



2015 Convention
Artwork

Curl-crested araçari
(*Pteroglossus beauharnaesii*)

Artist Biography: TRACY TAYLOR

AFA's 2015 Featured Artist

Tracy Taylor (Pedersen) began her illustration career while working as an entomology technician at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia. There she penned a drawing of an almost microscopic new species of Wentletrap snail for the Malacology department. Other scientists got wind of her talents and commissioned her to render scientific illustrations of fish, crickets, and birds while maintaining the Entomology department's extensive bug collection.



During her tenure at the Academy of Natural Sciences, she traveled with scientists to dense, untrammelled rainforests in the West Indies, and Central and South America. There with camera in hand and a box of paints and paper, she rendered field studies (often while huddled under an umbrella pelted by rain) of the riotously colored birds such as parrots, tanagers and toucans, as well as the secretive understory birds that followed marching army ants.



Early in her career, Tracy painted a tropical Zig-Zag Heron and was awarded the George M. Sutton Award for Outstanding Bird Illustration. She also painted a new species of owl, the Cloud-forest Pygmy Owl, which adorned the April 1999 cover of the *Auk*, a scientific ornithological publication.



Later years would find her at a drafting table illustrating birds, butterflies, and other creatures for postage stamps of countries around the globe (one stamp set was featured at the World Stamp Expo in 1989). Many of her illustrations are part of Herb Raffaele's *A Guide to the Birds of the West Indies*, and the parrots and trogons for Robert Ridgely's third volume of *Birds of South America*. While working on these projects, she accepted private commissions from scientists, parrot breeders, and even the director of communications of the Miami Metro Zoo, Ron Magill. A Harpy Eagle she painted for Mr. Magill was the centerpiece for a new aviary and zoo exhibit for the Summit Gardens Zoo in Panama.

Tracy also donated the use and many paintings for conservation efforts in the West Indies. Subjects range from the huge Homerus Swallowtail in Jamaica, the Cayman Blue Iguana and Rose-throated Parrots, as well as the Resplendent Quetzal.



Currently, Tracy is wrapping up her own guide to Birds of the West Indies. This is an engaging and user-friendly book that suggests easy places to find birds, including some natural history on each species and a color-coded grid outlining up-to-date occurrences of birds on each island.

Tracy lives with her husband in southern Utah, a bird watcher's mecca, situated in the Mojave Desert.