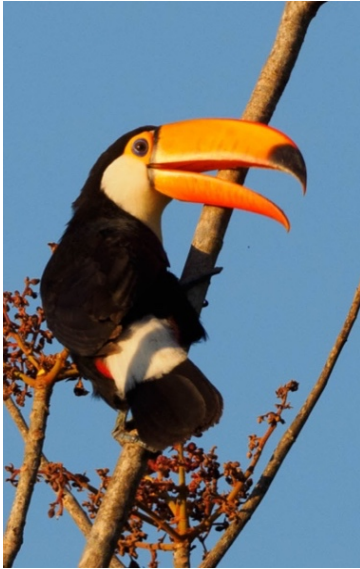


Brazil's Pantanal: Jaguars! & More...

with Naturalist Journeys



September 9 – 19, 2024

w/ Atlantic Forest Ext.

September 5 – 9

866.900.1146

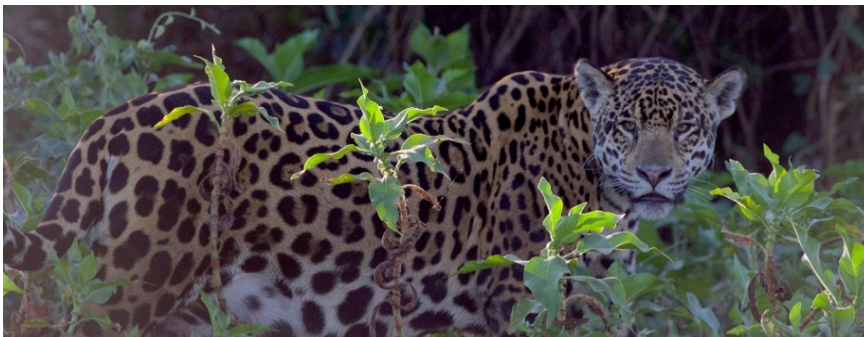
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Naturalist Journeys, LLC



Brazil's Pantanal: A place of superlatives. Home to the world's largest fresh-water wetlands, the Pantanal is ten-times the size of the Everglades, draining into a single channel: the Paraguay River. We venture deep into this world-class wildlife hotspot on a long road that bisects the Transpantaneira wilderness, in search of an adventure that can't be missed.

In this famed region, we discover wildlife thriving in a mix of savanna, forest, and wetland habitats. Even a relaxed day can yield more than 100 species of birds and dozens of mammals — Capybara are everywhere!

Brazilian Tapir, Maned Wolf, Giant Anteater, Giant Otter, and yes, Jaguar (we saw seven on our 2017 trip!), are five of many incredible mammals we seek, while Greater Rhea, Hyacinth Macaw, Toco Toucan, and Helmeted Manakin top the list of impressive bird sightings. Rare Green Anaconda, the world's largest snake, may be a lucky find, while the small crocodilian Yacaré can be seen by the thousands. For many, it is the sheer number and variety of species that leaves the most lasting impression.

Charming (and working) cattle ranches serve as our accommodations, each with its own impressive and distinctive wildlife community. Lazy afternoons invite photographers to wander between shade circles of the ranch trees for rare time with Hyacinth Macaw and other species.

Tour Summary

10-Night / 11-Day Brazil Wildlife Tour

\$TBD DBL / \$TBD SGL, from Sao Paulo

Arrival airport is Guarulhos International (GRU) in Sao Paulo, departure airport is Marechal Rondon International Airport (CGB) in Cuiaba

Tour Highlights

- Try for South America's "Big Five" Brazilian Tapir, Maned Wolf, Giant Anteater, Giant Otter, and Jaguar
- Witness the "Big Five" of birds: Jabiru, Greater Rhea, Hyacinth Macaw, Toco Toucan, and Helmeted Manakin. Add Southern Screamer, Sunbittern, Scarlet-headed Blackbird, and so many more!
- Explore both sides of the Transpantaneira wilderness—by boat and road on safari-like excursions
- Find five species of kingfisher
- Enjoy local cuisine and hospitality at fazendas (working cattle ranches) at several stages along the road
- Boat the Cuiabá River for an excellent chance at a Jaguar sighting
- See water birds in mass congregation—like those of the Everglades, but magnified!
- Find at least four species of monkeys and several hundred species of birds
- Scan for night birds under intense southern sky constellations; spotlight for mammals, too!
- Enjoy optional fishing at two locations (additional cost for local boat and guide)

Day-to-Day Itinerary

Mon., Sept. 9 Arrival to São Paulo, Brazil

Arrive today in São Paulo, Brazil, at Guarulhos International Airport (GRU). No activities are planned for today so you can rest up from your travels. Please take the free shuttle to our convenient and comfortable airport hotel. Remember, you have at least 1.5 hours to get luggage and clear immigration and customs; there are comfortable public areas in the hotel where you can relax if you don't want to pay an early room fee.

This evening we enjoy a welcome dinner—a chance to meet your guides and traveling companions, and learn

more about our coming adventure. Those on our highly-recommended pre-trip to the Atlantic Forest are returning to join you this evening. We invite you to sample Brazil's national cocktail, the caipirinha, made with cachaça (sugarcane liquor), sugar, and lime. We predict this may be the first of many.

Accommodations at a convenient airport hotel (L,D)

**Note: Most flights from the USA originate September 8 to meet this arrival date.*

Tues., Sept. 10

Early Flight to Campo Grande Airport | Explore the South Side of the Pantanal

We should arrive to Campo Grande about 9:00 AM and are met by our local guides. We drive by van or mini-bus to our lodge (around four hours drivetime) with stops for mammals and birding on the way there. We are motivated to get there, since this is where we have lunch!

After checking into our rooms, we spend time birding around the lodge until the end of the day, looking for birds like the Chaco Chachalaca, Hyacinth Macaw, Blue-fronted Parrot, Nanday Parakeet, Toco Toucan, Lineated and White Woodpeckers, Narrow-Billed Woodcreeper, Greater Thornbird, Giant Cowbird, Crested Oropendola, Purplish and Plush-crested Jays, Red-crested Cardinal, and many others.

We then gather with friends for dinner and for those that wish, the daily checklist.

Accommodations at Aguapé Lodge or similar (B,L,D)

Wed., Sept. 11 & Thurs., Sept. 12 Pantanal Safari

Our lodge is an excellent environment for birdwatching, a place where over 300 bird species have been recorded. The lodge is located 195 kilometers from Campo Grande city, which has an international airport, and 60 kilometers from Aquidauana city, which is known as the gateway to the Pantanal. We have two full days to explore from the lodge, plus our pathway coming and going. Optional fishing with local guides and boats can be arranged while you are at this lodge.

Interesting bird species are Southern Screamer, Blaze-winged Parakeet, Gilded Hummingbird, Toco Toucan, Pale-crested and White-fronted Woodpecker, Red-billed Scythebill, Helmeted Manakin, and the Scarlet-headed Blackbird.

After an early breakfast, we embark on a safari drive with good chances to see the Undulated Tinamou, Capped Heron, Jabiru, Savanna Hawk, Rufescent Tiger Heron, Buff-necked and Plumbeous Ibis, Roseate Spoonbill, Hyacinth and Yellow-collared Macaw, Red-billed Scythebill, Orange-backed Troupial, and many others.

After lunch we are back at the lodge and make time to enjoy a siesta in the hot part of the day, and then we make another safari drive until the end of the day, returning in the dark with chances to see mammals like the Crab-eating Fox, South American Coati, Capybara, Marsh Deer, Southern Tamandua, Crab-eating Raccoon, River Otter, and night birds such as Common and Great Potoo, Spectacled and Striped Owl, Pauraque and Scissor-tailed Nightjar.

We find this area to be the best place to spot Giant Anteater in the whole region and we make the effort to find them, so keep your fingers crossed! We have dinner upon return, and for those that wish again, the checklist.

Accommodations at Aguapé Lodge or similar (B,L,D)

Fri., Sept. 13 Birding to Campo Grande

After an early breakfast we take a bird walk for excellent chances to see Great Rufous Woodcreeper, Blaze-winged Parakeet, Black-crowned Tityra, Chestnut-eared Aracari, and Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, and many more.

This morning we also enjoy a motorboat excursion at Aquidauana River. This river is full of life with good chances to see a family of Giant River Otter and special birds like Black-collared Hawk, five species of kingfisher, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Blue-throated Piping Guan, and many others.

After an early lunch at the lodge we drive back to Campo Grande, check in to the hotel, and then enjoy a short visit to the “nesterar,” a place where a nice concentration of macaws and herons nest near the city.

Accommodations at Hotel Mohave or similar (B,L,D)

Sat., Sept. 14 Early Flight: Campo Grande to Cuiaba | Northern Transpantaneira Adventure Begins

After an early domestic flight to Cuiabá we begin the second (northern) half of our Pantanal adventure!

Driving south, we reach the famed Pantanal via a paved road to Poconé. En route we have lunch in a typical churrasqueria, and enjoy simple Brazilian-style cuisine. From here, we travel the dirt Transpantaneira Road, perhaps only rivaled by Tanzania’s Serengeti road for spotting wildlife. Along the way to our lodge, we might see Ringed Kingfisher, Red-crested Cardinal, Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, Toco Toucan, Jabiru, Limpkin, our Capybaras (of course!), Yacaré Caiman, and more.

Our lodge is located just 10km from Poconé. After check in, we can stretch our legs on a short walk. There is a lovely pool if anyone wants to cool off with a swim.

Accommodations at Pousada Piuval or similar (B,L,D)

Sun., Sept. 15 Birding & Wildlife Spotting on the Transpantaneira | Drive to Porto Jofre | Jaguar Boat Excursion

After some morning wildlife viewing at the ranch, we depart down the Transpantaneira, keeping an eye out for Red Brocket Deer, Marsh Deer, Crab-eating Fox, Greater Rhea, Chestnut-bellied Guan, Bare-faced Curassow, and a mix of wading birds. Bridges are hotspots from which we can view the presence of a huge food supply; Green Kingfisher, Great Egret, Cocoi Heron, both Bare-faced and Green Ibises, and White-lored Spinetail are just a few species we may see.

We pass through scattered palm woodlands, cerrado scrub, and seasonally-flooded grasslands reminiscent of the Everglades. Roadside ponds and canals are filled with waders: Roseate Spoonbill, Plumbeous Ibis, Limpkin, cormorants, herons, kingfishers, and their predator, Yacaré Caiman. August water conditions concentrate the fish for foraging waders like Jabiru and Maguari Stork.

At Porto Jofre, the “end of the road,” palms attract several resident pairs of Hyacinth Macaw. From this little town on the Cuiabá River, we board a small boat to reach our lodgings—two days on a lovely houseboat. Rooms are air-conditioned, with private bath. This “floating hotel” allows us to stay close to where the wildlife has been spotted; we explore from the houseboat each day on smaller boats.

We check into our boat cabins, have dinner, then have a briefing on safety and wildlife we hope to see. If skies are clear, star viewing is impressive—you can see the Southern Cross! Optional fishing is available while you are on the houseboat portion of the tour.

Accommodations in private cabins on a floating houseboat hotel! (B,L,D)

Mon., Sept. 16

Full Day Looking for Jaguar, Jabiru & More | Jaguar Boat Excursion

Awake on the river to a host of sounds and the sight of macaws and more flying overhead. We use smaller speedboats to spend the day searching for the iconic Jaguar, known for their affinity to water. They are good swimmers, and often lay down along the shore after a swim. Chances are good that we see at least one individual, male or female—perhaps even together!

We lunch on board, take a short siesta (yes, love that AC ...) and try for Jaguar again in the afternoon. Wildlife is plentiful in this remote part of the Pantanal, so once we accomplish the main task (a Jaguar, of course) we have time to admire other species like Giant Otter, Black Skimmer, Pied Plover, Southern Screamer, and Yacaré Caiman. We also visit little streams for skulkers like Pygmy Kingfisher and Sungrebe.

By late afternoon we return to the boat. We celebrate our sightings with caipirinhas before dinner!
Accommodations in private cabins on a floating houseboat hotel! (B,L,D)

Tues., Sept. 17 Wildlife & Birding on the Lower Transpantaneira

After two days immersed in the wildest part of the Pantanal, we return north, retracing our route. We are not in a hurry though, and work some of the areas we previously traveled in more detail.

Perhaps we find a troop of Black-and-Gold Howler Monkey, Chestnut-eared Aracari, Snail Kite, Rusty-backed Antwren, Common Tody Flycatcher, White-browed Blackbird, and others species as we drive to our next lodge. We watch for Cream-colored Woodpecker, Ashy-headed Greenlet, Short-crested Flycatcher, Mato Grosso Antbird, Great Antshrike, and Purple-throated Euphonia. Near water we find Whistling and Capped Herons, Pygmy and Ringed Kingfishers, Sunbittern, Black-collared and Great Black Hawks, and Rusty-backed Spinetail.

Once we arrive at the hotel on the Rio Pixium, we settle in and check the feeders for brilliant-colored troupials, Palm, Silver, and Sayaca Tanagers, and Red-crested Cardinal. At this point in our journey we have seen numerous mammals and birds, and we can base our efforts on finding anything missing from our list.
Accommodations at Mato Grosso or similar (B,L,D)

Wed., Sept. 18 Pixaim River Area Wildlife & Birding

It's another morning for gazing at the sunrise while sipping good Brazilian coffee. This morning, pending what we still need to see, we can do a safari drive, or we can take a small boat ride on the Pixaim River to spot secretive species like Agami and Zig-Zag Herons. This is a good spot for Giant Otter and, with luck, a Tapir.

Driving back to Cuiabá, the landscapes are iconic and make for great pictures. We look for Black-capped Donacobious, Green-and-rufous Kingfisher, Little Blue Heron, and other species like some very impressive iguanas. We can break up our drive with a walk in Gallery Forest habitat looking for special birds like Helmeted Manakin, Mato Grosso Antbird, Band-tailed Antbird, Black-hooded Tanager, Blue-crowned Trogon, and more.

Dinner finds us sampling authentic Grosso cuisine, including legendary piranha and local beef.
Accommodations at the Mato Grosso or similar (B,L,D)

Thurs., Sept. 19 Wildlife Viewing | Return Drive to Cuiabá | Departures

Today, we make our way back to Cuiabá; the paved road is perhaps a welcome sight as we bid adieu to the

marvelous but often dusty Pantanal. Our plan is to arrive in Cuiabá in time for connections to São Paulo for evening flights out. Plan on flights after 4:00 PM. For those not finding a good flight match up, you can return to GRU and overnight, or simply overnight in Cuiabá at the Odara Hotel, close to the city's botanic gardens, and start fresh the following day. If you plan to overnight in Cuiabá and would like to add an outing at the botanic gardens, we are happy to offer that (added charge). (B,L)

Pre-Tour Atlantic Forest Extension

One of the most beautiful birding sites in the Atlantic Forest is Itatiaia National Park, located just 250 kilometers from São Paulo and home to one of the largest altitudinal differences of any birding site in Brazil, ranging from humid Atlantic Forest at 300 meters, up to the “campos de altitude” at 2,800 meters.

Itatiaia was Brazil's first National Park and shelters an incredible variety of birds, including Black Hawk-Eagle, Dusky-legged Guan, Slaty-breasted Wood-Rail, Giant Snipe, White-throated Hummingbird, Brazilian Ruby, Frilled Coquette, Black-breasted Plover-Crest, Saffron Toucanet, Yellow-fronted and Robust Woodpeckers, Wing-banded Hornero, White-browed Foliage-gleaner, Itatiaia Thistletail, Speckle-breasted Antpitta, Giant and Large-tailed Antshrikes, White-bibbed and Rufous-tailed Antbirds, Fork-tailed Pygmy-tyrant, Southern Antpipit, Velvety Black-tyrant, Pin-tailed Manakin, Eastern Slaty Thrush, Red-ruffed Fruitcrow, Black-and-Gold Cotinga, Brassy-breasted and Gilt-edged Tanagers, and Sharpbill.

This extension is a feast for the eyes for birders, an extraordinary array of species, many endemic to the region.

Thurs., Sept. 5 Arrival in São Paulo

You arrive today in São Paulo for our Atlantic Forest pre-tour extension. After gathering your bags and going through customs please take the convenient shuttle to the hotel. Rest up from the long flight and get to know the others in the group at dinner tonight.

Accommodations in at a convenient airport hotel (D)

Fri., Sept. 6 Itatiaia National Park—Atlantic Forest

We want an early departure after breakfast so we can arrive at Itatiaia National Park (170 miles) before noon. Along the highway we look for Southern Crested Caracara and both White-tailed and Crane Hawks. Our stop at the park's entrance station provides us with our first opportunity to bird the Atlantic Forest. White-eyed Parakeet put on a show as they jet overhead, while we look for Curl-crested Jay, Chalk-browed Mockingbird, Campo Flicker, Savannah Hawk, Ruby-crowned Tanager, Grey Monjita, and Crested Black-Tyrant. We have lunch, check into our rooms and then enjoy the stunning vista with an array of feeders and birds in the foreground. For birders and photographers alike, this is just such a treat to see so many of the colorful birds of this park, and so close: Red-breasted Toucan, Dusky-legged Guan, Green Honeycreeper, White-throated Hummingbird, Brazilian Ruby, Chestnut-bellied Euphonia, Green-headed and other tanagers, Crested Oropendola, and Red-rumped Cacique. This is a fine introduction to some of the species of the Atlantic Forest.

Accommodations at Hotel do Ype or similar (B,L,D)

Sat., Sept. 7 & Sun., Sept. 8

Midlevel & High-Altitude Exploration of Itatiaia National Park

These two days are dedicated to exploring the trails and roads of the central part of the park. We stop for flocks as we climb the road to the higher elevations of the park where we should find Maroon-bellied Parakeet, Planalto Hermit, Surucua Trogon, Black-throated Trogon, Rufous-capped Motmot, Tufted Antshrike, White-

bearded Antshrike, Variable Antshrike, Spot-breasted Antwren, Plain Antwren, Star-throated Antwren, White-shouldered Fire-eye, Ferruginous Antbird, Ochre-rumped Antbird, White-bibbed Antbird, Rufous Gnateater, Black-and-gold Cotinga, Blue-backed Manakin, Gray-capped Tyrannulet, Bay-chested Warbling-Finch, Buff-throated Warbling-Finch, Diademed Tanager, Olivaceous Woodcreeper, White-throated Woodcreeper, and Scaled Woodcreeper.

We drive through the area, making “specialty stops” to areas that have Violet-capped Woodnymph, Black Hawk-Eagle, and Collared Forest-Falcon. Higher elevation stops allow us to look for Araucaria Tit-Spinetail, Itatiaia Spinetail, and Rufous-capped Antshrike. A number of different species occur along the transition zones of the various elevation-dependent habitats as we climb the road to the top. These include a long list: White-barred Piculet, Yellow-eared Woodpecker, Plain-winged Woodcreeper, Black-billed Scythebill, Rufous-capped Spinetail, Pallid Spinetail, White-collared Foliage-gleaner, Ochre-breasted Foliage-gleaner, Buff-fronted Foliage-gleaner, White-browed Foliage-gleaner, Yellow Tyrannulet, Gray-hooded Flycatcher, Cliff Flycatcher, Black-tailed Flycatcher, White-throated Spadebill, Velvety Black-Tyrant, Long-tailed Tyrant, White-browed Warbler, Golden-crowned Warbler, Rufous-crowned Greenlet, Golden-winged Cacique, Black-goggled Tanager, Rufous-headed Tanager, Golden-chevrons Tanager, and Ruby-crowned Tanager. We should also find monkeys: Black Capuchin along with Black-striped Capuchin.

One of the fascinating aspects of climbing this road is the different plant communities and species. We bird in Araucaria forest, a unique, high-elevation conifer of the park; the tundra-like plants found in the shrubby lands at the top of the park; and lower elevation cloud forest, complete with salvias, bromeliads, and orchids. Lower elevations have intermittent forests embedded with grasslands and streams. All of these habitats provide ample opportunity to experience this well-known and diversity-rich part of Brazil.

Accommodations at Hotel do Ype or similar (B,L,D)

Mon., Sept. 9 Morning in Itatiaia National Park | Return to São Paulo

This morning we enjoy an early breakfast, and then drive to the Agulhas Negras road into the highlands on the far side of the park. This road gives us access to higher elevation habitat where some specialty birds are found. Notable among these are White-rumped Hawk, Rufous-thighed Hawk, Araucaria Tit-Spinetail, Itatiaia Thistletail, Buff-browed Foliage-gleaner, Rufous-tailed Antbird, Black-and-gold Cotinga, Black-capped Piprites, Brown-breasted Bamboo Tyrant, Shear-tailed Gray Tyrant, Diademed Tanager, Gray-throated Warbling-Finch, and Bay-chested Warbling-Finch.

After we finish birding here, we drive back to São Paulo where we meet up with our companions, overnight before the start of our main trip (and in-country flight) to the Pantanal!

Accommodations at an airport hotel (B,L,D)

Tour Details

Plan Ahead!

Protect yourself with Allianz Travel Insurance. Naturalist Journeys pays 100% of your flight carbon offset.

Cost of the Journey

The cost of the 11-day main tour is \$TBD DBL / \$TBD SGL. Tour price includes 10 nights’ accommodations, all meals as noted in the itinerary, airport transfers, land and boat transportation during the journey, professional guide services, park and other entrance fees, and miscellaneous program expenses. It includes two flight segments within country. The tour cost does not include airfare to São Paulo and from Cuiaba, personal

expenses such as laundry, telephone, drinks from the bar, and gratuities. Cost of the pre-tour Atlantic Forest extension is \$TBD DBL / \$TBD SGL. Extension costs are based on a group of four persons minimum and includes all lodgings, meals, transportation, guiding and park and reserve entrance fees.

Travel Information

Please plan to make air travel plans only after the minimum group size has been met. We will send you a confirmation email as soon as the trip has been confirmed.

Arrival airport is Guarulhos International (GRU). For the main tour, plan to arrive at leisure on July 3. Note: Most flights arrive in the morning, and your room may not be available until noon – 2:00 PM. Plan departures on July 13 from Cuiabá's Marechal Rondon International Airport (CGB), with a flight 4:00 PM or after, timed to connect with your own international flight out of São Paulo; most flights leave São Paulo around midnight. If yours is a day flight, you will need to overnight in Cuiabá or São Paulo to go out the next day. We end in Cuiabá as some may continue to other parts of Brazil and can fly direct to those locations.

If you participate in the pre-tour Atlantic forest extension, plan to arrive at leisure on June 29.

Important Visa Note

US travelers to Brazil must obtain an E-visa. The online application can be found here: <https://www.ivisa.com/brazil/apply-now?splitversion=202306-861mwmed6>

Photo Credits: Toco Toucan, Don Cooper; Monk Parakeet, NJS; Bare-faced Curassow, Greg Smith (GS); Capybara Family, Peg Abbott (PA); Jaguar, GS; Giant River Otter, PA; Hyacinth Macaws, Mark Wetzel

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