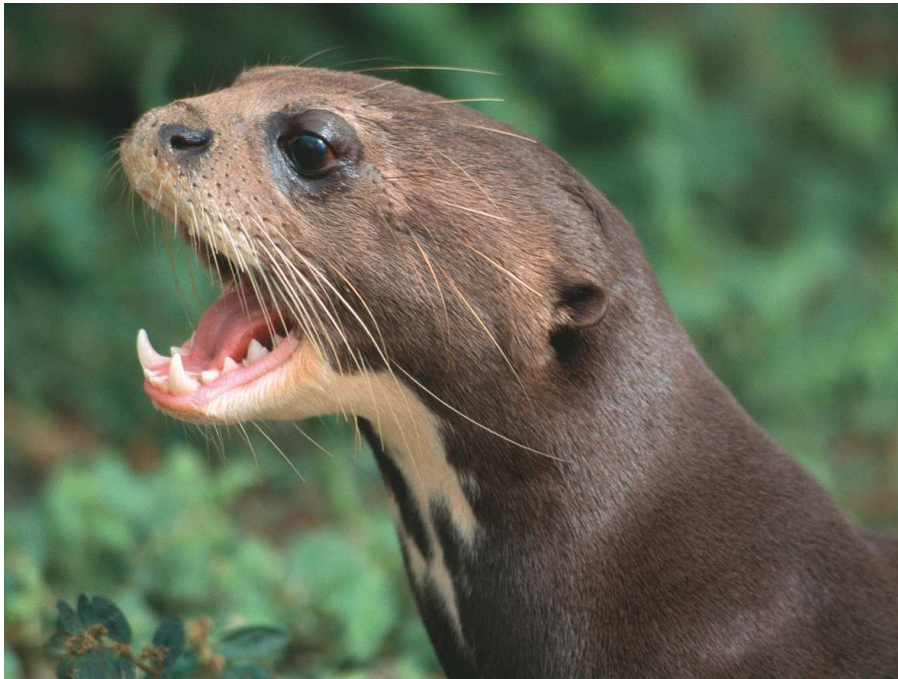


# Reef & Rainforest



## **In Search of the Giants of Guyana Special Christmas Departure**

Escorted Group Tour

Led by Local Naturalist Guides

23 December 2010 – 06 January 2011

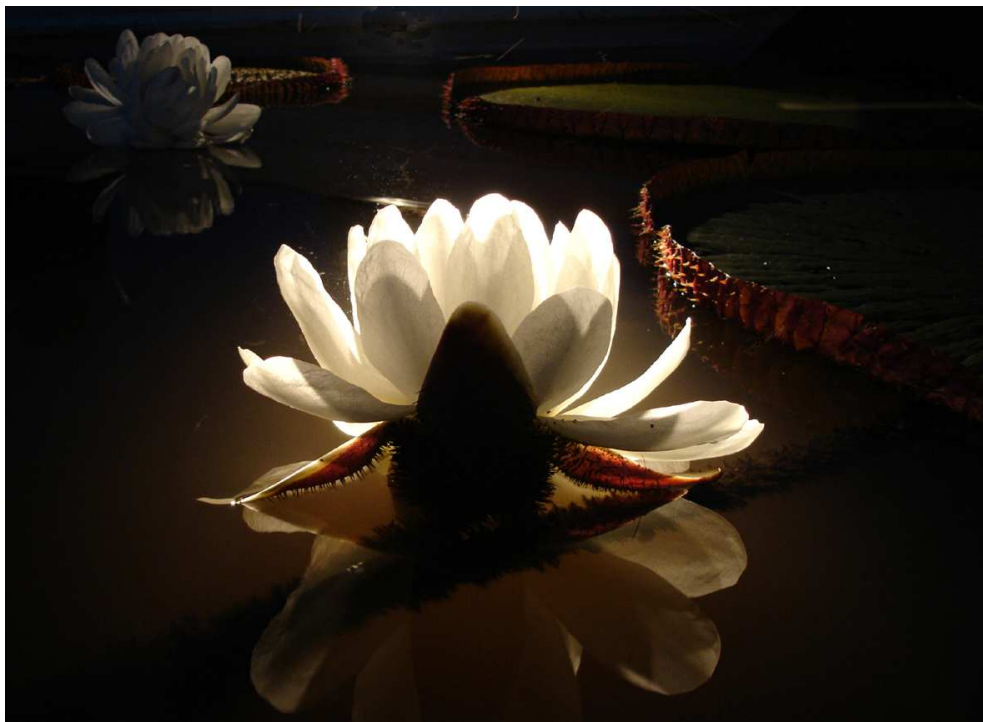


## In Search of the Giants of Guyana Escorted Group Tour

English speaking and little visited, Guyana's diverse landscape of rainforest, savannah and waterfalls is home to a staggering array of the world's wildlife giants. These include the world's largest otter (giant river otter); anteater (giant anteater); rodent (capybara); alligator (black caiman); freshwater fish (arapaima); freshwater turtle (giant river turtle); snake (anaconda) and pit viper (bushmaster), as well as two of South America's fiercest carnivores: the jaguar and harpy eagle.

Botanical giants include *Victoria amazonica* (the world's largest water lily) and tank bromeliad (the world's largest bromeliad). Geological highlights include Kaieteur Falls which is five times the height of Niagara making it the world's highest single-drop waterfall and affording a spectacular natural display as well as creating a unique cloud forest microclimate.

With a number of set departures throughout the year and a minimum group size of two, this tour is perfect for those who are looking for flexibility in their dates of travel combined with the camaraderie and cost savings of travelling in a group led by highly experienced local naturalist guides.



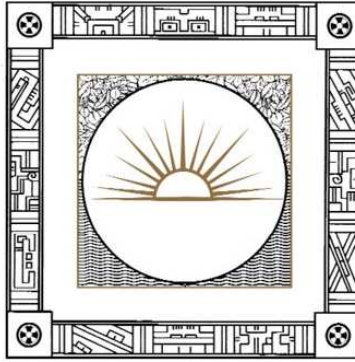


## IN SEARCH OF THE GIANTS OF GUYANA

15 DAYS - LED BY LOCAL NATURALIST GUIDES,  
CHRISTMAS 2010

### ITINERARY IN BRIEF

- 23 Dec (Thu) Depart **LONDON**. Arrive **GEORGETOWN**, GUYANA. Met on arrival and transfer to hotel. O/n CARA LODGE, BB.
- 24 Dec (Fri) Fly to **ROCK VIEW LODGE** working ranch. Traditional cahew nut roasting demonstration. O/n ROCK VIEW LODGE, FB.
- 25 Dec (Sat) Dawn hike in the foothills of the Pakaraima Mountains on the Panorama Trail. OPTIONAL horseback ride with vaqueros. O/n ROCK VIEW LODGE, FB.
- 26 Dec (Sun) Transfer by 4x4 to **IWOKRAMA**. Afternoon exploration of trails with a ranger. Nocturnal river trip. O/n IWOKRAMA FIELD STATION, FB.
- 27 Dec (Sun) Explore **IWOKRAMA** surrounds. Morning boat ride. Walk to Turtle Mountain for stunning rainforest view and wildlife. Visit Kurupukari Falls and Fair View village. O/n IWOKRAMA FIELD STATION, FB.
- 28 Dec (Tue) Early morning wildlife walk. After breakfast, 4x4 transfer to **IWOKRAMA CANOPY PLATFORM** for wildlife watching. O/n ATTA RAINFOREST HAMMOCK CAMP, FB.
- 29 Dec (Wed) Transfer by 4x4 to **SURAMA**. Tour of the village with local guide. Evening guided walk in the forest. O/n SURAMA ECO-LODGE, FB.
- 30 Dec (Thu) Dawn walk across savannah and challenging walk up **SURAMA MOUNTAIN**. Breakfast at look out point. Lunch at the village and canoe ride on the Burro Burro River. O/n SURAMA ECO-LODGE, FB.
- 31 Dec (Fri) Boat trip on the RUPUNUNI RIVER to **KARANAMBU** working ranch. O/n KARANAMBU RANCH, FB.
- 01 Jan (Sat) Morning to explore the Rupununi river with owners and giant river otters at **KARANAMBU**. Boat ride to the Crane Pond for bird watching. Watch lily blooms emerge at dusk. O/n KARANAMBU RANCH, FB.
- 02 Jan (Sun) Morning to explore the Rupununi river. Afternoon transfer to Yupukari Village. Evening boat trip to search for wildlife. O/n CAIMAN HOUSE, FB.
- 03 Jan (Mon) Morning to visit the village or go bird watching in the forest. Afternoon fly back to **GEORGETOWN**. City tour. O/n CARA LODGE, BL.
- 04 Jan (Tue) Fly to **KAIETEUR** and **ORINDUIK FALLS** on a charter flight for full day guided tour. O/n CARA LODGE, BB.
- 05 Jan (Wed) Transfer to **GEORGETOWN AIRPORT**. Depart Guyana.
- 06 Jan (Thu) Arrive **LONDON**.



## **IN SEARCH OF THE GIANTS OF GUYANA GROUP CHRISTMAS 2010**

### **DETAILED ITINERARY**

23 Dec (Thu) Depart LONDON. Arrive GEORGETOWN, GUYANA. Met on arrival and transfer to hotel. O/n CARA LODGE, BB. Built in 1840 this is one of the oldest buildings in Guyana and is steeped in history having hosted many world leaders, royalty and other dignitaries. Built in a plantation style, the lodge has spacious wooden verandas and large bedrooms with private facilities. There is a restaurant serving good food and the service is attentive and friendly.

24 Dec (Fri) Morning pick up from the lodge and transfer to Ogle Airstrip. Catch domestic flight to Rock View Lodge at Annai. Arrive at Rupununi and Annai, its northernmost community. The Rupununi Savannah is to Guyana what the Gran Sabana is to Venezuela, an extensive area of grassland with termite mounds and scattered or riparian woodland. The birdlife here is markedly different from that of the rainforest. Rock View Lodge is located where the savannah meets the forest-covered foothills of the Pakaraima Mountains. With its tropical gardens and flowering trees, the lodge resembles an oasis in the savannah, and attracts many species of birds, particularly nectar feeders and frugivores. Nearby patches of light forest are home to certain ant birds and flycatchers, and of course the grasslands support an avifauna of their own. Enjoy an explanation and demonstration of traditional cashew nut roasting. Overnight at Rock View Lodge, FB. This working ranch offers comfortable accommodation, swimming pool, private animal collection and wildlife-filled gardens.



(2).../ IN SEARCH OF THE GIANTS OF GUYANA GROUP, CHRISTMAS 2010

25 Dec (Sat) At dawn, hike in the forested foothills of the Pakaraima Mountains on the Panorama Trail for some birding. Rest of the day at leisure. OPTIONAL activities include joining the resident vaqueros on horseback as they take cattle out to graze on the savannah, or visiting nearby Amerindian villages. Join the local community in celebrating Christmas. Perhaps choose to join a church service in a nearby village. Finish the day with drinks around the pool. O/n ROCK VIEW LODGE, FB. \*\*\*\*\*MERRY CHRISTMAS\*\*\*\*\*

26 Dec (Sun) Early pick up from hotel and drive by 4x4 on dirt roads through miles of rainforest (stopping to watch wildlife en route) to the ESSEQUIBO RIVER in the wild heart of the country. Boat across the river and arrive at your lodge for lunch. In the afternoon, explore the trails around the station with one of the rangers and, after dinner, enjoy a nocturnal river trip to spot caiman and other nocturnal wildlife.

O/n IWOKRAMA FIELD STATION, FB.

Established to protect and manage a huge (one million acres) rainforest reserve, the station is surrounded by miles of pristine rainforest that is home to a staggering diversity of plants and animals. The area holds world records for the number of bat (90) and fresh water fish (420) species recorded and is home to the Arapaima - the world's largest species of fresh water fish. There have also been over 500 species of birds so far recorded including five species of macaw, 24 species of hummingbirds, and 29 species of raptors (including harpy eagle, crested eagle and osprey). Mammal highlights include eight species of primates (red howler monkeys, spider monkeys, brown capuchins, wedge-capped capuchins, squirrel monkeys, bearded saki, white-faced saki and golden-handed tamarin), two species of sloth, giant anteaters, giant river otters, Brazilian tapir, giant armadillos, deer, peccaries and wild dogs.



Despite this richness the wildlife here tends to be shy and sightings are few. However, the station has good record of big cat sightings, particularly jaguars and ocelots.

Accommodation is in detached, thatched cabins with verandas, hammocks and private facilities (cold water showers). Meals are served in the large central building that offers good wildlife viewing over the surrounding forest.

(3).../ IN SEARCH OF THE GIANTS OF GUYANA GROUP, CHRISTMAS 2010

27 Dec (Mon) Early morning boat ride to spot wildlife on the rainforest-fringed banks of the ESSEQUIBO RIVER. Following breakfast, travel by canoe and then hike the rainforest trails to Turtle Mountain. The walk is quite strenuous, but at a height of 935ft (approx. 360m) the mountain offers a stunning vista over the rainforest canopy and the chance to see wildlife. After a picnic lunch on the mountain we will visit KURUPUKARI FALLS to see the Amerindian petroglyphs (dependent on the water level) then visit the small Amerindian village of Fair View. O/n IWOKRAMA FIELD STATION, FB.

28 Dec (Tue) Early morning wildlife walk close to the station. Return to the lodge for breakfast before departing by 4x4 along a quiet rainforest road to the IWOKRAMA CANOPY PLATFORM. As well as other rainforest wildlife, this journey probably offers our best chance of seeing jaguars which emerge to sun themselves on the wide grassy verges (particularly following rain showers). Spend the afternoon on the 154m long - 35m high Canadian built canopy walkway for a bird's eye view of the forest offering a good platform to search for birds and monkeys. Jaguars have been observed using the trails below by some lucky visitors. Stay until evening to see the darkness settle over the forest. O/n ATTA RAINFOREST HAMMOCK CAMP, FB. Tonight, fall asleep to the sounds of the rainforest at this permanent hammock camp surrounded by tall rainforest, just yards from the canopy walkway allowing you to experience the wildlife from the canopy at early morning and perhaps even at night. The camp consists of hammocks under shelters complete with bar, dining room, showers and flush toilets.

29 Dec (Wed) Experience dawn from the canopy walkway before breakfast. After breakfast explore a forest trail in search of the Guianian Cock-of-the-rock. Continue by 4x4 to the Amerindian village of Surama, set in five square miles of savannah and surrounded by the densely forested PAKARAIMA MOUNTAINS. Surama's inhabitants are mainly from the Macushi tribe and still observe many of the traditional practices of their forebears. On arrival in Surama receive a welcome from a village counsellor and settle into the accommodation. A local guide will escort us for a short walk on trails to observe the forest and bird life. As the afternoon cools our guide will take us



on a tour of the village. Visit the local school, medical centre and church along with some of the village houses. (Contd.../)

(4).../ IN SEARCH OF THE GIANTS OF GUYANA GROUP, CHRISTMAS 2010

Tonight enjoy an educational walk to search for wildlife and experience the mystique of the forest after dark. O/n SURAMA ECO-LODGE, FB. Simple yet comfortable accommodation run by the local community.



30 Dec (Thu) Rise before dawn for a walk across the savannah and then a challenging walk up SURAMA MOUNTAIN. This is the best time to observe bird life along the trail. Breakfast will be served at a lookout point which affords incredible views across the village and savannah to the Pakaraima Mountains. Return to the village for lunch and then take a three-mile walk across the savannah and through the rainforest to the Burro Burro River. Our guides will then paddle us on the river for opportunities to observe wildlife. With luck, possibilities include giant river otter, tapir, tayra, spider monkey and more. Return to the village for sunset. O/n SURAMA ECO-LODGE, FB.

31 Dec (Fri) After breakfast drive by 4x4 to Ginep Landing for a boat trip on the RUPUNUNI RIVER to KARANAMBU RANCH. A leading centre for the recovery and rehabilitation of injured or orphaned giant river otters,



Karanambu has attained worldwide recognition for its conservation work and over the years has been visited by David Attenborough, the late Gerald Durrell (Three Singles to Adventure), the National Geographic and the BBC's Really Wild Show. As well as resident individuals, wild otters are frequently seen here. The rainforested banks of the Rupununi River are also home to large numbers of birds, squirrel monkeys and other forest wildlife. Away from the river can be found vast tracts of savannah which are home to endangered giant anteaters, commonly seen by ranch guests. The centre's founder Diane

McTurk is a fund of local knowledge and history and today's generation, Edward and Melanie McTurk, are extremely knowledgeable naturalists who will act as your hosts, leaving Diane more time to develop the Karanambu Trust, work with her otters and continue her writings. Dinner with Diane, Edward and Melanie will include stories on the history of the family and the Rupununi Savannahs. (Contd.../)

(5).../ IN SEARCH OF THE GIANTS OF GUYANA GROUP, CHRISTMAS 2010

(Contd.../) O/n KARANAMBU RANCH, FB. Diane and her family put the majority of their energy into their conservation efforts and, as such, the accommodation here is quite basic. The cabins are not well screened and can sometimes have as much wildlife inside as out. The staff will give a full rundown of what wildlife to expect in each cabin including the genus, species and pet name of each animal and you will soon find yourself becoming good friends with 'Doris' the spider and 'James' the gecko.

Good quality mosquito nets are provided as well as surprisingly comfortable beds ensuring a good night's sleep and each cabin has private facilities (cold water showers). Wonderful home cooked meals are provided in the main house and you will never be far from an unending supply of complimentary rum punches.

We feel that the quality of the wildlife seen here combined with its conservation pedigree and wonderful family atmosphere more than compensate for the simple accommodation: this is sure to be a highlight of your trip.

01 Jan (Sat) Morning spent with the family and any otters that are being rehabilitated. Perhaps watch the otters learning to fish, or explore the river by boat looking for individuals in the wild. In the afternoon, boat to the Crane Pond for some exceptional bird watching and see the *Victoria amazonica*, the world's largest water lily and Guyana's national flower. Stay until dusk when the incredibly delicate lily blooms emerge, and return to the ranch by starlight. O/n KARANAMBU RANCH, FB. \*\*\*\*HAPPY NEW YEAR!\*\*\*\*\*



02 Jan (Sun) Explore the Rupununi River in search of wild Giant River otters, Black Caiman and Arapaima. After lunch, transfer by boat, bird watching along the way, to the Amerindian village of YUPUKARI and Caiman House. Enjoy an nocturnal excursion on this section of the Rupununi River, where you have the unique opportunity to support and participate in an ongoing study of the black caiman, the largest member of the alligator family and an endangered species. Caiman are captured, weighed, measured, sexed and tagged before being released back into the river (capturing is more difficult during high water periods). Your time on the river may also reveal species such as spectacled caiman, tree boas, iguanas, frogs, fish such as the arrawana and piranha and birds such as nightjars, potoos, boat-billed herons. With luck, possums, tree-dwelling rodents, capybara and sleeping squirrel monkeys may be seen. (Contd.../)

(6).../ IN SEARCH OF THE GIANTS OF GUYANA GROUP, CHRISTMAS 2010

(Contd.../) Caiman House is the hub of several participatory development projects including the introduction of classroom libraries in all three village schools, an internet enabled public library, and a non-profit job creation scheme for the local villages including craft skills and furniture building. O/n CAIMAN HOUSE, FB. Accommodation is in simple but large comfortable rooms with ensuite bathrooms. There is a lovely open sitting room inside and an open deck. All furniture at the lodge is made by local craftspeople. Meals are served in the dining room and food is prepared by ladies from the local village. Caiman house offers a true indigenous village experience. It offers a simple but interesting insight into their lives combined with a fascinating and unusual wildlife experience.



03 Jan (Mon) Morning visit to the village, to learn of the local culture and way of life. Or perhaps enjoy some morning bird watching in the Savannah and gallery forest surrounding the lodge. After an early lunch fly back to GEORGETOWN. Enjoy a brief city tour and transfer to your hotel. O/n CARA LODGE, BL.

04 Jan (Tue) Board charter flight and fly over miles of rainforest and savannah to KAIETEUR and ORINDUIK FALLS for full day guided tour (with lunch). With a single drop of 822 feet, Kaieteur falls are five times the height of Niagara but are only visited by a handful of tourists. Kaieteur is most impressive in the rainy season when billions of gallons of water cascade over the edge creating a breathtaking fusion of noise, spray and colour. [Please note: the Kaieteur trip is subject to minimum numbers and may be scheduled for an alternative day.] The cloud forest created by the unique microclimate of the falls is home to an impressive array of wildlife including tank bromeliads - the world's largest bromeliad and themselves home to a



tiny, endemic golden frog. Kaieteur swifts nest under the fall's immense curtain of water and the brightly coloured males of the rare Guiana cock-of-the-rock display in a number of favoured leks. At the border of Brazil and Guyana, the Ireng River crashes over steps of solid jasper, a semi precious stone, at Orinduik falls. Here you may wish to swim in natural Jacuzzis whilst enjoying a backdrop of the Pakaraima Mountains – surely one of the most stunning locations in Guyana's hinterland. O/n CARA LODGE, BB.



(7).../ IN SEARCH OF THE GIANTS OF GUYANA GROUP, CHRISTMAS 2010

05 Jan (Wed) Transfer to GEORGETOWN AIRPORT. Depart Guyana.

06 Jan (Thu) Arrive LONDON.

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<i>Departure Dates from London</i>	<i>Adult Price</i>	<i>Single Supplement</i>
23 December 2010	£4,018	£341

Minimum group size is 2, plus the tour leader.

Please call 01803 866965 if you have any queries, would like to secure your place on the tour, and/or if you would like to extend the tour to include other locations.





## IMPORTANT NOTES TO ACCOMPANY THE ABOVE ITINERARY

NB: All itineraries are subject to change without notice to take into account possible airline flight schedule changes which can take place before departure date or during the tour, and other operational factors.

NB: The quoted price for the above itinerary is based on current airline fares (both international and domestic), fuel surcharges and flight taxes. These (and other tour costs) may be subject to unanticipated increases beyond our control at short notice, either before or after you have booked the tour, in which case the price would need to be revised accordingly.

NB: This tour involves some travel in remote areas. This adds to the adventure and increases the opportunity to enjoy a true wildlife experience. However, due to terrain, weather, road conditions, and other factors beyond our control, some elements of the tour may have to be altered. Times of some activities may need to be changed or even cancelled due to the conditions. If an activity is cancelled it will usually be replaced with an alternative activity that is more appropriate for the conditions. Advance notice will be given for any changes where possible, although at times changes may need to be made whilst the tour is in progress.

NB: With any trip involving wildlife it is impossible to guarantee a sighting, but each trip is designed around known habitats. Every effort will be made to ensure a sighting, but we cannot be held responsible if no sighting is made due to the wildlife itself, weather, or any other elements beyond our control.

NB: Prices are based on a specific airlines and specific economy seating classes. Flights are booked on an ad hoc basis and so early booking is recommended to take advantage of this fare availability. Please call for information on price variations for using alternative airlines or for seat upgrades.

NB: Adequate insurance cover is mandatory. Please supply us with details of your cover.

NB: All international flights should be re-confirmed at least 72 hours before departure.

NB: All domestic flights should be re-confirmed at least 36 hours before departure. During the main tour, our representatives will provide this service. During extensions you should make the re-confirmations – your hotel should be happy to provide this service if requested.

NB: Visas are easily obtainable on arrival for EU residents. For all other nationalities, please check with the Guyana High Commission in London. Please ensure your passport has six months validity from the date of return.

NB: Your local flights within Guyana are in light aircraft with small luggage holds. You should try to pack your luggage in small soft-sided bags and keep to a luggage restriction of 20lbs (including hand-luggage). You should be able to leave any surplus luggage in Georgetown and collect this before you fly home. Please don't hesitate to call if you have any concerns about this or if you feel that you may have problems conforming to this limit (for example if taking a lot of photographic equipment).

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## Reef and Rainforest Tours Ltd.

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