BIODIVERSITY OF T&T

AN ASSET TO TOURISM

BY

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The Resource...
Biodiversity

• Approx 100 mammals (32 terrestrial; 65 bats)
• 433 species of birds
  ○ (411 Trinidad and 210 Tobago)
• 93 reptiles including 47 snakes
  ○ (44 Trinidad and 21 Tobago)
• 37 amphibians
• Approx 45 FW fish and between 400-500 marine
• Over 700 butterflies (14 of 15 families in world)
• Approximately 2160 species of flowering plants, 110 of which are endemic
The Resource... Forests

- 2000 MODIS satellite imagery – estimate of 44% forest cover (229,000 hectares)
- 1969 aerial photos – 50% cover (loss of 6% since)
- 91% owned by state
  - 35 Forest Reserves in T’dad
  - 1 in Tobago

![Pie chart with percentages]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>54%</td>
<td>Forest reserves</td>
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<td>37%</td>
<td>Other state lands</td>
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Several distinct terrestrial ecosystems
- Evergreen seasonal forest
- Semi-evergreen seasonal forest
- Deciduous seasonal forest
- Dry evergreen forest
- Montane forest
- Mangrove forest
- Herbaceous swamp
- Palm marsh
- Marsh forest
Source: Kenny, J.S. Views from the Ridge
First a historical perspective...

Forests
- 1765 – Main Ridge declared Forest Reserve (1st in Western hemisphere)
- 1901 – One-man Branch precursor to Forestry Div.
- 1942 – 1st official Forest Policy

Species
- 1933 – Wild Animals and Birds Ordinance
- 1950 – Game Section established in FD
Species Conservation today

- Conservation of Wildlife Act – 1958 hunting legislation
  - Open season for hunting – October to February
  - Species for hunting – game animals, cage birds, waterfowl & vermin
  - Any not listed are protected species
- Wildlife Sanctuaries – 13
- Endangered Species listing (not official)
- International Treaties
  - CITES regulates wildlife trade
  - Convention on Biodiversity
  - SPAW protocol
Forests Conservation today

- Trinidad – primary agency is Forestry Division, MHE
- Tobago – DNRE, THA
- 2 Management Regimes:
  - Production Forestry (21% of FRs) – teak, pine and natural forests servicing over 80 sawmills
  - Protection Forestry (79%)
    - All areas above 90 metre contour
    - Protected areas
    - Dams
    - All FRs in Tobago
Ecosystem Conservation today

- 1980 system of protected areas – not yet enabled
- 19 Prohibited areas – 3 turtle nesting areas; 1 Scientific reserve (Aripo savannas); some wetland sanctuaries
- 3 Environmentally Sensitive Areas (Nariva, Matura & Aripo)
- 3 Ramsar sites of International Importance (Nariva, Caroni & Buccoo/Bon Accord)
- National Park – 1 (Chaguaramas)
- Marine Park – 1 (Buccoo Reef)
- Private lands under protection – Asa Wright, PAPWFT; Tobago – Grafton Sanctuary, Arnos Vale and others
Do we know our animal treasures?

Name the **Endemic** species?
Some animal attractions...

Name the species and one location found in?
One Habitat, Many Species...
One Habitat, Many Species...
Places of Interest...
Places of Interest...
Places of Interest...
Thoughts to Ponder

- T& T still rich in biodiversity
- Diversity of eco-systems in close proximity
- Easily accessible areas
- English-speaking
- Improved environmental ethic
The Blue-crowned Motmot (formerly Momotus momota) has been split into five species by the South American Classification Committee (SACC) on the basis of plumage variation. The Trinidad and Tobago form has been renamed the Trinidad Motmot (Momotus bahamensis). It is found only on Trinidad and Tobago and therefore becomes the islands’ second endemic bird species (the other being the Trinidad Piping-Guan (Pipile pipile))
Trinidad is the only island in the Caribbean where the Guacharo or Diablotin, locally known as the Oilbird, *(Steatornis caripensis)* makes its home, other territories being located in Central and South America.

Aripo -2 caves  
Cumaca- 1 cave  
Lopinot-1 cave  
La Vache-1 cave  
Tamana-1 cave
• *Amphisbaena fuliginosa* is also known as the Black-and-white Worm Lizard, Speckled Worm Lizard or Spotted Worm Lizard.

• It is oviparous and lives in the rainforest of northern South America and Trinidad.

• It is a burrowing nocturnal species and spends most of its time underground.

• *A. fuliginosa* will feed on any small invertebrate, or insect, that it can find while burrowing.
The Tamana bat cave is prime vampire bat
Home to 11 of Trinidad's 67 species of bat:
- including fruit bats (frugiverous),
- insect-eating bats (insectivorous),
- nectar-feeding bats (nectivorous),
- blood-feeding bats (sanguivorous)

More than just good vampire bat habitat
- also home to the Greater Spare-Nosed Bat (the largest bat in the New World),
- Trinidadian Funnel-Eared Bats,
- Long-Nosed Bats
- and others
• **The Golden Tree-frog (Phyllodytes auratus)** can be found at the summits of Trinidad's highest peaks, El Cerro Del Aripo and El Tucuche.

• They live and reproduce in the pools at the centre of giant bromeliads, mainly the Tank Bromeliad.

• The Golden Tree-frog has not been found outside of Trinidad's northern range.
Matura National Park was declared an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) in 2004, the first such area for Trinidad and Tobago.

Matura National Park is 9000 ha and includes the watersheds of the Rio Seco, Rio Salybia, Grande Rivière and Shark River.