



THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB

P.O. Box 642, Port of Spain, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

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Joycelin Hargreaves
Chief Executive Officer
Chaguaramas Development Authority,
Airway Road,
Chaguaramas.

September 30th 2014

Dear Ms. Hargreaves,

The Trinidad and Tobago Field Naturalists' Club would like to draw your attention to a series of disturbing observations that were made recently at the Gasparee Cave on Gaspar Grande.

One of our members recently participated on one of the CDA's tours to the caves and was shocked to see that visitors were not only being allowed, but actually encouraged by the tour official to climb atop limestone structures to take photographs.

Indeed, the presence of a poster in the lodge showing a model posing atop a limestone formation, no doubt gives the impression that such a potentially destructive action is permissible.

The CDA guide went on to play music by hitting a stalactite, which shows evidence of damage, probably from repeated impacts from this sort of 'entertainment'. On a subsequent visit, a different guide was performing the same routine.

As you are well aware, the fantastic features of the cave which we marvel at today, came about over centuries of limestone erosion and deposition and is still ongoing today. Certainly the CDA would not knowingly permit its tour officials to oversee the cave's destruction.

While the solution may be as simple as proper tour guide training, we urge you to take up the matter and enforce a strict preservation policy at the cave. If needed, the TTFNC would be glad to work with you and help devise an adequate policy if one is required.

Yours Respectfully,

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Kris Sookdeo
President
Trinidad & Tobago Field Naturalists' Club
admin@tfncl.org

cc: *Christiaan Harragin, Manager Health, Safety & Environment, CDA*
David Prescott, Manager Human Resources, CDA
Peter Campbell, Corporate Communications & PR Specialist, CDA