

Brazil's Pantanal: Jaguars & More!

Species List | September 5-15, 2026

With Naturalist Journeys



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Summary: We saw a huge number of different bird, mammal, and reptile species on our once-in-a-lifetime trip to the one of the most uniquely biodiverse places in the world! Avian highlights included Toco Toucan, Hyacinth Macaw, Red-Legged Seriema, Jabiru, Capped Heron, Sunbittern, Great Potoo, Whistling Heron, Crimson-Crested Woodpecker and many, many more. However, the bird voted most memorable and impressive by our group was the icon of the pantanal, the Hyacinth Macaw. This beautiful macaw species was almost extirpated from the Pantanal and was critically endangered until dedicated conservation efforts in the Pantanal brought it back from the brink of extinction.

This was one of the luckiest groups ever when it came to mammal sightings and we had no shortage of views of some of the most famous residents of the Pantanal: the Jaguar, the Giant Anteater, the Giant Otter, the Brazilian Tapir and the Ocelot. Our first jaguar sighting came early in the trip when we saw a mother Jaguar with a new cub at Pousada Piuval, far from the river where we typically see Jaguars. On the river we had really great luck with a family of three jaguars hunting and resting along the shore (Jaguars were voted mammals of the trip) as well as two successful hunts (one caiman and one anaconda)! We also set a record for NJ trips and Giant Anteater sightings and we ended up seeing 22 different individuals throughout the trip. Mammals were a true highlight throughout the trip and we also saw Tapir, different primates and many others. This part of Brazil never fails to impress and it is a birdwatcher's paradise and a naturalist's dream.

BIRDS (187):

This species report Ebird link below details the 187 species of birds our group observed during the Pantanal portion of the tour, but does not include the birds from the Amazon extension.

If you're new to Ebird, be sure to click on "Show All Details" on the right side of the list as this will expand the report to show you where and when all of the birds were seen.

[Brazilian Pantanal | September 2026 | eBird Species List](#)

MAMMALS (21):

Giant Anteater *Myrmecophaga tridactyla*—We had amazing views of this unique and charismatic mammal in both the southern and northern Pantanal. 22 individuals in total!

Nine-banded Armadillo *Dasypus novemcinctus*—Seen in the southern Pantanal on safari, the most widespread and one of the largest armadillo species, but not as commonly seen in the southern Pantanal as the smaller six-banded species

Six-banded Armadillo *Euphractus sexcinctus*—We saw a few of these charismatic armadillos while on safari in the south

Greater Bulldog Bat *Noctilio leporinus*—seen throughout the Pantanal, especially feeding over the Cuiabá River in the evenings from the Panoramico houseboat (ALSO KNOWN AS THE GREATER FISHING BAT)

Proboscis Bat *Rhynchonycteris naso*—We saw a group of these charismatic bats on a tree on the Cuiabá river

Black-tailed Marmoset *Mico melanurus*—A brief sighting in the trees at Piuval

Black-and-gold Howler Monkey *Alouatta caraya*—We saw these large New World primates along the Aquidua river and the Cuiabá river. Both sexes start as the golden color and then males get darker and turn black as they age

Azara's Capuchin *Sapajus cay*—Several great observations throughout the Pantanal especially at SouthWild

South American Coati *Nasua nasua*—Really nice looks at these curious mammals at Pousada Pequi and along the Transpantaneira

Crab-eating Fox *Cerdocyon thous*—Frequent observations over multiple days of the trip, particularly at night or in the early morning. Genetic studies show that these 'foxes' are more closely related to South American 'wolves' such as the Maned Wolf than to true foxes

Ocelot *Leopardus pardalis*—We were treated to an extended and up-close view of a food-conditioned but still wild ocelot at SouthWild Lodge.

Jaguar *Panthera onca*—We were very lucky with jaguars, especially considering we saw a female with a cub at Pousada Piuval! We also got to spend a lot of time with jaguars that were actively hunting prey, including a female with two yearling cubs. This species is the world's third largest big cat after the lion and tiger and the Pantanal is the only place where they can be seen with any regularity

Giant Otter *Pteronura brasiliensis*—Nice looks at these incredible mammals hunting and feeding along the edge of the, the Cuiabá river.

South American Tapir *Tapirus terrestris*—We quickly saw two individuals at night while on safari at Pousada Piuval.

Red Brocket *Mazama gouazoubira*—We saw this small deer species on the shore of the Aquidua River

Pampas Deer *Ozotoceros bezoarticus*—Common at Pousada Pequi. Due to habitat loss and hunting, this deer has a highly fragmented distribution

Marsh Deer *Blastocerus dichotomus*—Seen both along the Transpantaneira and at SouthWild. The Pantanal is the stronghold of this largest South American deer species and we saw a number of nice individuals

Capybara *Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*—Extremely common in the Pantanal. It is the largest rodent species in the world and large groups of capybara can be found in most places where there is standing water

Azara's Agouti *Dasyprocta azarae*—Common throughout the Pantanal and seen many times on our trip

Brazilian Guinea Pig *Cavia aperea*—A small group seen in Piuval

Tapeti *Sylvilagus brasiliensis*—We had a very brief sighting of this rabbit species.

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS (13):

Red-footed Tortoise *Chelonoidis carbonarius*—We saw one of these beautiful tortoises on the Transpantaneira

Tropical House Gecko *Hemidactylus mabouia*—Common on the walls of the different lodges

Amazon Lava Lizard *Tropidurus torquatus*—A regularly seen "fence lizard"

Giant Ameiva *Ameiva ameiva*—We had fleeting looks at the beautiful green lizard, especially at Pequi and along the Transpantaneira

Argentine Black-and-white Tegu *Salvator merianae*—We had a really nice view of some big tegus that were actively hunting— the largest species of lizard in the Americas!

Golden Tegu *Tupinambis teguixin*—A second tegu species, often referred to as the Colombian tegu, that we saw in the Northern Pantanal

Green Iguana *Iguana iguana*—Observed many times along the different waterways

Yellow Anaconda *Eunectes notaeus*—We got to see a jaguar kill and eat one of these huge snakes, but the snake was obscured almost the entire time!

False Water Cobra *Hydrodynastes gigas*—A participant briefly saw this large “anaconda-looking” snake near a body of water at SouthWild

Rio Tropical Racer *Palusophis bifossatus*—A somewhat large snake seen in the grass at Pousada Pequi

Yacaré Caiman *Caiman yacare*—The most abundant reptile (terrestrial vertebrate!) in the Pantanal, where it was ubiquitous. We saw hundreds if not thousands of these crocodilians, including one pool on the Transpantaneira that easily had over 100 individuals

Chaco Tree Frog *Boana raniceps*—Common around lodges in the Pantanal

Veined Tree Frog *Trachycephalus typhonius*—Big tree frog seen on the walls around SouthWild in the late evenings and night