

## *Trogon collaris* (Collared Trogon)

Family: Trogonidae (Trogons)

Order: Trogoniformes (Trogons)

Class: Aves (Birds)



**Fig. 1.** Collared trogon, *Trogon collaris*.

[[http://neotropical.birds.cornell.edu/portal/species/gallery?p\\_p\\_spp=283096](http://neotropical.birds.cornell.edu/portal/species/gallery?p_p_spp=283096), downloaded 28 February 2017]

**TRAITS.** *Trogon collaris* is quite a resplendent species of bird (Fig. 1), with an average length of 25cm. The male collared trogon has an iridescent green hood and upper body, which is separated from the lower body by a white band across its breast (Jones, 2010). It bears a black face as well as black wings with white lines, with an average length of 12.2cm in males and 12.4cm in females. Its lower body is a vibrant scarlet colour, the outer tail feathers are striated in black and white with white tips, and it has an orange eye ring and a yellow bill. Females are similar except that their upper body is a bronze colour (Fig. 2), the lower body is a paler red, and their eyes have white rings (Ffrench, 2012).

**DISTRIBUTION.** As can be seen in Fig. 3, the distribution of the collared trogon spreads through several parts of the Americas from southern Mexico to Bolivia and Brazil, including Colombia, Venezuela, French Guiana, and Trinidad and Tobago (Ffrench, 2012).

**HABITAT AND ACTIVITIES.** A diurnal (daytime active) species whose habitat varies with its location, however it can generally be found from the mid strata to canopy levels in moist, wet or dry forests. They are also known to occupy foothills and mountains (Hilty, 2003). In Belize, it resides in the mid-levels to sub-canopy of primary forests and forest edges (Jones, 2010). It is a moderately common resident of the forest in the Northern Range of Trinidad and can be found occupying both forest and secondary growth (Ffrench, 2012).

**FOOD AND FEEDING.** Like other trogons, its diet consists of small invertebrates such as caterpillars, crickets, cicadas, beetles and phasmids (sticklike insects), and fruits to which its broad bill is adapted. It can pluck berries and catch its prey by doing quick aerial sallies from one tree to another. Because of their arboreal lifestyle, collared trogons tend to hunt close to their nest and are reluctant to fly any distance despite its rapid flight speed. They can also be found lurking on the outskirts of other flocks of birds, waiting to capture any prey that has either escaped the flock or that has been startled (Neotropical Birds, 2017).

**POPULATION ECOLOGY.** The collared trogon is known to be sociable and associates with mixed flocks (Hilty 2003). It can be found in pairs or alone however it is not uncommon to be seen in small flocks during the breeding season or on the outskirts of mixed species of birds (Neotropical birds, 2017).

**REPRODUCTION.** The clutch is incubated by both male and female, and chicks are also fed by both parents (Neotropical Birds, 2017). Mating seasons vary depending on the location of the birds (Neotropical birds, 2017); in Trinidad and Tobago, the collared trogon typically breeds during the months of March to May. It can be found nesting in a termite's nest in which it has burrowed a shallow hole or tunnel. Typically its clutch is made up of two white eggs (Ffrench, 2012). Collared trogon nests may be found in trees with very soft wood which makes it possible for the bird to carve out its nest with its stout bill. Eggs are usually placed in the nest without any soft material or cushioning as they never provide a lining (Skutch, 1956). In Fig. 4, a collared trogon can be seen entering its nest in a tree.

**BEHAVIOUR.** It behaves similarly to other flycatchers occupying high levels in a tree and can be found sitting erect and motionless (Ffrench, 2012). It is a social species and is usually found in pairs, and small groups are not uncommon before and after the mating season (Neotropical birds, 2017). The collared trogon is predated upon by larger animals and it is also parasitized by *Brueelia cicchinoi* (chewing louse) (Neotropical birds, 2017).

**APPLIED ECOLOGY.** As the collared trogon has a population size 5,000,000-50,000,000 mature individuals, it does not seem to be in jeopardy of being listed as vulnerable according to the range-size criterion of the IUCN. The population size of the birds appears to be decreasing, but not at an alarming rate therefore it is listed as Least Concern (Birdlife International, 2017).

## REFERENCES

- BirdLife International. 2017. Species factsheet: *Trogon collaris*. <http://www.birdlife.org>  
Ffrench, R. 2012. A Guide to Birds of Trinidad and Tobago. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.  
Hilty, S. L. 2003. Birds of Venezuela. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Jones, H. L. 2010. Birds of Belize. Texas: University of Texas Press.

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[http://neotropical.birds.cornell.edu/portal/species/lifehistory?p\\_p\\_spp=283096](http://neotropical.birds.cornell.edu/portal/species/lifehistory?p_p_spp=283096)

Skutch, A. 1956. A Nesting Of The Collared Trogon. *The Auk* **73**: 354-366.

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**Fig. 2.** The female collared trogon.

[[http://antpitta.com/images/photos/trogons/gallery\\_trogons.htm](http://antpitta.com/images/photos/trogons/gallery_trogons.htm), downloaded 8 March 2017]



**Fig. 3.** Geographical distribution of the collared trogon.

[<http://neotropical.birds.cornell.edu/map/?cn=Collared%20Trogon&sn=Trogon%20collaris&species=283096>, downloaded 8 March 2017]



**Fig. 4.** A collared trogon returning to its nest.

[<http://www.lynxeds.com/hbw/photo/collared-trogon>, downloaded 8 March 2017]

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