** Outdoor stores such as Cabela's and REI carry field clothing that many birders find appealing. Pants and shirts made of lightweight yet durable, quick-drying materials, such as nylon and polyester, with multiple pockets and ventilated seams are popular and more reasonably priced than in the past. Such clothing offers protection from the sun and biting insects and is easy to launder (including by hand).
- **Pants and shirts:** We recommend wearing long pants throughout the trip. Please bring two or three pairs of pants made of nylon, polyester, or other lightweight, quick-drying material. Pants with zip- off lower legs provide an option to convert to shorts at appropriate times. You should also consider two or three long-sleeved and short-sleeved shirts in addition to other comfortable styles suitable for warm weather.
- **Raingear:** A poncho or light waterproof jacket is recommended. We do not anticipate a lot of rain on this trip, but due to the nature of being in the tropics, the possibility cannot be ruled out. On the extension, the area around Kaieteur Falls will be the coolest and most humid area that we'll visit, and here, an umbrella and/or rain jacket is recommended. Rain pants are optional but probably not needed.
- **Hat:** A hat for protection from the sun is essential. We recommend a flat-brimmed hat for the best protection, but you should at the least bring a baseball-style cap.
- **Socks:** Some people prefer thick socks for absorbing perspiration and cushioning one's feet, especially when walking constantly on a hard surface. Others prefer thin socks made from a moisture wicking fabric to help cool the feet.
- **Swimsuit:** You might want to pack a swimsuit if you like to swim, as a couple of the hotels and lodges we use have a swimming pool.

**FOOTWEAR:** We suggest bringing sturdy hiking boots. Gore-Tex boots are fine, although not essential because we should rarely if ever be wading in water. A pair of lighter weight athletic shoes will be useful when not in the field, and, optionally, a pair of shower thongs for showers. Rubber boots are not necessary unless you wish to use them for chigger protection or to feel secure walking inside the forest. Please refer to the HEALTH section below regarding chigger protection.

**EQUIPMENT:** One of the most important aspects of having an enjoyable travel experience is being prepared with proper equipment. The following items will come in handy during your trip:

- **Daypack:** Essential for carrying extra clothing, optical equipment, field guides, supplies, toiletries, “between-meal” snacks, and water during excursions
- **Notebooks and pens**
- **Travel alarm clock:** In addition to, or in lieu of the alarm on your mobile phone
- **Polarized sunglasses with good UV protection**
- **Sunscreen, lip balm, skin lotions:** Essential for sun protection
- **Personal toiletries:** Including medications, spare glasses and contact lenses, etc.
- **Cameras, lenses, memory cards, and extra batteries:** With added emphasis on memory cards. You will likely take many photographs and will need all the memory you can get.
- **Regular batteries:** Regular batteries are preferred over rechargeable, as opportunities to recharge may be limited at remote lodges.
- **Plastic bags:** A supply of strong plastic bags is very useful to protect equipment from rain, humidity, and dust.
- **Collapsible walking stick:** A highly recommended item for those who have trouble walking
- **Tissue packs and handywipes:** Especially useful
- **Insect repellent:** Sticks and lotions are preferred; please try to avoid sprays.
- **Water bottle:** We recommend a one-quart bottle with a tight-fitting lid.
- **Flashlight or headlamp:** Essential for being out after dark and useful for evening checklist sessions. Please bring spare batteries. Please see notes on batteries above.
- **Umbrella:** The small, collapsible type is easy to carry and useful against rain and sun.
- **Earplugs:** For those who have trouble sleeping

**Binoculars:** We strongly recommend you bring a pair of good binoculars of 8x32, 8x42, or 10x42 magnification. Please do not bring mini-binoculars of any kind. Some people like them because they are small and lightweight; but they have an extremely small field of view and very poor light gathering power. You will find that 8x32 binoculars are compact and light enough.

**Spotting Scopes:** Your tour leaders will have scopes available for group use throughout the trip, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so.

## **DESTINATION INFORMATION & LOCAL CONDITIONS**

**CLIMATE & WEATHER:** Guyana has an equatorial climate, with temperature on the coastland ranging from 68–93° F with a mean temperature of 81°. In the interior, temperatures run between 64–103° with a mean temperature of 83°. The coastal heat is alleviated by northeast trade winds. Still air makes the forest sultry in the daytime but moderates at night. The equatorial sun makes savannas quite warm in the heat of the day, but there is usually a breeze, which picks up toward sunset, making the nights comfortable. Day length varies relatively little near the equator, and dawn and dusk come on quickly. The seasonal appearance of rain leads to four seasons in the Guianas: two dry seasons, which occur between February/April and July/November, and two rainy seasons, which occur between May/June and December/January. The average annual rainfall is about 90 inches. We expect a dry trip, generally, but by virtue of being in the tropics, rain is always a possibility.

**CONDITIONS:** This is a tour to a real wilderness area in South America. Guyana's infrastructure is still quite basic, and many people in the interior lead simple lives under primitive conditions. But life in the tropics doesn't need to be complicated! Don't expect luxury, but be ready for charming people and a great wildlife experience. On the other hand, most of the lodges where we'll stay have many modern conveniences, including internet, cell phone service, and extensive solar powered systems, in some cases. Guyana's most important achievement in conservation is the commitment of the villages to protect the birds and their habitats. On the extension, our flight to Kaieteur Falls could be noisy and a bit cramped. Some airstrips are unpaved. No flights will take more than about an hour. We expect to make lengthy drives in 4-wheel drive vehicles. Some roads are nothing more than dirt tracks over open savanna. Rain can make them difficult or impassable, which may necessitate detours over higher ground. All of our drivers are very experienced with local conditions, being native to the area. Also, the distances between available accommodations and some key habitats will make for some early mornings (for example, 3:00-4:00 a.m. wake-up) and long days of birding. Hiking and walking conditions may be over uneven, though generally level ground of distances up to a mile or more. Midday temperatures can be uncomfortably warm,

especially in the sunny savanna. Accommodations are not luxurious, but simple and clean. Note that single rooms cannot be guaranteed at Wichabai Ranch and Guest Houses (Days 7–8). This has been taken into account for the single supplement. Culinary fare is also simple, generally nutritious and tasty, and somewhat dependent on availability of ingredients, many of which are grown locally. All of these issues are part of daily life in southern Guyana, and part of the adventure of experiencing unspoiled nature firsthand.

**CURRENCY & SPENDING:** Your trip to Guyana includes all necessary expenses. You will want to bring enough cash to cover personal expenses not included in the tour fees, such as taxi rides, gifts, laundry, gratuities, meals on your own, and personal items. It is best to carry small denominations of cash as many places we visit may be unable to provide change for large bills. While U.S. dollars may be accepted in more populous areas, it is always convenient to have a supply of local currency for such items. It is best to acquire local currency before leaving home or at the airport.

Should you extend your vacation beyond what is offered in the program, you'll want to obtain local currency. Please check with your bank and credit card issuer for more information regarding banking and the use of ATM and credit cards overseas.

The official currency of Guyana is the Guyanese Dollar (GYD). You can check the latest currency conversion rate by visiting “XE-The World’s Favorite Currency Site” at: <http://www.xe.com/>.

**ELECTRICITY:** Electricity in Guyana is generally supplied at 110 volts. Wall outlets accommodate plug types A, G, and D, with type A outlets being the most common. The type A plug, or “American” plug, is characterized by two flat blades and no grounding pin. Most modern electronic appliances will not have a problem working with electrical outlets in Guyana. Because outlets in some places are of the G and D type, and run higher voltage, we recommend bringing a plug adapter kit as well as an electrical converter if you have any doubt about your appliances being properly protected. All our lodges are equipped with solar power, with the standard USA outlets; however, when not using, please switch off your lights or unplug your equipment from the electrical outlet to save the batteries.

**INTERNET ACCESS:** All the lodges where we'll stay (except at Wichabai Ranch and Guest Houses) have internet service, either unlimited or on a voucher system for \$5 US per hour. However,

because they are in remote and thinly populated areas, equipment failure can and does occur. Such events are unpredictable, and repairs can take time.

**LANGUAGE:** The official language of Guyana is English.

**TIME:** Guyana operates on Guyana Time (GYT) and is on the same time zone as Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) and one hour ahead of Eastern Standard Time (EST).

**LAUNDRY SERVICE:** Laundry service will most likely not be available in the hotels and lodges where we'll stay. The lightweight field clothing recommended above will typically dry overnight after handwashing.

## **HEALTH & SAFETY**

**HEALTH:** VENT follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for standard travel precautions, which includes vaccination against a variety of preventable diseases. Among these so-called Routine Vaccinations are measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine (boosters for adult travelers), and Varicella (Chickenpox). You should also be up-to-date with Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccinations.

If you are taking personal medication, prescription or over-the-counter, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

**COVID-19:** We continually emphasize that our number one priority is the health and safety of our customers and employees. Although VENT no longer maintains any of its COVID-era prevention protocols, we strongly recommend best practices for protecting yourself and your fellow travelers against COVID-19 illness. These measures include receiving the primary series vaccinations for those eligible, staying "Up to Date" with COVID-19 booster shots, wearing high filtration N-95 or KN-95 masks when in airports and on airplanes, and avoiding risky social settings in the lead-up to your tour. These recommendations are firmly rooted in CDC guidance for avoiding COVID-19.

**BITING INSECTS:** Mosquitos may be encountered anywhere in our travels in Guyana but are not an anticipated problem. An array of tropical diseases associated with mosquitos are endemic to Guyana, but the risk of contraction is extremely low, especially when proper prevention protocols are followed. Chiggers can be a problem in some areas, and we recommend you come prepared with a good repellent. Long pants and long-sleeve shirts offer good protection.

**YELLOW FEVER** is a viral disease transmitted by a mosquito. It is a very rare cause of illness in travelers, in part because of the precautions taken by affected countries. In Guyana it is recommended for all travelers over the age of nine months. It is required for anyone entering Guyana who has been in a country in the last year where yellow fever is known to occur. The yellow fever vaccine is a live virus vaccine which has been in use for many decades. A single dose confers long-lasting immunity. If it has been more than ten years since vaccination, please consult with your health care provider about a booster. Adults and children over nine months can take this vaccine. Those over 60 should consult with their health care provider.

**MALARIA** is a protozoan transmitted by a mosquito. Malaria is widespread in Guyana including the chloroquine-resistant strain in rural areas. Travelers to most places in Guyana lying below 3,600 feet, including all locations on this tour, are advised to take anti-malarial medication. To reduce the risk of contracting this disease, travelers are strongly urged to take one of the following antimalarial drugs (brand names in parentheses): mefloquine (Lariam), doxycycline, or atovaquone/proguanil (Malarone). Some travelers may experience serious side effects from antimalarial drugs; consult with your physician to determine the best preventative medication. These medications are available by prescription only. Please consult your physician or local travel clinic for recommendations.

**TYPHOID** VENT recommends vaccination against Typhoid, a bacterial disease endemic to Guyana. Typhoid, or Typhoid Fever, is caused by *Salmonella Typhi*. It is transmitted through consumption of contaminated food and water, typically when someone who is infected uses the bathroom and does not wash their hands. Symptoms may include high fever, weakness, stomach pain, headache, diarrhea or constipation, cough, and loss of appetite.

**INSECT REPELLENTS:** We strongly recommend bringing insect repellent. Please try not to bring a spray form of repellent but rather stick or liquid forms. There are insect repellents for the skin and an insect repellent used to treat clothing that should not be applied to the skin.

Insect repellents for the skin are commonly available in three forms:

- **DEET:** (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide): A chemical compound that is marketed under various brand names (OFF!®, Cutter™, Ultrathon™, etc.) and offered in a variety of formulations including sprays, lotions, time-release preparations, and disposable wipes. The formulations will state a percentage of the active ingredient DEET on the packaging. DEET may be applied to exposed skin directly and/or sprayed on clothing. Please be careful when applying DEET as it can damage plastics and lens coatings.
- **Picaridin:** A synthetic formulation that is derived from piperine, a substance found in plants that produce black pepper.
- **Herbal insect repellents:** Various mixtures of organic ingredients such as oils from eucalyptus, citronella, cedar, and other herbs. The herbal repellents are more difficult to categorize because of the difference in ingredients from one brand to another. There is considerable variation in their effectiveness.

Insect repellent for clothing is marketed in one approved formulation:

**Permanone® (Permethrin):** is an odorless spray-on repellent that may be used for pre-treatment of clothing, gear, and tents. It should not be used directly on the skin or sprayed on clothing while it is being worn. The pre-treatment process requires a number of hours to complete and must be done outdoors, so it is best completed in advance of travel. Do-it-yourself pre-treatment must be repeated more often than commercial treatment using Insect Shield® technology. It is available at various outdoor stores and can easily be found online.

**Insect Shield® apparel:** Clothing pre-treated with Permanone is made by a variety of manufacturers. It is available for purchase from some sporting goods suppliers. The clothing is advertised as retaining its repellency for up to 70 washings.

The US EPA offers a search tool to help choose a repellent that is best for a particular situation. For example, some repellents work for mosquitoes, but not for ticks.

<https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/which-insect-repellent-right-you>

**A Note About Chiggers:** This tour visits areas where chiggers are known to occur. Chiggers are tiny parasitic mites found in most warm weather areas of the southern United States and the world's

tropics. They are especially numerous in grassy areas, where, in the immature stage, they attach themselves to other animals or humans who make contact with the grass as they pass by. Chiggers do not suck blood and the majority of species do not carry disease. They do feed on bodily fluids through a process in which a digestive enzyme is produced by the chigger which essentially liquefies the skin around the area where the chigger is attached. The chigger is not usually attached to the skin for more than a few hours before it either falls off or is knocked off. Our bodies respond by producing a hardened area as a defense against the chigger's digestive enzyme. Though the chigger may be long gone, it is the presence of the hardened area, and the body's natural process of reabsorbing it that typically causes intense itching, often lasting for a week or more. Chiggers like to attach themselves to areas of thin skin, like around the ankles, beltline, undergarment lines, knees, and elbows.

Chiggers can be avoided by following these procedures:

- Avoid walking or standing in areas dominated by grass. These areas are where one is most likely to encounter chiggers.
- Tuck your pants into your socks to avoid direct skin-to-grass contact. Chiggers can find their way through clothing, but this is a standard and effective prevention technique.
- Apply insect repellent to your skin and clothing. Please refer to the Insect Repellent section that follows for important information about selecting and applying repellent.
- Powdered sulfur applied to waist, bottoms of pants, sock and boots is also effective at repelling chiggers. However, be warned that clothes will retain the sulfur odor for several washings. If using sulfur, never touch your eyes, nose, or mouth before washing your hands first.
- Shower at the end of each day in the field. Use a washcloth to vigorously rub your legs, feet, and ankles.

By following these methods, you should be able to avoid all chigger bites, as well as tick bites. If, however, you are bitten by chiggers anyway, you can reduce or eliminate the symptoms by applying benzocaine or hydrocortisone creams, calamine lotion, After Bite, or any number of anti-itch products.

**FOOD, WATER & GENERAL SANITATION:** Although sanitation conditions are generally good at the major hotels in Georgetown and the eco-lodges where we'll stay in the interior, international travelers vary tremendously in their susceptibility to gastrointestinal complaints. To avoid getting sick (traveler's diarrhea, for example) you should avoid drinking untreated water anywhere in Guyana, even in the nicer hotels. All the lodges where we'll stay provide purified water, either in large bottles or locally filtered. To limit plastic waste in the interior, please bring a water bottle or bottles (32 oz total capacity) with you to be refilled at the lodges. Beer, soda, and other bottled drinks are safe. You are advised to carry iodine tablets for personal drinking water purification as an added precaution in case purified water is not available due to unforeseeable circumstances. You are also advised to avoid eating uncooked or partially cooked food or food that has been cooling in the open. Only eat fruit that you have peeled, preferably first washing the outside with clean water. Remember the old adage: "Boil it, peel it, or forget it."

**SUN EXPOSURE:** The sun's ultraviolet rays are dangerous under prolonged exposure (sometimes only a matter of minutes), even in winter and early spring. Anytime you are outdoors you will want to protect your skin, including your lips, eyes, nose, and ears. A severe sunburn is potentially very painful and will affect your level of enjoyment. Always protect yourself when outdoors and be sure to bring an ample supply of high SPF sunscreen and lip balm. We strongly recommend the use of ultra-violet blocking, polarized sunglasses.

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta Georgia. The CDC operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers' Information Line at 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636), or you can check their website at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel). Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new\\_e.html](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new_e.html) (click on travel health).

### **SUGGESTED READING & TRIP PREPARATION**

A number of traditional booksellers and online stores list excellent inventories of field guides and other natural history resources that will help prepare you for this tour. We recommend [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) which has a wide selection; [www.buteobooks.com](http://www.buteobooks.com) and [www.nhbs.com](http://www.nhbs.com) which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com) for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

## **FIELD GUIDES**

### ***BIRDS:***

Ascanio, David; Gustavo Rodriguez & Robin Restall. ***Birds of Venezuela***. Helm Field Guides, 2017. This is the most appropriate book for this trip. It treats and illustrates most of the species you will see. This is probably the best field guide for use in Guyana at this time but unfortunately is out of print, thus can be expensive to get a printed order.

Hilty, Steven L. ***Birds of Venezuela***. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003.

### ***MAMMALS:***

Emmons, Louise H. ***Neotropical Rainforest Mammals: A Field Guide***. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Paperback.

### **BIRDING RESOURCES AND GENERAL NATURE:**

Forsyth, Adrian, & Ken Miyata. ***Tropical Nature***. Life & Death in the Rain Forests of Central and South America. New York: Scribners Sons, 1984. Does not deal much with birds but is a fantastic introduction to all kinds of topics relating to tropical wildlife including bugs, frogs, plant strategies, bot flies, and much more.

Extraordinarily well written, a classic, and a book that ought to be read by anyone contemplating a visit to the American tropics.

Hilty, Steven. ***Birds of Tropical America: A Watcher's Introduction to Behavior, Breeding and Diversity***. University of Texas Press, 2005. Highly recommended for background information on how things work in bird communities in tropical latitudes; topics include diversity of birds, hummingbird communities; mixed species flocks; antbirds and army ants; colorfulness, song structure in relation to environments, and much more.

Kricher, John C. ***The New Neotropical Companion***. Princeton University Press, 2017. An introduction to the animals, plants and ecosystems of the New World Tropics. Recommended as a general, broad-based introduction to plants and animals of Amazonia.

## **HISTORY AND CULTURE:**

Conan Doyle, Arthur. ***The Lost World***. 1912 (several reprints available).

Hudson, William Henry. ***Green Mansions: A Romance of the Tropical Forest***. 1904 (several reprints available).

Ishmael, Odeen. ***The Guyana Story: From Earliest Times to Independence***. XLIBRIS. 2013.

Marvin, Uzo. ***Guyana History, The Early Years: Independence and the Burham Era, Society, Population, Ethnic Groups, Economy, Government and Politics***. CreateSpace, 2016. As of November 2018, it was a free download in Kindle.

Smock, Kirk. ***Guyana Bradt Travel Guide***. Most recent edition.

## **APPS:**

***Merlin Bird ID***. Cornell Lab of Ornithology. The best app to use in the field. Nowadays considered the “future of birding.” Once you download the app, you must download the packs for countries with similar avifauna to that of Guyana. There is a pack for Guyana. Includes bird description, photos and voices. Also, there is a section for Bird Photo ID which can be useful in the field.

### **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.**

**Ebird.** Cornell Lab of Ornithology. This is nowadays your best way to keep your life list, all in a single application. When taxonomic splits are incorporated, your list will be automatically updated. Furthermore, your guide will be able to share the daily list. You can just accept the list, and have it uploaded in your files! **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.**

**Bird Call Xeno.** This app gives you access to one of the largest online bird libraries in the world. Provided that your phone has an active data service, you'll be able to listen to the bird recordings uploaded in the site. **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.**

## **TERMS, CONDITIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc.**, a Texas corporation, and/or its agents (together, "**VENT**") act only as agents for the participant in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the participant or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in airfare or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will be borne by the participant, as tour rates only provide for arrangements for the time stated.

VENT reserves the right (i) to substitute hotels of similar category, or the best reasonable substitution available under the circumstances, for those indicated and (ii) to make any changes in the itinerary that are deemed necessary by VENT or which are caused by third party transportation schedules (i.e. railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, etc.).

VENT reserves the right to substitute leaders or guides on any tour. Where VENT, in its sole discretion, determines such substitution is necessary, it will notify tour participants.

VENT reserves the right to cancel any tour prior to departure with or without cause or good reason. See the VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy set forth above.

Tour prices are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on December 31,2025 and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change thereto.

VENT reserves the right to decline any participant's Registration Form and/or refuse to allow any participant to participate in a tour as VENT deems reasonably necessary, in its sole discretion. VENT also reserves the right to remove any tour participant from any portion of a tour as VENT deems necessary, in its sole discretion, reasons for such removal include but are not limited to, medical needs, injury, illness, inability to meet physical demands of a tour, personality conflict or situations in which such removal is otherwise in the best interest of the tour, the tour group and/or such participant. A participant may also voluntarily depart from a tour. If a participant is removed from a tour or voluntarily departs from a tour, such participant will be responsible for any expenses associated with such removal or departure, including but not limited to, transportation, lodging, airfare and meals, and VENT will have no obligation to refund or reimburse any such removed or departed participant for any tour payments or deposits previously paid by such participant.

Baggage is carried at the participant's risk entirely. No airline company, its employees, agents and/or affiliates (the "**Airline**") is to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time participants are not on board the Airline's aircraft. The participant ticket in use by any Airline, when issued, will constitute the sole contract between the Airline and the purchaser of the tickets and/or the participant. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for VENT tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airlines Reporting Corporation.

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1/20/26-PN/SB