



THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB

Month in Review – April 2014

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The month of April kicked off with a lecture on the invasive lionfish by Jahson Alemu of the Institute of Marine Affairs. This fish represents a significant threat to our marine ecosystems as it consumes large quantities of smaller fishes. It is unlikely that the invasion can be stopped and but proper management can reduce their impact.



The State of the Lionfish invasion. Presented by Jahson Alemu, IMA.

The scheduled birding group trip to Mt. Tamana had to be canceled due to unforeseen circumstances. Instead, the bird group opted to visit the El Naranjo Estate in the Aripo Valley. Now owned by the Asa Wright Nature Centre, the estate was once a thriving ornamental flower farm.

Several interesting forest birds were observed including common black hawks, white hawks and hummingbirds.



A female collared trogon (*Trogon collaris*). Photo by Kamal Mahabir



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Common Black Hawk (*Buteogallus anthracinus*). Photo by Kamal Mahabir

The Club participated in the Toyota's Earth Day celebration on Easter Monday. Our display booth was kept busy as curious members of the public learned a bit about our flora and fauna. A range of printed material, seeds, fruits and mounted butterflies were on display.



Curious members of the public visit the Club's booth at Toyota's Earth Day. Photo by Kris Sookdeo

April's field trip was a visit to Escondida Bay in Point Gourde, Chaguaramas. Navigating the limestone gully that leads to the bay was a bit tricky but the group was rewarded with several interesting observations including some of the biggest carat palms, *Sabal mauritiiformis* any of us had ever seen before.



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Very robust carat palms (*Sabal mauritiiformis*). Photo by Kris Sookdeo

Also of note was the very localized butterfly *Calydna venusta morio*.



A female *Calydna venusta morio*



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Finally, three tufted capuchins, *Cebus apella* were encountered in the dry scrub that fringes Escondida Bay. These monkeys are not native to Trinidad but have successfully adapted to life on the north-west peninsular.



The tufted capuchin (*Cebus apella*). Photo by Kamal Mahabir

Some members opted to end the trip with a swim in Escondida Bay. A good way to end another good month for the Club.