



December 2014
Newsletter

**SOUTH RUPUNUNI
CONSERVATION SOCIETY**

**Field Visit: Wii Wii Tau
Rupunau Village**

SRCS EXEC. TEAM

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

SRCS RANGERS

ON THIS FIELD VISIT:
Leon Baird, DADANAWA
Richard Peters, DADANAWA

SUPPORT & PARTICIPANTS:

Leroy Ignacio, SHULINAB
Eion Gray, SHULINAB
Lexroy Joseph, RUPUNAU
Levi Joseph, RUPUNAU
Ponila Joseph, RUPUNAU
Chung Liu, DADANAWA

VOLUNTEER VISITORS:

Asbjorn Nielsen, DENMARK
Joergen Nielsen, DENMARK
Indiana McLauchlan, NEW ZEALAND

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

The SRCS would like to thank Rupunau Village Council and the village community for their support its most recent visit to Wii Wii Tau, and to thank the DTC for their ongoing support. Red Siskins were sighted throughout the two day field survey, and four birds were safely captured, banded, and released. We would like to extend our gratitude to all Rangers and participants, with a special acknowledgment to Ponila, Lexroy, and Levi Joseph, who assisted the team enthusiastically and capably during the trip.

We hope that you will enjoy these photos, and wish you all a very Merry Christmas!



Top: (1) Ponila Joseph releasing a newly banded male Red Siskin. Clockwise, from Top Left: (2) Lexroy and Levi Joseph handling a very lively Brown-throated Parakeet (Chiziki); (3) Rangers Leon Baird and Richard Peters carefully removing two Red Siskins from the mist-net; (4) Leroy Ignacio helping a Blue-gray Tanager (Bishao) identify itself in a bird book.

PROJECT FUNDED BY:



THE RESEARCH PROCESS



Left column, from top to bottom: In addition to each bird's weight and measurements, the bird's feathers can also provide indication of its health and age. (1) The female Red Siskin has a different colour pattern from the male, with brown feathers on the head, back, and shoulders instead of a black head and red back. (2) Young Red Siskins are often more faded in colour than adults, who exhibit the more striking red plumage that the bird is known for. This young siskin is moulting, as seen by its patchy appearance. (3) Adult male Red Siskin exhibiting the bright and characteristic colouration that the bird is known for.



Right column, from top to bottom: (1) Once the nets are set, the research team then continues to observe birds while keeping an eye out all the time on the nets. Often there are many birds that can be observed from afar - including vultures, birds of prey, and storks - and many aside from the Red Siskin that end up in nets. (2) Surprisingly on this trip, two Brown-throated Parakeets (Chiziki) were caught in the nets moments after a pair of Red Siskins! Luckily enough, both Lexroy and Levi Joseph quickly went to free them. They are substantially larger than the Red Siskin and other birds that generally get caught in the mist-net, and gave the boys a few serious bites to reward them for all of that hard work! (3) The highlight of the day included this male and female pair of Red Siskins, who were measured and banded before release.



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 the Blue-Backed Manakin, the Rufescent Tiger-Heron, and the Blue-gray Tanager.

From left to right: (1) The **Blue-Backed Manakin** is a bird known for its unusual breeding behaviour and intricate dances. During breeding, two or more males hop up and down to attract a female, and then start to dance in a vertical circle. Up to eight males have been observed cooperating at once, until the dominant male lets out a call and leaves with the female. (2) This juvenile **Rufescent Tiger-Heron (Aronao)** was photographed at night on a bridge. As the Tiger-Heron ages, a chestnut colour replaces the dark streaks on its neck and crown. Tiger-Herons wetland birds mostly found feeding by water at night, but also sometimes during the day. (3) The **Blue-gray Tanager (Bishao)** is also known as the Blue Saki, a noisy and active bird found in open woodland and savannah terrain. Juveniles have darker, duller blue feathers than adults. It is a common bird found throughout Central and South America, and while it is primarily a fruit-eater, it is also known to feed on flower nectar and small insects.



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).**