



The Bellbird Newsletter

THE ASA WRIGHT NATURE CENTRE



www.asawright.org

August 2009

Asa Wright Centre Hosts Digi-Scoping Workshop

The Asa Wright Nature Centre was fortunate to host a high profile group of United States birdwatchers brought together by the Leica Sport Optics Company. The group of eight stayed between July 19 and 25 on a successful "digi-scoping" workshop partly sponsored by Leica. This is the process of digital photography done through a telescope (similar in concept to telephoto photography).

A Leica-produced camera, adaptor and telescope are used together to take distant photographs, especially of birds. Demonstrations of this process and the equipment themselves were the feature of the workshop.

Participants included Pete Dunne, a prolific and nationally respected bird author who serves as a Director on the board of the Cape May Bird Observatory and Vice-President of the New Jersey Audubon Society.

Mr Dunne, a feature columnist in several recognised bird magazines, was here with his wife Linda, who's also an accomplished birder.

Also present was Ken Kaufman, a distinguished writer and feature presenter at birding events, and author of the prestigious *Kaufman's Focus Guide* on wildlife of North America, among others. He and his wife Kim are renowned advocates for introducing children to nature. She is also the Executive Director of the noted Black Hawk Bird Observatory.

Bill Thompson and Julie Zicklefoose is another power couple who attended. Bill is editor of the famous *Bird Watcher's Digest* and his blog is very popular. Julie is a well-respected bird artist who studied under the late Don Eckelberry. They're all accompanied and facilitated by Jeff Bouton of Leica and Mark Hedden of Caligo Ventures. All had a great time and vowed to return.



WHITE BEARDED MANAKIN
Manicus manicus

This species is easily recognised by the male's habit of displaying throughout the day in forest areas called "leks" (display grounds) in groups to attract females. The female, unlike the black and white male, is coloured lime green. She often goes unnoticed except when entering the leks to select the most energetic (thus healthy) male. Courtship is done throughout the year and mating pairs separate soon after courtship. Manakins are a feature and common sighting along the Centre's trails.

MANGO ROOM UPDATE

On Friday June 26, the Jonnie Fisk Conference Room (formerly called the Mango Room) was reopened. This refurbished facility is also fitted with free Wi-Fi to enable participants of conferences or retreats ready access to modern electronic communications, while enjoying the green, serene and peaceful environment of this unique location of the Northern Range. We invite groups and organisations, especially those of corporate Trinidad and Tobago, to take advantage of the Centre's facilities to achieve successful objectives and outcomes for their meetings, workshops or retreats. Call Deborah at 667-5162.

