

FEATURES

# Noise pollution and nature

**STOP AND listen. What do you hear? Is it the wind in the trees or a bird singing? Or is it the ear-shattering bass of a passing car or the non-stop music from a bar someone's house? Slowly but surely, the country is being choked by noise pollution.**

We don't often think of noise as a serious threat but it is.

Under Section 70 of the Summary Offences Act, "Any person who causes a nuisance to the public, and any person who at any time takes any part in causing such a nuisance, and any person occupying or having control over any house, yard or premises of whatever nature who permits such nui-

sance in such house, yard or premises, is, without prejudice to anything contained in any other law, liable on summary conviction to a fine of \$1,500 or to imprisonment for six months."

And disturbance from excessive noise is illegal with good reason. Excessive noise doesn't just disturb the elderly and sleeping babies. For whatever reason you might think having blaring speakers in your car is a good idea, keep in mind that prolonged exposure can easily lead to serious long-term damage to the ear (even more so in young children), resulting in permanent loss of hearing. As if harming yourself wasn't



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
**FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB**

bad enough, your noise is also disturbing everyone else and negatively affecting their quality of life.

But what about the effects of noise on the natural environment? Studies have been done but most focus on "background" noises like traffic.

Furthermore, these studies are all based in foreign countries. But some important parallels can be drawn to the local situation.

Indeed, studies in different parts of the world on background noise have shown that excessive noise can affect wildlife. Many animals after all, communicate using sound.

Birds are probably the first animals that come to mind. One study showed that house finches in urban areas in Mexico stopped singing the low frequency portions of their calls because it was being lost in the noise from the city. A study of nightingales in the German city of Berlin found

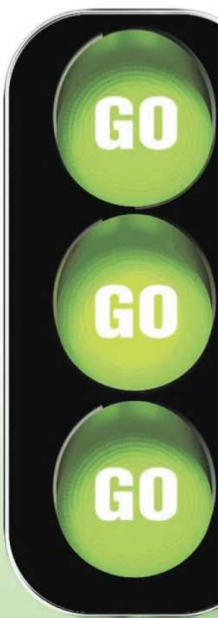
that the birds there sang up to 14 decibels louder in response to noise, and were even capable of crossing 95 decibels for their songs to be heard (prolonged exposure to 80 decibels can cause ear damage).

Not all birds can adapt to noise. Other studies have shown that some birds just move away from noisy environments.

And the negative effects on wildlife are not just limited to birds - many species of insects, amphibians and even small mammals depend on sound for communicating, finding mates, finding prey or avoiding predators.

● NATURE continues on Page 6B

This Carnival **Jamieson** gives you the energy so you can



Distributed by **ULTRA PHARM** MARKETING LIMITED

## INFINITI SECURITY WEAR

**SECURITY CARGO PANTS**  
SIZES FROM 30 TO 50  
FROM **\$135.00\*** VAT **\$20.25**  
Minimum order quantity of 24 pcs required\*  
• 6 colours  
• Available with elastic inserts or full elastic waistband • High quality zippers  
• Extra deep side, cargo & back pockets

**BODYGUARD STYLE SHIRT JAC SUITS**  
FROM **\$260.86\*** VAT **\$39.13**  
Minimum order quantity of 24 pcs required\*  
• 3 colours / Sizes M to XXL  
• 290gsm 2 way stretch 100% ultra polyester  
• Wrinkle free and fade resistant  
• Fast drying and breathable

For wholesale enquiries call:  
662-4810 ext 109  
or call 381-6202 or 393-1333  
E-mail: sales@bistnt.com  
Specific assortments require a surcharge over stated prices.  
Prices subject to change without notice.

For Wholesale Prices & Enquiries visit

**DETOUR**



## NOMINATION NOTICE

Nominations are invited from eligible members of *Cathedral Credit Union* who wish to serve on any ONE of the following Committees:

- BOARD OF DIRECTORS
- CREDIT COMMITTEE
- SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

Nominations must be submitted on the prescribed form along with a passport size photograph and resume to the Credit Union Offices located at 60 Park Street, Port of Spain.

Kindly note that applicants will be required to attend an interview in March 2016. You will be advised of the exact date, time and location.

Fully completed forms must be at the Credit Union Office on or before February 29, 2016.

Errol Carmino  
Secretary,  
Board of Directors

FEATURES

# Noise pollution is a serious threat

●NATURE from Page 4B

Sea turtles coming ashore to lay their eggs, for example, have been known to abandon their nesting attempt if disturbed by excessive noise. Once, on a TT Field Naturalists' Club trip to Chacachacare, we

observed the midday emergence of hawks-bill turtle hatchlings from the sand at La Tinta Bay, soon after the speakers of a nearby beach party were turned on.

Of course, this may have been a coincidence, but it was also quite possible that the vibrations from the

speakers disturbed the hatchlings and forced their premature departure.

Other unexpected impacts include evidence to suggest that noise pollution can indirectly affect plant communities. Researchers in New Mexico have found that western-scrub

ja (a bird) disappeared from noisy areas and, because the birds are important in the dispersal of seeds from pinyon pine trees, their departure is likely to have long-term implications for pine tree distribution there, which would, in turn, impact other species that depend

on these trees.

While the Commissioner of Police recently spoke out on the matter (he indicated that officers who are errant in taking reports of noise pollution could be reported to the Police Complaints Division), what really needs to be done is for

citizens to realise on their own accord that noise pollution is a serious threat, not just an unavoidable part of life in TT. If you are an offender, you need to turn it down. If you are a victim, you need to report it to the police.

It's that simple. If we do, perhaps we can save our country from noise pollution and make it a bit easier for our wildlife and ourselves to live here.

For more info: on our natural environment, you can contact the Trinidad and Tobago Field Naturalists' Club at [admin@ttfnc.org](mailto:admin@ttfnc.org) or visit our website at [www.ttfnc.org](http://www.ttfnc.org) and our Facebook or YouTube pages. The club's next monthly meeting will be held on February 11, at St Mary's College, Port-of-Spain. Lecture: "Human disturbance and tropical freshwater communities" by Amy Deacon.

**FORRES PARK PUNCHEON RUM**  
75% GENUINE STRENGTH  
200ml

**THE TRUTH TRUMPS THEM ALL**

DESIGNATE, DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE.



Former Miss Trinidad and Tobago, Athaliah Samuel, left, poses with a friend at Ladies Night Out held at the Hasely Crawford Stadium last Saturday. PHOTO BY CLEAVORN DIAZ

**FOR SAFETY  
KEEP YOUR  
PHONE  
CHARGED**

blink | umobile