

Poor Jonathan Durward promised me an article about his holiday trip to Trinidad little realising that, in common with many other consultants, for reasons not altogether clear, he would be totally snowed under with work. When I reminded him of his deadline his reply was a horrified squawk and an expletive I have deleted. I asked him if he would like to defer the rest of the story and he replied "Yes please! "Got to bed at 2am and bloody fire alarm woke me at 4.30am! Bloody raging and feeling slightly sorry for myself. Whatever happened to all those voluntary bat surveys? ██████████ hate consultancy - have just gone through a plastic bag of receipts in order to invoice some twats!"



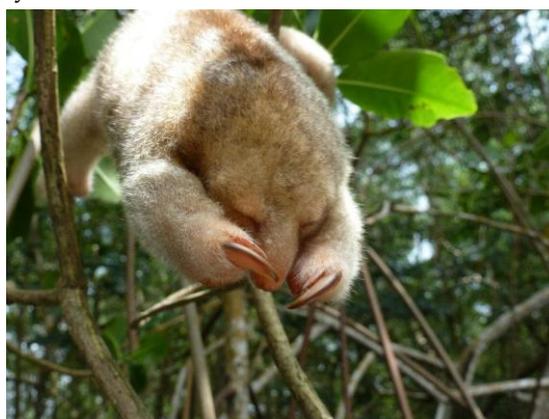
Jonathan looking mean and magnificent and not altogether dissimilar to the Roger Delgado incarnation of Dr Who's enemy the Master.

In November last year I was doing a bit of birding with my cousin Dave O'Dell (please don't mention this to Daniel Hargreaves) and we happened to be near Ampthill. We were kindly invited to Bob and Jude's for dinner with the added entertainment of a slide show of their bat trip to Nicaragua. Even though Dave fell asleep, I have to admit I was fascinated by the tropical bats and mentioned to Bob that it would be great to go on a foreign bat jolly.

Low and behold in March this year I found myself winging away to Trinidad & Tobago on a very entertaining British Airways flight with an added bit of Caribbean colour - the rastafarian dude beside me happily sinking back white wine and bursting into a vocal longing for St Lucia's finest!

Alicia's Palace beckoned first stop and did not disappoint, a higgledy piggedly hotel built into a hillside at the edge of the rainforest overlooking Port of Spain. Arriving a couple of days earlier than the rest

of the group I met up with Daniel and Geoffrey Gomes and was invited to the University of the



West Indies to watch them identify various bat specimens in jars, including dissected bats, before giving a talk about the Trinibats project. This was the initial meeting with Trini Eco Warriors, a group of young people who are making documentaries highlighting the diversity of Trinidad's ecology.

The next day Bob & Jude arrived and we popped up the road to Geoffrey Gomes's house to mist net *Molossus molossus* species that were drinking from his swimming pool. Here, I was introduced to mist netting Hargreaves style, tying the poles to chairs at either side of the pool. A couple of bats fell into the pool and we were rewarded with the sight of the remarkable swimming action of the 'little mastiff bat'.

On Friday morning we headed down to the Caroni Swamp in search of the silky anteater. On a particular hot

day we were not disappointed and Daniel managed to saw off a specimen on a branch (see Jude's Facebook profile <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.4100454389590.2180936.1229820872&type=1> if you are not on facebook) and we got some fantastic close up shots of the animal in defensive pose. The birds at Caroni were magnificent as was our guide. Later that day we met the rest of the group at the airport after a delayed flight due to a blocked toilet and travelled to our first destination, Hacienda Jacana. Not to plug this place too much, but if you ever visit

Trinidad you must stay there! My room mate Adrian got his Anabat out straight away and stuck it on the veranda before the group put some mist nets out in the grounds of the former

plantation.' Down at the lake we caught two of the most common



species in this part of the world; *Carollia perspiculata* and *Glossophaga sorocina*, Seba's chort-tailed bat and the common long-tongued bat respectively.

Jonathan Durward
to be continued