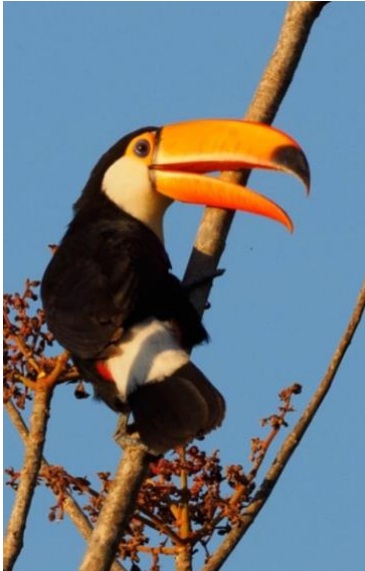
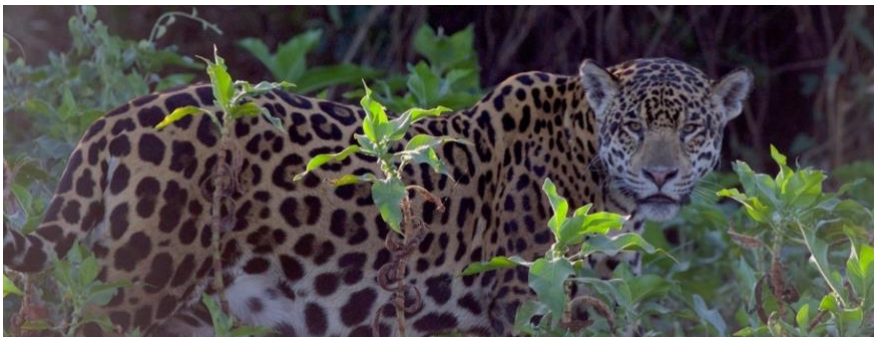


Brazil Pantanal: Jaguars! & More ...

With Naturalist Journeys & Caligo Ventures



July 17 – 26, 2019
With Atlantic Forest Extension
July 13 – 17
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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 Harpy Eagle, Greater Rhea, Hyacinth Macaw, Toco Toucan, and Helmeted Manakin top the list of impressive bird sightings. The 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 provide our accommodations, each with their 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 Highlights

- ✓ Try for South America's "Big Five" of mammals: Brazilian Tapir, Maned Wolf, Giant Anteater, Giant Otter, and Jaguar
- ✓ Witness the "Big Five" of birds: Harpy Eagle, Greater Rhea, Hyacinth Macaw, Toco Toucan, and Helmeted Manakin. Add Southern Screamer, Sunbittern, Scarlet-headed Blackbird, and so many more!
- ✓ Explore the Transpantaneira wilderness 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!
- ✓ Support the Pantanal Wildlife Center with your visit
- ✓ Find at least four species of monkeys and several hundred species of birds
- ✓ Scan for night birds under intense southern sky constellations

Tour Summary

9-Night / 10-Day Wildlife & Birding Safari with Bob Meinke
 \$5290 from São Paulo
 Arrival Airport is Guarulhos International (GRU),
 Departure Airport is Marechal Rondon International Airport (CGB) in Cuiaba



Itinerary

Wed., July 17 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. The transfer to our hotel is included; our hotel is about twenty minutes away and we can organize an early check-in as an option for those that need it.

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 return today and join you. 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 Hotel Matiz Guarulhos or similar (L,D)

*Note: Most flights from the USA originate Tuesday, July 16 to meet this arrival date.

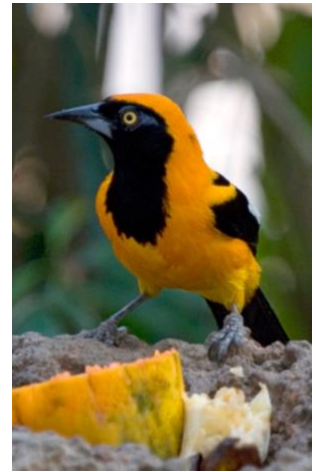
Thurs., July 18 Flight to Cuiabá | Transpantaneira Adventure Begins!

After an early domestic flight to Cuiabá (about two hours), we begin 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.

Our destination tonight is Pousada Piuval. Along the way, we might see Ringed Kingfisher, Red-crested Cardinal, Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, Toco Toucan, Jabiru, Limpkin, our first of many Capybaras, Yacaré Caiman, and more.



Pousada Piuval is located just 10km from Poconé. This is the first lodge on the Transpantaneira. It is small, about twenty rooms, and part of a large (7,000ha), family-run ranch. 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)

Fri., July 19 Wildlife & Birding on the Lower Transpantaneira

After breakfast we work our way from Pousada Piuval to SouthWild Pantanal Lodge, our home for the next two nights.

Perhaps we find a troop of Black-and-Gold Howler Monkeys, Chestnut-eared Aracari, Snail Kite, Rusty-backed Antwren, Common Tody Flycatcher, White-browed Blackbird, and others species as we drive. 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 our lodgings, we settle in and check the feeders for brilliant-colored Troupials, Palm, Silver, and Sayaca Tanagers, and Red-crested Cardinal. After dinner we may take a night safari looking for mammals, Rufous and Little Nightjars, and owls. We keep our fingers crossed for Great Potoo.

Accommodations at SouthWild Pantanal Lodge or similar (B,L,D)

Sat., July 20 Pixaim River Area Wildlife & Birding

It's another morning for gazing at the sunrise while sipping good Brazilian coffee. Today we spend time close to the lodge and also take a small boat ride on the Rio Claro or Pixaim River to spot secretive species like Agami and Zig-Zag Heron. This is a good spot for Giant Otters and, with luck and some searching, a Tapir.

The landscapes are unique 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 then return for lunch, a siesta, and 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 SouthWild Pantanal Lodge or similar (B,L,D)

Sun., July 21 Drive to Porto Jofre | Jaguar Boat Excursion



We enjoy wildlife walks again this morning before moving on to the end of the road at Porto Jofre, a little town on the Cuiabá River.

Along the way, working the road between ponds and scattered palm woodlands, we search for more birds and mammals that we have not seen yet. This lower part of the Pantanal has excellent wildlife, but many travelers do not reach this remote area. Here we try for Great-rufous Woodcreeper, Orange-backed Troupial, Spotted Rail, Pearly-vented Tody Tyrant, Great Antshrike, and others. We stay alert, perhaps finding a huge Yellow Anaconda, a troop of Coatimundi, or foraging Agouti.

From Porto Jofre, we travel for the next two days in a lovely houseboat. Rooms are air-conditioned, with private bath. This “floating hotel” takes us to where the wildlife has been spotted.

We check into our 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!

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

Mon., July 22

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 a 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 our welcoming houseboat. We celebrate our sightings with caipirinhas before dinner!

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

Tues., July 23 Birding & Wildlife Spotting on the Transpantaneira | Drive to Pousada Alegria

We say goodbye to Porto Jofre and depart again 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. We take our time getting to Pouso Alegre, a huge fazenda (cattle ranch) known for excellent wildlife — so many wildlife stops! 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. July water conditions concentrate the fish for foraging waders like Jabiru and Maguari Stork.

Pousada Alegre is lovely, with palms that attract several resident pairs of Hyacinth Macaw. The open savanna is edged by evergreen and semi-deciduous woodlands. Once settled, we enjoy trails and drives from the lodge for chances at rare Giant Armadillo, along with Black-tailed Marmoset, Black and Gold Howler Monkey, Southern Tamandua, and Giant Anteater. Among the snakes at Pousada Alegre is one of the greatest of them all, the Yellow Anaconda. The fazenda is also home to 13 parrot species, seven owls, 11 woodpeckers, and 16 hummingbirds. A highlight is the brilliant blue Hyacinth Macaw that roosts within earshot of the lodge — what a thrill!

At the ranch house, Brown Capuchins may join the various parrots and Monk and Yellow-chevroned Parakeets working over ripe mango trees. Long-tailed Ground Dove feed just outside the gate and Ferruginous Pygmy Owl call from the mango trees at dusk.

Relax at the ranch tonight and enjoy Brazilian barbecue.
Accommodations at Pousada Alegre or similar (B,L,D)

Wed., July 24 Full Day at Fazenda Pousada Alegre | Optional Horseback Riding | Night Excursion



Awaken early to a chorus of birds and Black-and-Gold Howler Monkeys roaring in the distance. Listen for Undulated Tinamou and witness the magic of a Pantanal sunrise. It is fun to watch the cowboys bring in horses for the day's work.

On an optional early morning walk, we scan for Southern Caracara, Guiraca Cuckoo, Turquoise-fronted Parrot, Buff-bellied Hermit, White Woodpecker, Gray-crested Cacholote, Greater Thornbird, Cattle Tyrant, Vermilion Flycatcher, White-rumped Monjito, and Campo Oriole.

After breakfast, we venture out on an open safari truck, enjoying the property and amazing savanna. Immerse yourself in the local activities of cattle ranching and ecotourism while cowboys help us spot wildlife. Frisky calves play in the fields while wide-spreading jacaranda trees decorate tree islands with purple blossoms. Some may wish to alternately venture out by horseback, a great way to experience ranch life.

In the cool afternoon, after lunch and a siesta (developing a rhythm here ...) we look for Brown Capuchin Monkey and birds like Purplish Jay, Red-billed Scythebill, Toco Toucan, Bare-faced Curassow, Yellow-billed Cardinal, Great Rufous Woodcreeper, Nanday Parakeet, Blue-crowned Trogon, and three types of spinetail: White-lored, Cinereous-breasted, and Chotoy. The day is full of action, with new things to see and admire.

After dinner we may venture out for an evening spotlighting adventure, with hopes of seeing Crab-eating Fox, Crab-eating Raccoon, cats such as Puma or Ocelot, Giant Anteater, and Tapir. We should also spot several night birds including Parakeet, and Band-tailed and Lesser Nightjars.

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

Thurs., July 25 Return to Cuiabá | Observation Tower

We have a last morning to enjoy the Pantanal and perhaps visit one of the local observation towers for close views of Jabiru nests, perhaps the most iconic bird of the Pantanal. Monk Parakeet attend these nests, and here we learn more about their symbiotic relationship.

We make our way back to Cuiabá; the paved road is perhaps a welcome sight as we bid adieu to the Pantanal. Our plan is to have a final dinner and overnight in Cuiabá so those with international flights can go out the following day at a time convenient to match up to that flight out.

Accommodations at the Slaviero Hotel, Cuiabá or similar (B,L,D)

Fri., July 26 Departures

We say goodbye and depart today from Cuiabá at your leisure to make International flights from São Paulo.

Pre-Tour Atlantic Forest Extension



Itatiaia is Brazil's oldest national park and one of the most sought-after birding sites along the Southeast coast of Brazil. Apart from the spectacular birds we encounter here, there are wonderful vistas, endemic plants, and a geologic background that sets a time and place. At different times of the year, it is even possible to have the park with relatively few other visitors!

Ranging from 2000 to 9200 feet in altitude, the reserve and its environs encompass a wide range of habitats, stretching from warm lowland forest to cool high-altitude grassland. A large number of Brazil's Atlantic Forest endemic species are found here, including the Black-and-gold Cotinga, Slaty Bristlefront, White-bibbed Antbird, and Brazilian Ruby. The park even has a bird named after it, the Itatiaia Spinetail, which is found only in shrubby areas above 1850 meters. The park is less than a half-day drive from São Paulo, which gives us ample opportunity to bird and explore this unique setting during our five-day visit.

Sat., July 13 Arrival in São Paulo

After clearing customs in São Paulo, you are met and transferred to our local hotel, located 20 minutes from the airport. Most flights arrive in the morning, so you should have the day to relax, rest, or explore the city at your leisure. In the late afternoon, your local guide provides a briefing about tomorrow's tour activities and locations. *Accommodations at Hotel Matiz Guaruhos or similar (D)*

Sun., July 14 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 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. Depending on which parrots or monkeys we find along the road, we should arrive at our lodge in time for lunch. We have our rooms and then access to a 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)



Mon., July 15 & Tues., July 16

Mid-level & 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. Specialty stops include 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 the 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 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)

Wed., July 17 Return to São Paulo

We spend our final morning on this part of the journey taking in the latest visitors to the feeders. We might find

Saffron Toucanet, Magpie Tanager, and some soaring raptors. A fine way to say "tchau" to this part of Brazil before heading back down to São Paulo to meet the rest of our group arriving for the main tour.

Accommodations at Hotel Matiz Guarulhos or similar (B,D)

Cost of the Journey

Plan Ahead!

Protect yourself with Allianz Travel Insurance. Their website will show a grid of tour cost and your age category for you to make selections. As of January 2017, Naturalist Journeys pays 100% of your flight carbon offset.

Cost of the Journey

The cost of the 10-day main tour is \$5290 per person, double occupancy, and \$5790 single occupancy. Tour price includes 9 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. Tour cost does not include airfare to São Paulo and from Cuiaba, personal expenses such as laundry, telephone, drinks from the bar, and gratuities for luggage handling or other services.

Cost of the pre-tour Atlantic Forest extension is \$1450 per person based on double occupancy, and \$1585 single occupancy. With five participants or less, a small surcharge, typically \$100 - \$200, may apply.

This tour is considered a safari due to the high demand for very limited space at the lodges. Payments are due in full at 120 days; please note that monies sent to the operator in Brazil for deposits on lodging will be applied as a penalty on an cancellation from the time of booking.

Travel Information

Arrival airport is Guarulhos International (GRU). For the main tour, plan to arrive at a time convenient for you on July 17. Please plan departures on July 26 from Cuiaba's Marechal Rondon International Airport (CGB). If you participate in the pre-tour Atlantic forest extension, plan to arrive at a time convenient for you on July 13.

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; Giant Anteater, PA; Pantanal Sign, PA; Pantanal by Horseback, NJS; Red-crested Cardinal, NJS; Pousada Puival, NJS; Orange-backed Troupial, NJS; Jaguar, PA; Brocket Deer, PA; Black Skimmer, GS; Tamandua, GS; Jabiru, PA; White Woodpecker, NJS; Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, Mike Boyce; Chestnut-bellied Guans, PA; Southern Caracaras, NJS; Green-headed Tanager, PA; Saffron Toucan, PA; Spot-billed Toucan, PA; Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Tom Dove.