



August 2015  
Newsletter

# SOUTH RUPUNUNI CONSERVATION SOCIETY

## Field Visit: Saurab Falls Shulinab Village

### SRCS EXEC. TEAM

Nicholas Fredericks, PRESIDENT  
Leroy Ignacio, VICE PRESIDENT  
Kayla de Freitas, TREASURER  
Erin Earl, SECRETARY  
Asaph Wilson, BIRD SPECIALIST  
Chung Liu, PROJECT MANAGER

### SRCS PARTICIPANTS

#### SHULINAB FIELD VISIT

Rgr. Nicholas Cyril, KATOONARIB  
Rgr. Samuel Cyril, KATOONARIB  
Rgr. Angelbert Johnny, SAWARIWAW  
Rgr. Abraham Ignace, SHULINAB  
Rgr. Eion Gray, SHULINAB  
Cdt. Kim Spencer, KATOONARIB  
Cdt. Nathaneel Wilson, KATOONARIB  
Cdt. John Paulin, SAWARIWAW  
Cdt. Terrence Alexander, SHULINAB  
Cdt. Leandrew Fredericks, SHULINAB  
Cdt. Maya de Freitas, RUPUNAU  
Verna Cyril, KATOONARIB  
Joshua Fredericks, SHULINAB

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

The SRCS would like to thank Shulinab Village Council and community for your support in our recent field visit to Saurab Falls, especially for kindly letting us use the village tractor for field visit transportation! We would also like to thank all field visit participants for their hard work on this trip.

We hope that you will enjoy these photos of our latest activities.



Top: (1) The team watching for birds on the hillside beside Saurab Creek. How many Rangers can you spot? Clockwise, from upper left: (2) Rgr. Samuel Cyril walking through the tall grass on the way to the field site. With the rain, the terrain is very different from the last trip to Saurab during dry season. (3) The team pauses at the top of the crest overlooking House Lake to enjoy the view - only Verna is eager to continue on! (4) A male Red Siskin observed perched high above (15m+) in a tree. Red Siskins were observed but none were captured and banded on this trip. (5) Rgr. Angelbert Johnny watching as cadets practice their bird measurements with the calipers. Calipers and rulers are used to measure lengths; spring scales and small digital balances are used to measure bird weight.



## THE RESEARCH PROCESS



*Left column, from top to bottom:* Education is one of the most important foundations for good community conservation practice. (1) Rangers are responsible for training Cadets in a wide range of skills including bird handling and measurement, which is not always easy for Cadets to pick up. (2) Successful cadets are expected to be able to do the entire process without supervision. Here, Nathaniel Wilson is very patiently working on getting the bird out of the net. All of our Cadets have been able to pick up these vital skills within several field visits. (3) Research skills are one component, and then there are many other experiences too, such as crossing over Saurab with equipment without falling and getting wet! *Right column, from top to bottom:* Successful conservation projects rely on strong written, mathematical, and scientific skills. (1) Data collection involves calculations, descriptive writing, and scientific powers of observation - maybe not as exciting as imagined, but definitely no less important.



We also have a very special announcement to make. We would like to announce a very proud farewell to Cadets Leandrew Fredericks (2) and Maya de Freitas (3). Leandrew will be attending Bina Hill to complete his CSECs, and Maya will begin her degree in Environmental Studies at the University of Guyana, Georgetown. Both Leandrew and Maya have been outstanding and spirited cadets and a pleasure to work with - the entire team will miss them. We wish them success in their continued education and bright futures!

## BIRDS OF THE RUPUNUNI

*This section features photos and a short description of bird species found in the Rupununi taken by SRCS members during routine field activities, while guiding for bird-watching expeditions, and all sorts of other opportunities. This Newsletter includes two hummingbirds (Pimudi): the Ruby Topaz, and the Fork-Tailed Woodnymph.*

*From left to right:* (1) The male **Ruby Topaz** has a shining red head, with bright orange and gold feathers from chin to breast, and rusty orange underparts and tail with a black fringe. It feeds on small insects and spiders amongst flowers in the canopy and mid-level foliage, and like many other hummingbirds, their rapid speed and small size make it a difficult bird to view through binoculars properly. (2) Like most hummingbirds, the Ruby Topaz can appear in different colours depending on the direction the light shines upon it. This photo also shows the Ruby Topaz raising its crown feathers and spreading its tail - the male bird is aggressive towards much bigger species that it encounters, even towards raptors and humans! (3) The **Fork-Tailed Woodnymph** is a bold hummingbird as well, and is also aggressive towards intruders in its territory. It is mostly seen alone and feeding on insects, spiders, and other invertebrates at mid- to low-level foliage. While it is not an uncommon bird, it is another difficult hummingbird to spot due to its preference for staying high in the trees.



**Note: The endangered Red Siskin (*Sporagra cucullata*) is officially protected by the South Rupununi Conservation Society. The SRCS is currently researching its ranges in the South Rupununi, to be included as a proposed Important Birding Area (IBA). The South Rupununi Conservation Society is based at Dadanawa Ranch, South Rupununi, Region 9, Guyana. Contact via radio at 4-0 on 7900 or 5300, phone Kayla (+592) 668 8562 and Erin (+592) 680 8102, or email Erin (earl.erin@gmail.com) and Kayla (epiona04@yahoo.ca).**