

'Barbadiana Jones' Damon Corrie becomes first outsider to see & photograph a series of waterfalls in Guyana's interior

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Damon Corrie (called 'Barbadiana Jones' by some in reference to the adventurous 'Indiana Jones' of Hollywood fame) is of Barbadian birth and Guyanese Amerindian descent and is well known in local, regional & international circles for two things primarily - #1 His promotion of Indigenous Rights, and #2 - His promotion of Guyana as THE premier Eco-Adventure Paradise destination in the Americas.

In late August 2011 for his 19th anniversary as a regular visitor to Guyana he 'celebrated' by mounting an expedition into a little known (even to native locals) area of the South Pakaraima mountains, taking his Guyanese Arawak wife of 18+ years along with him; they physically suffered immensely with their 2 Makushi guides and old friends Floyd Davis and Marc Andries - but they may have potentially found yet another tourist attraction for Guyana - albeit an extreme fitness level one.



Ex-Chief Kennard Davis of the nearest Makushi Village (aka Tapok) said that only 8 local Amerindians alive today have ever been to this area in the south Pakaraima Mountains because they fear it as the legendary home of the 'Water Tiger' (an as yet undocumented Cryptid speculated to be a large member of the Mustelid family by Lisa Dowley of the UK based Centre for Fortean Zoology).

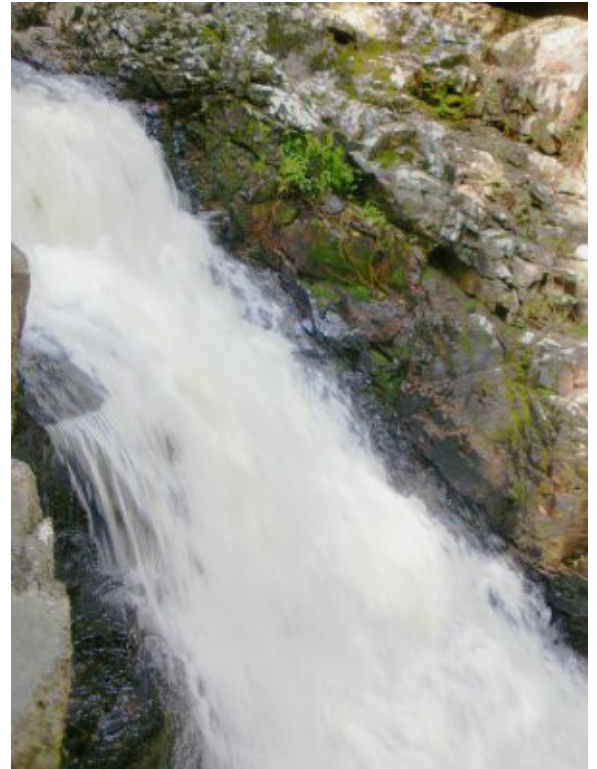


Corrie noted that several large fish were seen in the lagoon in front of the cave the Makushi's say is the Water Tiger den at the base of the main waterfall to the left (see photo) so fish might play a big part in this alleged 'water tiger's' diet - as it might seasonally reside & hunt this area, as apart from this crabs seem to be the only other plentiful food item in this stream...all very mustelid-like food Corrie (also a member of the CFZ) speculated.

Due to the fact that these waterfalls are a phenomenon of the rainy season only and disappear in the dry season - Damon is the 9th known person alive to have seen (and the first to photograph) these waterfalls because it is

extremely hard to reach the area in the dry season, and much more so in the rainy season when the hiking in the punishing terrain becomes twice as hard. His wife Shirling is the 10th person known to have seen them.

"It is no comparison to Kaiteur Falls but a beautiful sight to behold nonetheless - despite the severe hardships one must face to go to them and get back safely, in this area there are many ways one can die up there behind God's back - so to speak, and the only way in or out is by foot, no emergency medical aid can get to you faster than 24 hours - and that is if they use the swiftest and fittest tracker in the closest village to rush to your assistance". Corrie stated. But the beautiful scenery, campsites, wildlife, exotic flora that also seem to have great potential as ornamental plants locally, regionally and internationally, and mountain pools under each waterfall that one can bathe, swim and relax in - made it all worthwhile for us.



Damon says he counted 12 waterfalls of various heights, and named 4 of them after his own Amerindian children so there now exists a 'Hatuey Falls', 'Tecumseh Falls', 'Sabantho Falls' and 'Laliwa Falls', he also named one after his trusted Makushi guide who like him is the only one to visit this area 3 times (it was Marc's first) - each time with Damon, so there is a 'Sado Falls' now there too. The first one is 'Water Tiger Falls' as it is the biggest and first one you encounter and it must be climbed before you see the smaller ones at various points on this seasonal mountain stream.

"For centuries Europeans have been going to Indigenous areas and claiming they 'discovered' the natural wonders there (as if the locals did not see them before) and naming these sights after themselves, and whilst I do not claim to discover what some of my Makushi brothers have seen before me - who is to say that I cannot name some waterfalls after some Amerindians too? Do you have to be white to do that or something?" Corrie added.



"Many ex-Soldiers from many countries (Germany, USA, Canada, UK etc) have come with me on my expeditions to Guyana's interior and struggled to make it, all said it was the hardest trip of their lives - but worth the hardships they faced because of the natural beauty of places I showed them, so it is definitely something for only the fittest adventure seekers to consider, for example - I took my slim and trim Amerindian wife with me on this one and she was in pain for the 8 hours per day (due to a swollen knee and aching muscles) minimum we had to be hiking and cutting our own Surihi through the mountainous jungles, at the end on the 4th day I asked her what was more painful, natural childbirth or hiking in this area with me - and she

said she would prefer the pain of childbirth another 5 times to the torment I put her body through to reach these waterfalls and back safely - and she vowed to never accompany me on such a trip ever again. I believe her almost stepping on a 6 foot long Rattlesnake just as we finally reached back down on the Savannas - after having to descend a 100+ metre rock wall where she was attacked by bees - might have made her reach this conclusion, luckily for myself and the other 2 men we had no such bad luck with animals Corrie said jokingly.

Damon said the main thing readers should take from our experience is that Guyana is one of the few places on Earth where a truly adventurous soul CAN STILL be the first outsider to see and photograph pristine natural wonders even in this 21st century...I encourage everyone to visit Guyana's interior at least once in their lifetime it is THE greatest natural spectacle awaiting discovery that I have ever found in my life - and i've visited half the countries in the Western Hemisphere. Not everyone is willing to put their body through severe pain for days on end like me, but to be among the first to see truly off-the beaten track areas of Guyana I am willing to suffer the consequences for the reward to me is worth the effort, and those who think as I do seek me out to act as a guide for them.

