BRAZIL: CLASSIC PANTANAL

&

IGUAÇU FALLS PRE-TRIP

Brazil & Argentina

July 16 - 28, 2027
July 13 - 17, 2027

In a country renowned for its remarkable biodiversity, the Pantanal region of southern Brazil stands out. From the savannas and woodlands in the north to the vast marshes and winding rivers in the south, the Pantanal is home to concentrations of mammals and birds so extraordinary that it owns a reputation as one of the top wildlife viewing destinations in the Western Hemisphere.

For this trip, we present a wildlife safari extravaganza to explore the varied habitats of the vast Pantanal ecosystem, seeking the many special mammals, birds, and reptiles that lend the area its fame. In particular, this region has become the single greatest location for viewing Jaguars, with most visitors experiencing multiple sightings of South America's greatest predator.

Lying in the seasonally flooded basin of the Paraguay River, the vast lowlands of the Pantanal are home to countless numbers of waterbirds, raptors, and other wildlife. The abundance and diversity of large mammals (Jaguar, Giant Anteater, Ocelot, Capybara, Giant Otter, Marsh Deer, Brazilian Tapir, Black Howler Monkey, Crab-eating Fox, and Coatimundi) coupled with throngs of herons, ibises, storks, ducks, raptors, and kingfishers are reminiscent of the great wildlife spectacles of Africa.



Jaguar © Richard Teig



Giant Anteater © Sue Taylor



Ocelot © Larry Martin

By small bus, boat, and safari vehicle, we will explore the diversity of habitats that together comprise one of the world's largest freshwater wetland ecosystems. Mammal viewing is of high importance, with Jaguar and Giant Otter topping the list, but we will also anticipate encounters with some of South America's most remarkable birds including Greater Rhea, Red-legged Seriema, Jabiru, Southern Screamer, the incomparable Hyacinth Macaw, Toco Toucan, and Scarlet-headed Blackbird, in addition to many other species.



A central feature of this trip is a three-night stay on the Piquirí River, where boat excursions will likely produce multiple sightings of Jaguars, Giant Otters, and Yacaré Caimans, along with chances for Brazilian Tapir and smaller mammals. Other highlights include boat trips on the Rio Pixaím, Jabiru nest viewing from an observation tower, Ocelot viewing from a photo blind, and two evening night drives to search for birds and mammals. Beyond birding and mammal viewing, this trip promises a complete natural history adventure in one of the world's great ecosystems.

July 16-17, Days 1-2: Travel to Cuiabá via São Paulo

Participants not continuing from the pre-trip will depart the USA on July 16 this evening and arrive in São Paulo on July 17 in time to connect with any of several flights to Cuiabá. Upon arrival, you will be met by a representative of our local ground operator, who will provide transportation to our hotel. We will meet in the hotel lobby at a time to be announced for a trip welcome and orientation followed by dinner.

Those wanting to avoid the risk of misconnecting or desiring more rest time after the lengthy international flight are strongly encouraged to arrive into São Paulo or Cuiabá on or before July 16 and spend the night at an airport-area hotel. Upon request, VENT will be happy to assist with these arrangements.

NIGHT (July 17): Amazon Aeroporto Hotel, Cuiabá

July 18, Day 3: Transpantaneira and the Pantanal

After breakfast we will begin the drive into the Pantanal. Departing Cuiabá, our route will take us away from the city in a southwesterly direction, leading through small towns and rural areas en route to the town of Poconé, gateway to the Pantanal. Here, the famous Transpantaneira, or Trans-Pantanal Highway,

takes off on an 88-mile traverse over savannas, pasturelands, and freshwater marshes, past Greater Rheas before ending in Porto Jofre on the bank of the Cuiabá River.



Entrance gate to Transpantaneira Highway © Linette Mansberger



Greater Rhea © Linette Mansberger

We will spend the entire morning working our way about 40 miles down the highway, making frequent stops for wildlife viewing. Our destination is the SouthWild Pantanal Lodge set amid an expanse of native habitat and ranchlands where the wildlife is often plentiful and where the restaurant serves a hearty Brazilian fare.

At Poconé, at the head of the Pantanal, we will pass through a gate marking the head of the Transpantaneira. We will have the entire morning for wildlife viewing as we make our way south along the road. The wildlife concentrations for which this region is so famous will be readily apparent. We will anticipate our first encounters with Jabirus and Hyacinth Macaws -- two of the Pantanal's signature bird species -- and marvel at the assemblages of waterbirds and Yacaré Caimans that abound in seemingly every roadside waterhole. The array of wading birds that occurs here is nothing short of remarkable and includes a wonderful diversity of storks, herons, egrets, and ibises.

The Transpantaneira itself is a source of wonder. Developed in the 1970s as an ill-fated plan to connect the Brazilian interior with Bolivia via an overland route, the project ultimately halted in the wake of a funding shortage and insurmountable challenges attributable to geography and climate. Remarkably, the resulting road became a boon for wildlife viewing. Although a "highway" in some sense, it is really more of a glorified dirt road passing through a mosaic of farmlands, savanna, dry forest, and wetlands. Because portions of the highway are submerged in water for part of the year, the highway is linked continuously

with the help of 122 wooden bridges, underscoring the significance of this feat of engineering. A project to replace all the bridges is underway now and all the bridges up to SouthWild Pantanal have been replaced.



Jabiru © Linette Mansberger



Viewing Tower ©



Hyacinth Macaws © Larry Martin Linette Mansberger

Around mid-day we will arrive at SouthWild Pantanal on the banks of the Rio Pixaím. We will have lunch at the lodge, after which we will check in to our rooms and relax for a while before making a late afternoon boat trip along the Rio Pixaím. This evening we will visit the special photo blind, hoping to see Ocelots.

NIGHT: SouthWild Pantanal, Pixaím

July 19, Day 4: SouthWild Pantanal and the Rio Pixaím

We will explore the mosaic of gallery forest, pasturelands, and river that come together on the grounds of the SouthWild Pantanal Lodge. Our exact schedule will remain flexible, allowing us to take advantage of water conditions on the river and to follow up on recent wildlife sightings.

The coming of dawn in the Pantanal brings an astonishing flurry of bird activity. Just tearing ourselves away from the lodge feeders, which regularly host spectacular Toco Toucans, Bare-faced Curassows, raucous Chaco Chachalacas, Purplish Jays, and mobs of smaller birds including flashy Yellow-billed Cardinals, will be a challenge.

The boldly marked White Woodpecker and beautiful Orange-backed Troupial are often found in the trees around our rooms while the gallery forest and brushy pastures along the Rio Pixaím are alive with birds, among them Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Black-fronted Nunbird, White-wedged Piculet, Pale-crested and Golden-green woodpeckers, Red-billed Scythebill, Narrow-billed Woodcreeper, Pale-legged and Rufous horneros, Whitelored and Rusty-backed spinetails, Great Antshrike, Band-tailed Antbird, Helmeted Manakin, Stripe-necked Tody-Tyrant, Fuscous Flycatcher, Rufous Casiornis, Masked Gnatcatcher, Ashy-headed Greenlet, Greenbacked Becard, Variable Oriole, Red-crested Finch and many others. Such is the diversity of birdlife here that we could easily have seen more than 100 species by dinner!



Toco Toucans © Tari Voydanoff



Yellow-billed Cardinal © Chris Conard

Birding, however, is not all the forest offers. The first section of trail overlooks the river where we should see Yacaré Caimans sunbathing on exposed sand bars and Capybaras, the world's largest rodent, at very close range.

Further along, primates such as Brown Capuchin and Black-tailed Marmoset are seen with regularity, as is Azara's Agouti, a shy forest rodent. Down in the wetter, tall forest, we may also have an opportunity to ascend a canopy tower. Stationed along the river, the sturdily constructed tower offers commanding views of the surrounding forest and pasturelands.

We will also take a walk in back of the lodge to view Jabiru storks at a nest-site. Only here at SouthWild Pantanal can one experience eye-level views of this majestic wading bird from the height of a viewing tower. Made from steel and secured by thick cables, the tower is situated near the nest tree at a distance the birds find unobtrusive, as they have nested here for years. In the same area, especially later in the day,

we may be able to view Hyacinth Macaws returning for the evening roost. Decked in a uniformly dark-blue plumage, the Hyacinth Macaw is the largest macaw species and certainly one of the world's most beautiful birds.



Yacaré Caiman © Chris Conard



Capybara © Cynthia Berg

In the afternoon, we will enjoy a leisurely boat ride on the Rio Pixaím, stopping often to observe some of the amazing birdlife that occurs along the river and drifting close to a variety of kingfishers, herons, and hawks. One of our primary objectives is seeing the spectacular Giant Otter, one of the most impressive mammals in South America. This animal was once widespread throughout parts of lowland South America, but ongoing disturbance from human activities has caused the animal to decline broadly across its range. Here in the Pantanal, however, the animal is still delightfully common, and our chances for seeing this sought-after animal are good.



Jabirus on their nest © Tari Voydanoff



Hyacinth Macaws © Chris Conard

River trips are also excellent for encountering birds like Sunbittern, Gray-cowled Wood-Rail, and Boat-billed and Agami herons. The late afternoon is a perfect time to see parrots and macaws returning to roost, as well as large turkey-like birds known as cracids such as the Chestnut-bellied Guan, White-throated Piping-Guan, and Chaco Chachalaca perched up in the open. As dusk gathers around us, the bugling of Green Ibis is heard up and down the river while spectacular Nacunda Nighthawks may join many Band-tailed Nighthawks in their pursuit of flying insects along the waterway. Dusk also represents our best chance for finding the rarely seen and very secretive Zigzag Heron.

Tonight, or on our return visit, we will do a post-dinner night drive searching for mammals. Among the possibilities are a range of animals large and small, with chances for Crab-eating Fox, Giant Anteater, and South American (Brazilian) Tapir. The latter two species are always high on the wish-list of visitors to the Pantanal.

NIGHT: SouthWild Pantanal, Pixaím

July 20-22 Days 5-7: Transpantaneira (Pixaím to Porto Jofre) and the Rio Cuiabá

Our Pantanal adventure continues today as we set our sights south toward the Rio Cuiabá and the land of the Jaguar!

We will depart the lodge after breakfast and continue working our way south along the Transpantaneira. At this time, a couple of months into the dry season, the vast marshes of the Pantanal are beginning to dry out, concentrating wading birds, Capybaras, and Yacaré Caimans. Herons and egrets (including Capped Heron and Rufescent Tiger-Heron), Wood Storks, magnificent Jabirus, Roseate Spoonbills, and four species of ibis (including Plumbeous Ibis and Buff-necked Ibis) are all in abundance. Raptors are conspicuous as well, with Snail Kites and Black-collared Hawks being particularly abundant.

Five species of kingfishers frequent the stream and river edges, where we will also remain alert for Sungrebes, Sunbitterns, and Gray-cowled Wood-Rails. As we enter increasingly open marshlands, giant Southern Screamers are more in evidence, as are Southern Lapwings and Wattled Jaçanas. Both Large-billed and Yellow-billed terns cruise over the larger bodies of water, and the skies are frequently filled with martins and swallows. It's here that we could be treated to large numbers of waterfowl including Muscovy

Duck, Brazilian Teal, and one-to-three species of whistling-ducks. Parrots are also well represented in the Pantanal, among them fast-flying groups of Yellow-chevroned Parakeets, screeching colonies of Monk Parakeets, Turquoisefronted Amazon, and colorful Yellow-collared Macaws. However, one member of this family stands out above all others, the fabulous Hyacinth Macaw - - biggest and most spectacular of its tribe and a near endemic of this region. These incredible blue-and-yellow birds will be one of the primary targets as we travel through the Pantanal. We will also make a special stop to look for the stunning Scarlet-headed Blackbird, an uncommon and localized resident of marshes at the southern end of the Transpantaneira.



Sungrebe © Linette Mansberger



Sunbittern © Linette Mansberger

Although better known for its extensive marshes, the Pantanal also offers excellent gallery forest and savanna woodlands birding. Groups of screeching parrots, parakeets, and macaws constantly divert our attention from scanning the larger trees, where our glasses are apt to find White-throated and Red-throated piping-guans, Chaco Chachalacas, spectacular Toco Toucans, Chestnut-eared Araçaris, or groups of monkeys. Smaller birds are everywhere. Among those we will seek out are Blue-crowned Trogon, Buff-bellied Hermit, Gilded Sapphire, White-tailed Goldenthroat, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Black-fronted Nunbird, Pale-crested Woodpecker, Campo Flicker, Great Rufous Woodcreeper, White-wedged Piculet, Cinereous-breasted Spinetail, Rufous Cacholote, White-rumped Monjita, Rusty-fronted Tody-Flycatcher, Pearly-vented and Stripenecked tody-tyrants, Thrush-like Wren, Purplish Jay, Black-capped Donacobius, Chestnut-vented Conebill, Guira and Hooded tanagers, Yellow-billed Cardinal, Red-crested Finch and many others.

We could easily spend all day exploring our way to the end of the highway, but we will need to push on in order to reach the town of Porto Jofre around noon. There, we will be met by small boats that will take us up the Rio Cuiabá to the SouthWild Jaguar Suites, a well-appointed accommodation featuring large air-conditioned suites, 24-hour electricity, and private bathrooms (hot water showers and flush toilets). Perhaps more importantly, the air-conditioned dining room offers excellent food and lots of ice-cold drinks (including some spectacular caipirinhas!).



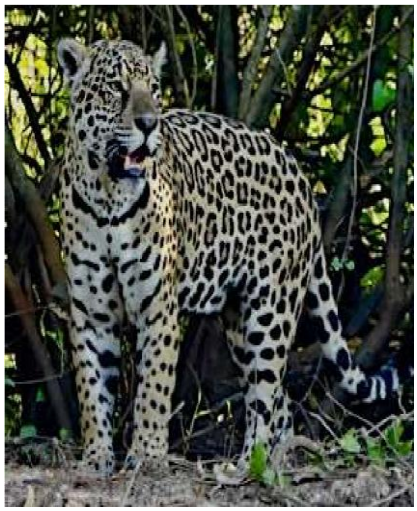
SouthWild Jaguar Flotel & Suites on Piquirí River © Christiane Shannon



Jaguar Suite © Christiane Shannon

Over the next couple of days, staying in the SouthWild Jaguar Suites will provide us with the opportunity of lodging ourselves right in the middle of prime wildlife viewing habitat and, more specifically, right at the crossroads of multiple Jaguar home-ranges. These magnificent predators are the largest wild cats in the Americas, and although they range from northern Mexico (and rarely the extreme southwestern United States) south to Argentina, nowhere are they as readily seen as they are in the Pantanal. Furthermore, the local abundance of large prey (primarily Capybaras and Yacaré Caimans) has seemingly allowed the Jaguars of this region to grow distinctly larger (50% heavier) than their cousins in Central America and Amazonia -- large males may reach 350 pounds! Until recently, Jaguar sightings were a rare event, even in the Pantanal, where densities are perhaps higher than anywhere else, but the establishment of a huge state park in this region has led to a relaxation of hunting pressure, which, coupled with an abundance of easy-to-catch prey and regular exposure to sport fishermen and birders, has resulted in a population of Jaguars that has lost some of its fear of humans. This has enabled the folks at SouthWild, without either

radio-collaring or baiting, to regularly locate Jaguars for their guests. Indeed, many trips to this area result in prolonged observations of different Jaguars of both sexes and of varying ages.



Jaguar © Tom Robertson



Jaguar © Patti Coolsen



Jaguar © Jeri Langham

Accordingly, finding a Jaguar will be a primary focus of our days here, although in the process, we will be spending lots of time looking for other mammals and birds. Most of our time will be spent working along the main channel of the Cuiabá River and its various tributaries from small boats, which not only will allow us to safely cover much more ground than we could on foot, but will also permit us to approach birds and other wildlife more closely.

We can expect an abundance of raptors (among them Great Black Hawk, Black-collared Hawk, Roadside Hawk, Savanna Hawk and Crane Hawk), waders and kingfishers, not to mention some spectacular breeding colonies of Neotropic Cormorants, Anhingas and herons. The many sandbars along the rivers provide nesting and loafing sites for Black Skimmers, terns, and shorebirds, while shaded riverbanks are prime places for spotting Bare-faced Curassows. This area also boasts the highest concentration of Giant Otters that we have ever encountered, and the opportunities for viewing and photographing these amazing creatures are unparalleled. We also stand an excellent chance of seeing Brazilian Tapir, the largest land mammal in South America.



Bare-faced Curassow © Tari Voydanoff



Giant Otters © Tari Voydanoff

Combined with abundant Capybaras, Yacaré Caimans, Black Howler Monkeys, other primates, and a nonstop parade of birds, our days here will be filled with adventure!

NIGHTS: SouthWild Jaguar Suites, Rio Cuiabá

July 23-24, Days 8-9: Morning on the River; Return to SouthWild Pantanal

After a final morning on the river, we will return to Porto Jofre by noon and start back up the Transpantaneira road. Our destination is the SouthWild Pantanal Lodge where our arrival will likely occur in late afternoon. Time-permitting, we may take a walk on the lodge grounds just before dinner. Perhaps we will walk over to the river for a look at the Rio Pixaím, or maybe head out back to view the Jabirus in the waning light, or simply gather in the yard to enjoy the setting sun and the coming night. If we arrive early enough, we may be able to take another boat ride on the Rio Pixaím and if our visits to the Ocelot photo-viewing platform and/or the brand-new Brazilian Tapir photo-viewing platform were not successful on our first attempts, we can try again. The following day will be spent in areas mentioned earlier for July 19.

NIGHTS: SouthWild Pantanal, Pixaím

July 25, Day 10: Early Morning at SouthWild Pantanal and Transfer to Pousada Piuval

Day 10 will give us another opportunity to experience the early morning rush of activity along the Rio Pixaím before we start working our way back north along the Transpantaneira to our next lodge, Pousada Piuval. It is located along the northern end of the Transpantaneira, which is drier and brushier, providing suitable habitat for some species that are rare or that tend not to occur in the lower, wetter portions of the Pantanal, such as Greater Rhea, Red-legged Seriema, Blue-crowned Parakeet, Campo Flicker, White Woodpecker, and Black-bellied Antwren.

NIGHT: Pousada Piuval, Poconé



Red-legged Seriema © Linette Mansberger



Campo Flicker © Chris Conard

July 26, Day 11: Pousada Piuval

This morning gives us a prime-time opportunity to bird the grounds of Pousada Piuval. Although this is only the fringe of the Pantanal, birds are amazingly abundant and conspicuous, and frequent stops in a range of habitats will be the order of the morning. Greater Rheas are frequently seen here and this area seems to be particularly good for species such as Crab-eating Zorro, Pearl Kite, Aplomado Falcon, Yellow-collared Macaw, Blue-crowned and Peach-fronted parakeets, Guira Cuckoo, Long-tailed Ground Dove, Great Rufous Woodcreeper, Rufous-fronted Thornbird, and Red-crested Cardinal.



Crab-eating Zorro © Chris Conard



Guira Cuckoo © Marcos Eugenio

Following lunch, we will take a break during the heat of the day before reconvening for a final afternoon outing.

Our activities will be determined in large part by searching for any species we haven't yet caught up with, or perhaps we will simply spend a relaxed afternoon visiting various waterholes and forest patches as we enjoy our final day in the Pantanal.

Night drives in this area have produced such treats as Giant Anteater; Ocelot; Crab-eating Fox; Crab-eating Raccoon; Great Horned, Black-banded and Mottled owls; Scissor-tailed, Little and Spot-tailed nightjars; Nacunda Nighthawk and both Common and Great potoos.

NIGHT: Pousada Piuval, Poconé

July 27-28, Days 12-13: Return to Cuiabá; Departure for Home

After a final round of birding this morning (time permitting), we will return to Cuiabá in time for early afternoon or later flights to São Paulo, which will connect to most overnight flights to the USA (arriving on the morning of July 28), allowing time for homeward connections.

IGUAÇU FALLS PRE-TRIP: BRAZIL & ARGENTINA

July 13-17, 2027



The Devil's Throat, Iguaçu Falls NP, Brazil © Kevin J. Zimmer

Comprising one of the largest waterfall complexes in the world, Iguaçu Falls surely ranks among the planet's great natural wonders. Here, in the southeastern Brazilian state of Paraná, on the border with Argentina, the Iguaçu River plunges off the Paraná Plateau in a multitude of thunderous cataracts. To the visitor, the sight is simply overwhelming. Across a 260º vista, curtains of water cascade with awesome force into the roiling lower Iguaçu River, the resulting mist vaulting hundreds of feet in the air.

For this optional pre-trip, we will spend two full days and parts of two others exploring the Iguaçu Falls region. Activities will include walking a number of paths and trails to the various viewpoints and overlooks that reveal the falls in their full glory. A highlight experience is standing front and center before the Devil's Throat, generally considered the falls' single-most astonishing site. We'll also explore the lush forests of the surrounding national park, searching for some of Brazil's most spectacular birds, including Black-fronted Piping Guan, Robust and Blond-crested woodpeckers, Red-ruffed Fruitcrow, Spot-billed Toucanet, Toco and Red-breasted toucans, Surucua Trogon, Rufous-capped Motmot, Plush-crested Jay, and Green-headed Tanager. We will also search for some of the rarer endemics, such as Buff-bellied Puffbird, Russet-winged Spadebill, São Paulo Tyrannulet, and Creamy-bellied Gnatcatcher.

Considering the long journey to reach the Iguacu Falls (one of the seven Natural Wonders of the World), we strongly recommend that tour participants consider arriving a day in advance of the official start of the tour. The Hotel das Cataratas is an ideal spot to rest up and recover from the overnight international flight, and has great sightseeing opportunities of Iguaçu Falls within an easy walk from the front porch. Arriving a day earlier will allow you not only to recover from lengthy flights but also to take advantage of several alternatives beyond the birding activities, namely a walk to falls and boat trip on the river.



July 13-14, Days 1-2: Travel to Iguaçu Falls

There are direct overnight flights from Los Angeles, Dallas/Fort Worth, Miami, and other cities, which depart on July 13 and arrive in São Paulo's Guarulhos International Airport (code GRU) on the morning of July 14. Participants arriving this day will clear customs and connect to a flight to Iguaçu Falls (code IGU) where participants will be transferred to Hotel das Cataratas.

Those wanting to avoid the risk of misconnecting or desiring more rest time after the lengthy international flight are strongly encouraged to arrive into São Paulo or Iguacu Falls on or before July 13 and spend the night. Upon request, VENT will be happy to assist with these arrangements.

NIGHT (July 14): Hotel das Cataratas, Iguaçu Falls



Plush-crested Jay, Iguaçu Falls NP, Brazil © Kevin J. Zimmer

July 15-16, Days 3-4: Iguaçu / Iguazu National Parks (Brazil & Argentina)

Through special arrangements with the Brazilian Park Service, we'll plan to spend the first full day in a more remote, less accessible part of the park where we will seek the more forest-restricted birds of the area. The avifauna here has an Atlantic rainforest component and among the more spectacular birds that we'll be searching for are the Black-fronted Piping-Guan, Red-ruffed Fruitcrow, Spot-billed Toucanet, Toco and Red-breasted toucans, Rufous-capped Motmot, Surucua Trogon, Blond-crested and Robust woodpeckers, Band-tailed Manakin and Plush-crested Jay. Smaller birds will not be neglected, and indeed, much of our time will be spent searching for roving mixed-species flocks which may yield numbers of birds such as White-throated and Olivaceous woodcreepers; Black-capped, Ochre-breasted, and White-eyed foliage-gleaners; Three-striped Flycatcher; Gray Elaenia; Southern Bristle-Tyrant; São Paulo Tyrannulet (endemic); Creamy-bellied Gnatcatcher; Rufous-crowned Greenlet; Blue-naped Chlorophonia; and Green-headed, Black-goggled, and Guira tanagers.

Time and conditions allowing, we're planning to spend the second day in the Argentina side of the falls. An early departure from our hotel will find us crossing the international border to Argentina in time to bird the famous road 101, where will enjoy a picnic breakfast. As the forest gains life, we might see Slaty-breasted Wood-Rail exploring the road edge, a Surucua Trogon singing and a pair of Yellow-fronted Woodpeckers

announcing their presence in a unique voice. The forest chorus will eventually become activated and allow us to look for feeding flock species including Eared Pygmy-Tyrant, Variable Antshrike, and Rufous-crowned Greenlet as well as Magpie, Chestnut-headed, Ruby-crowned and Swallow tanager. The list of birds here also includes swamp species such as Blackish Rail. By mid-morning it will be warmer and time to pay a visit to the Iguazu Falls in Argentina. We must emphasize that the order and sequence of activities depends greatly on the weather, bird activity and immigration control, therefore this paragraph basically indicates the plans for the day provided that everything is on our side. By around noon, we should be having lunch near the falls to get ready for a short drive to the Hummingbird Garden, a family-owned house that has been feeding these wonderful creatures for decades. There are several species reported; for this time of the year we hope to see Swallow-tailed, Fork-tailed and Gilden hummingbirds; Black Jacobin and Versicolored Emerald (two phenotypically different subspecies); and maybe a Black-throated Mango has arrived (local migrant). Surprises abound in Argentina, and we are sure today will be a nice complement to the Brazilian side. If a visit to the Argentina side turns out to be impossible for reasons beyond our control, we will pay a second visit to the Pozo Preto road, in the rainforest patch on the Brazilian side.

As is the case anywhere in tropical forests, there are a number of skulking birds of the forest interior at both sides of the falls, and seeing them will require special effort and luck. Some of these species are Pavonine Cuckoo, Rusty-breasted Nunlet, Short-tailed Antthrush, Russet-crowned Spadebill, and Southern Antpipit.

NIGHTS: Hotel das Cataratas, Iguaçu Falls



Swallow-tailed Hummingbird Eupetomena macroura © David Ascanio

July 17, Day 5: Departure from Iguaçu

It is said that the Brazilian side of the falls is best in the a.m. hours, when the morning light illuminates the cascading water, producing a series of mist-shrouded rainbows. We will arise early this morning and venture to the many overlooks for our final views of the extensive, small to huge waterfalls.

We will have a little while this morning to wander around the area, take photographs, and enjoy our remaining time before returning to the hotel to gather our belongings and prepare for departure. In the late morning, we will transfer to the Iguaçu Falls airport in time for a late morning connection (specific flights and time to be determined) to Cuiabá to begin our Brazil: Pantanal Safari tour.

Essential Tour Information

TOUR SIZE: Both sections are limited to 10 tour participants. However, VENT reserves the right to increase the limit to 11 to accommodate a couple when only 1 space is available

TOUR LEADER(s): This tour is led by **Erik Bruhnke** with the assistance of local leaders.



Erik Bruhnke has had a love for birds since he was a child. He graduated from Northland College in Wisconsin with a Natural Resources degree in 2008 and taught field ornithology for various semesters while there. As a devoted raptor nerd, Erik is drawn to hawkwatches. He worked as an interpreter for six seasons at Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory in Duluth, Minnesota; has counted migrating raptors at the Corpus Christi HawkWatch in Texas; and is the 2016 hawk counter at the Cape May Hawkwatch in New Jersey. Erik's avian field experiences have taken him throughout Oregon, Washington, Montana, Idaho, North and South Dakota, Maine, California, New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and western Canada. Erik's wildlife photography has won national awards, and his writings have been featured in Birder's Guide via the American Birding Association, BirdWatching, and Birdwatcher's Digest. When not traveling the country leading field trips and speaking at various birding festivals, Erik splits his time between the tropics of South Texas and the Northwoods of Minnesota. He loves to cook and bake in his free time.

TOUR COSTS & PAYMENT INFORMATION

TOUR FEE: For Brazil: Classic Pantanal, **$13,195** per person based on double occupancy or **$14,695** for a person requiring single accommodation. This includes all meals from dinner on Day 2 through breakfast on Day 12, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, all ground transportation during the tour, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does **not** include airfare to nor from Cuiaba. The fee also excludes laundry, personal expenses, and other items of a personal nature. For information about gratuities, please see the "TIPPING" sub-section below. If the minimum group size is not met, each participant will be charged a small-group supplement—shared equally and communicated in advance—to allow the tour to proceed.

TOUR FEE: For Iguacu Falls Pre-Trip: Brazil & Argentina, **$6,975** per person based on double occupancy or **$8,445** for a person requiring single accommodation. This includes all meals from dinner on Day 2 through breakfast on Day 5, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, all ground transportation during the tour, the group flight from Iguacu Falls to Cuiaba for those continuing on the main tour on Day 5 (see above) and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does **not** include airfare to nor from Iguacu Falls. The fee also excludes laundry, personal expenses, and other items of a personal nature. For information about gratuities, please see the "TIPPING" sub-section below. If the minimum group size is not met, each participant will be charged a small-group supplement—shared equally and communicated in advance—to allow the tour to proceed.

REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT: You may register for this tour through the VENT website or by calling our office (512-328-5221). The initial deposit for this tour is **$1,000** per person per section. At 180 days VENT will collect a second deposit that brings the total deposit amount to 40% of the tour price. We accept MasterCard and Visa for both deposits.

PAYMENTS: All tour payments may be made by credit card (MasterCard or Visa), check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). These include initial deposits, second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc. Full payment of the tour fee is due 120 days (March 18, 2027 for the main tour; March 15, 2027 for the pre-trip) prior to the tour departure date.

EXTRA ARRANGEMENTS: Should you wish to make arrangements to arrive early or extend your stay, please contact the VENT office at least two months prior to your departure date. We can very easily make hotel arrangements and often at our group rate, if we receive your request with enough advance time.

EXCHANGE RATE SURCHARGES: Tour prices are based on the rate of exchange at the time of itinerary publication. If rates change drastically, it may be necessary to impose a surcharge. If a surcharge is necessary, every effort will be made to minimize the amount. In many cases, these additional foreign exchange rate surcharges have been passed to VENT by its vendors and suppliers.

FUEL SURCHARGES: Our prices are based on fuel prices at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

TIPPING: An important part of the value of a VENT tour is knowing that tips for local service providers at our destinations—restaurant staff, hotel staff, drivers, local guides, and various other support staff—are included in your tour fee. If you would like to offer any of your local guides an additional tip, $5 to $10 a day is a common amount.

Tips for your VENT tour leader(s) are **not** included, but it is customary to tip one or both if you feel that you have received exceptional service. To assist in your planning, we recommend tipping your VENT tour leader(s) $15 to $20 per day, or the equivalent of approximately 2–4% of the tour fee.

If you plan to give tips by cash, they should be given directly to your tour leader at the end of the tour and **not** sent to the VENT office. Some of our tour leaders use mobile payment applications such as Venmo, PayPal, and Wise. If you would like to use this method, please ask your tour leaders directly whether they can accept tips through such an application.

We emphasize that tipping is optional and that these amounts are only recommendations. The amount you decide to tip is based entirely on your experience and at your discretion.

CANCELLATION & REFUNDS

CANCELLATION BY PARTICIPANT:

- **More than 120 days prior to the tour start date:** A refund of all monies paid will be issued, less 50% of the deposit (including initial and second deposit)
- **120 days or fewer prior to the tour start date:** No refund will be provided.

- **Optional add-ons:** Some tours offer optional add-ons that are designated as non-refundable. Any such add-ons are clearly identified as non-refundable at the time of booking. By selecting and purchasing an optional add-on, the participant acknowledges and accepts its non-refundable status. Fees paid for non-refundable add-ons are not refundable under any circumstances, regardless of when the tour is cancelled.

This cancellation policy applies to all participants and all tours (Pre-Tours and Extensions are considered self-contained tours separate from the main tour). Because unexpected events can occur, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance.

CANCELLATION BY VENT:

If VENT cancels a tour prior to departure without cause or good reason, VENT will provide the participant a full refund, which will constitute full settlement to the participant.

If VENT cancels or delays a tour or any portion of a tour as a result of any Force Majeure event, VENT will use its reasonable best efforts to refund any payments on the balance of the tour fee to participant; provided that, VENT will have no obligation to provide a participant with a refund and will not be liable or responsible to a participant, nor be deemed to have defaulted under or breached any applicable agreement, for any failure or delay in fulfilling or performing any term of such agreement. A "***Force Majeure***" event means any act beyond VENT's control, including, without limitation, the following: (a) acts of God; (b) flood, fire, earthquake, hurricane, epidemic, pandemic or explosion; (c) war, invasion, hostilities (whether war is declared or not), terrorist threats or acts, riot or other civil unrest; (d) government order, law or actions; (e) embargoes or blockades; (f) national or regional emergency; (g) strikes, labor stoppages, labor slowdowns or other industrial disturbances; (h) shortage of adequate power or transportation facilities; and (i) any other similar events or circumstances beyond the control of VENT.

This VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy does not apply to air tickets purchased through VENT or to any special arrangements, such as additional hotel nights, that fall outside of the services described in the tour itinerary.

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of $50,000. CST #2014998-50.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

SUGGESTED OPTIONS: To safeguard against losses due to illness, accident, or other unforeseen circumstances, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance as soon as possible after making a deposit. VENT has partnered with Redpoint Travel Protection as our preferred travel insurance provider. Through Redpoint, we recommend its comprehensive Ripcord plan, which includes a medical evacuation benefit. With this in mind, it is important to note that medical evacuation is not offered by Redpoint as a stand-alone policy or benefit. For travelers not interested in comprehensive travel insurance, VENT recommends Medjet and its MedjetAssist® plan. Medjet is not an insurance company, and Medjet Assist is not an insurance product; rather, Medjet is a membership-based air-medical transport company specializing in moving hospitalized travelers from an admitting hospital to a medical facility of choice. Medjet does not provide medical evacuation service from the point of injury or illness; yet, the MedjetAssist plan offers robust enough travel protection to satisfy the medical evacuation insurance requirement in place for many VENT tours.

About Redpoint Travel's Ripcord Plan

Ripcord is a completely integrated travel insurance program with single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims. Critical benefits include comprehensive travel insurance for trip cancellation/interruption, medical evacuation from your point of injury or illness to your hospital of choice; medical expense coverage, death of pet, and much more. Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as evacuation coverage in case of a natural disaster or political or security reasons, waiver for pre-existing medical conditions exclusion, and a "Cancel for Any Reason" benefit. Ripcord is available to U.S. and non-U.S. residents.*

For a price quote or to purchase travel insurance, please visit: **Ripcord Travel Insurance**; or click the Ripcord logo on our website (click Help > Preparation and Insurance > Trip Insurance); or call +1-415-481-0600. Pricing is based on age, trip cost, trip length, and level of coverage.

*To be eligible for the pre-existing medical condition exclusion waiver and the optional Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR) upgrade, you must purchase your policy within 15 days of making your first trip payment. The CFAR benefit provides reimbursement for 75% of covered costs, and increases the policy premium by approximately 50%. Policies may be purchased either for the full value of the tour fee at the time of deposit or in segments as individual tour payments are made (deposit, second deposit, final balance, additional arrangements, etc.). The "pay as you go" approach reduces up-front expense and ensures that the amount paid toward your full policy premium is in proportion to the amount paid toward the full tour fee. If you choose to "pay as you go," you must cover each deposit or payment within 15 days, and insure all non-refundable trip costs in order to maintain the CFAR benefit. Please refer to the policy for a full description of coverage.

About Medjet's MedjetAssist Plan

MedjetAssist is a membership program that functions like AAA for motorists. The company's primary service is air medical transport. Critical benefits of MedjetAssist include a staff on call and ready to provide assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; all-expenses-paid air medical transport in the United States and internationally to medical facility of choice, regardless of medical necessity; repatriation of remains; and no exclusions for pre-existing conditions.

For travelers under 75, MedjetAssist may be purchased as Short-Term Memberships of 8, 15, 21, and 30 days, or Regular Annual Memberships from 1 to 5 years. For travelers 75–84, Medjet offers a Diamond Membership that is the same program but with a few additional conditions.

For a price quote or to purchase MedjetAssist, please visit: Medjet.com/VentBird or call 1-800-527-7478. Pricing is based on type and term of membership.

GETTING THERE & REQUIRED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

AIR TRAVEL: Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. Per person fees apply for each set of travel arrangements: $50 domestic; $75 international.* Many of our travelers choose to make their own air travel arrangements, but we emphasize the benefits to using our services. If you book your air arrangements yourself, Victor Emanuel Travel is unable to provide support in managing any flight delays

and/or cancellations that could occur before and during a tour. When you purchase air tickets through Victor Emanuel Travel, our staff has ready access to your air ticket record and can provide assistance as problems arise. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements. **Please be sure to check with the VENT office prior to purchasing your air ticket to confirm that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. VENT cannot be held responsible for any air ticket penalties.**

*An air ticket will be purchased by Victor Emanuel Travel on behalf of the traveler with the traveler's consent. A purchase is considered final upon receipt of payment. If a ticket is subsequently reissued at the behest of the traveler (i.e. voluntary change of plans), the same fee rates apply for the reissue process, in addition to any fees that may be charged by the airline.

For those combining the Iguaçu Falls Pre-Trip with Brazil: Classic Pantanal, group commercial air travel from Iguaçu Falls (code IGU) to Cuiabá (code CGB) on Day 5 is covered by the tour fee. The specific flights will be selected by your tour leader.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

PASSPORTS: A passport valid for the duration of your visit is required.

VISAs: Electronic Visas are required for U.S. citizens traveling to this destination as of November 24, 2026. Information on how to apply can be found on the following website:

https://brazil.vfsevisa.com/

Because entry requirements can change without notice, we kindly remind all participants to double-check the latest information before traveling. If you hold a passport from another country, please check with your consulate or embassy for the most accurate guidance.

For Help obtaining a VISA: If you need assistance with your VISA, we recommend working with Travel Document Systems (https://www.traveldocs.com/ or 202-640-0257 in Washington, D.C.by phone), a company which efficiently handles visa procurement. Non-United States citizens should check with your local consulate or embassy for instructions.

BAGGAGE: Please limit baggage to one piece of luggage and one carry-on. The airlines now strictly enforce baggage regulations. Excess baggage charges, which can be substantial, are the personal responsibility of

each participant. Please consult your pre-departure materials and/or airline to find out specific weight restrictions.

As a precaution against lost luggage, we suggest that you pack a change of clothes, toiletries, medications, important travel documents, optics, and any other essential items in your carry-on bag. Due to ever-changing circumstances in the government's attempts to improve airport security, we recommend that you check the website of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for information pertaining to permissible carry-on items.

WHAT TO BRING

CLOTHING: Weather will be generally warm to hot. Light field clothing, including several pairs of pants and shorts and comfortable shirts, will be appropriate. **DARK-COLORED OR NEUTRAL CLOTHING IS REQUESTED, AS WHITE AND OTHER BRIGHT COLORS MAY FRIGHTEN SECRETIVE BIRDS.** One set of warm clothing should be included to deal with possible cold fronts that reach the region, on occasion bringing the temperatures down into the 50s or, rarely, even the 40s. This should include a thermal fleece or warm sweater and/or lightweight jacket to cut the wind, all of which could also prove particularly handy on morning boat trips. Be sure to have one pair of good hiking boots or comfortable walking shoes and a second pair to change into. A swimsuit is also suggested, and raingear, although likely not needed, is recommended. Dress will be casual throughout.

FOOTWEAR: We recommend a good trail-walking shoe or light hiking boot when in the field, and a second pair of comfortable shoes to change into for time around the lodge or on the Flotel. Athletic shoes are acceptable but will not keep your feet dry and can become soiled from muddy conditions. Rubber boots are not recommended because these departures are conducted in the dry season, when the trails and ground are typically dry, and chiggers are less of an issue. Most people find rubber boots uncomfortably warm, and they add a lot of weight and take up substantial space in your bags, and, on this tour, we spend a lot of our time birding from boats and open-sided safari trucks at Piuval), where boots are not needed.

EQUIPMENT: Pack a flashlight or headlamp, water bottle, alarm clock, and day pack. Your leader will have a spotting scope, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so. Many electrical outlets in Brazilian hotels and lodges require a different plug type than the standard outlets in the United States. Therefore, a set of plug adaptors (available at a wide range of stores, including most airport terminal gift

shops that sell travel accessories) is recommended for participants wishing to charge camera batteries and other appliances.

Binoculars: We strongly recommend you bring a pair of good binoculars of 8x32, 8x42, or 10x42 magnification. Please do not bring mini-binoculars of any kind. Some people like them because they are small and lightweight; but they have an extremely small field of view and very poor light gathering power. You will find that 8x32 binoculars are compact and light enough.

Spotting Scopes: Your tour leaders will have scopes available for group use throughout the trip, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so.

DESTINATION INFORMATION & LOCAL CONDITIONS

CLIMATE & WEATHER: June, July, and August are part of the dry season in the Pantanal, so rainfall is generally limited. Mornings are typically cool, with daytime temperatures warming into the upper 80s or low 90s °F.

Since these months fall during the austral winter in the southern hemisphere, occasional cold fronts may move north from farther south. These can bring overcast skies, some rainfall, and temperatures up to 20 degrees below average.

At Iguaçu Falls, conditions can be warm, especially on sunny days. Temperatures generally range from lows in the 50s °F (occasionally the high 40s) to daytime highs in the 70s and 80s, with occasional temperatures in the 90s. Travelers should be prepared for variable conditions.

CONDITIONS: Your trip to Brazil will be an exciting and full travel experience in which wildlife viewing is paramount. Our time in the field will be spent seeking a number of the region's signature birds, mammals, and other wildlife, in addition to learning about the region's complex ecology.

Our days will typically begin with breakfast followed by a full morning in the field. After lunch we will break during the heat of the day before going out again later in the afternoon.

Travel will be aboard a combination of vehicles ranging from open safari-style trucks to a closed air-conditioned bus or van. . At SouthWild Pantanal we will walk trails in the dry forest and take daily (mostly afternoon) boat trips on the Pixaím River. All walking will be on flat and well-maintained trails.

Additionally, there may be an opportunity to ascend a canopy tower, which will require walking up a reinforced steel tower via a series of staircases.

We will spend several days on the Rio Piquirí where we will stay in the SouthWild Jaguar Suites. Our days will be spent cruising portions of the main Cuiabá River channel and a number of smaller tributaries in search of wildlife, especially Jaguars and Giant Otters. We will travel aboard a stable and comfortable motorboat designed to enter areas of shallow water. With a full group we may utilize two boats.

All accommodations are air-conditioned and contain en suite bathrooms.

Overall, physical demands will be easy, but please bear in mind that some of our excursions may involve a moderate amount of walking and standing. We emphasize that no one will be subjected to physical demands that exceed their capabilities. All walking will be done at a slow pace.

CURRENCY & SPENDING: Brazilian Real. MasterCard and Visa are more widely accepted than American Express, but all are useful, particularly in major population centers. Sometimes the credit card machines malfunction, and for that reason you should consider having some cash with you. You will want to bring enough cash to cover personal expenses not included in the program (and that might not payable with credit card), such as gifts, laundry, gratuities, meals on your own, and personal items Some places are reluctant to accept U.S. dollars, so it might be a good idea to exchange some some dollars for Brazilian Reals before leaving home or at the arrival airport in Brazil.

Credit cards are accepted in Cuiabá, at SouthWild Pantanal lodge and Pousada Piuval on the main tour, but note that credit cards are not accepted at the Jaguar Suites.

ELECTRICITY: The electrical current in Brazil ranges from 110V to 220V, depending on the region of the country. Electrical outlets are one of four standard socket types: “A,” “B,” “C”, and “N.” The “A” and “C” types are similar; both are ungrounded and receive two-pronged plugs. The “A” plug is outfitted with two parallel blades, and the “C” plug is equipped with pins instead of blades. Many outlets in Brazil are a hybrid between the two types and accept either plug. The “B” type socket is the American 3-prong style and is less common. The “N” plug is something like the “C” plug but with a third pin added as a ground. The lodge at SouthWild Amazon provides guests with plug adapters to accommodate American-style plugs. Still, if you have concerns, you should consider bringing a set of plug adaptors (available at a wide range of stores, including

most airport terminal gift shops that sell travel accessories). An electrical current converter may be required as well. Please check the adaptability of your electronics and electrical appliances to verify your needs.

INTERNET ACCESS: Expect Wi-Fi to be available at all lodges and hotels. It generally works well in Cuiabá, at Pousada Piuval (in dining room and reception, but not in all rooms), and at both SouthWild Pantanal Lodge and the Jaguar Suites, but can be slow or erratic the farther you get from Cuiabá.

LANGUAGE: Portuguese is the primary language spoken in Brazil, but English and Spanish are spoken by some staff at hotels and lodges.

LAUNDRY SERVICE: Laundry can be done at SouthWild Pantanal and Jaguar Suites. Laundry service at SouthWild Pantanal is expensive and sometimes only dollars or reals are accepted. However, credit cards are currently accepted for items purchased at the gift shop.

HEALTH & SAFETY

HEALTH: VENT follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for standard travel precautions, which includes vaccination against a variety of preventable diseases. Among these so-called Routine Vaccinations are measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine (boosters for adult travelers), and Varicella (Chickenpox). You should also be up-to-date with Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccinations.

If you are taking personal medication, prescription or over-the-counter, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

SUN EXPOSURE: The sun's ultraviolet rays are dangerous under prolonged exposure (sometimes only a matter of minutes), even in winter and early spring. Anytime you are outdoors you will want to protect your skin, including your lips, eyes, nose, and ears. A severe sunburn is potentially very painful and will affect your level of enjoyment. Always protect yourself when outdoors and be sure to bring an ample supply of high SPF sunscreen and lip balm. We strongly recommend the use of ultra-violet blocking, polarized sunglasses.

INSECT REPELLENTS: There are insect repellents for the skin and an insect repellent used to treat clothing that should not be applied to the skin.

Insect repellents for the skin are commonly available in three forms:

- DEET: (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide): A chemical compound that is marketed under various brand names (OFF!®, Cutter™, Ultrathon™, etc.) and offered in a variety of formulations including sprays, lotions, time-release preparations, and disposable wipes. The formulations will state a percentage of the active ingredient DEET on the packaging. DEET may be applied to exposed skin directly and/or sprayed on clothing. Please be careful when applying DEET as it can damage plastics and lens coatings.
- Picaridin: A synthetic formulation that is derived from piperine, a substance found in plants that produce black pepper.
- Herbal insect repellents: Various mixtures of organic ingredients such as oils from eucalyptus, citronella, cedar, and other herbs. The herbal repellents are more difficult to categorize because of the difference in ingredients from one brand to another. There is considerable variation in their effectiveness.

Insect repellent for clothing is marketed in one approved formulation:

- Permanone® (Permethrin): is an odorless spray-on repellent that may be used for pre-treatment of clothing, gear, and tents. It should not be used directly on the skin or sprayed on clothing while it is being worn. The pre-treatment process requires a number of hours to complete and must be done outdoors, so it is best completed in advance of travel. Do-it-yourself pre-treatment must be repeated more often than commercial treatment using Insect Shield® technology. It is available at various outdoor stores and can easily be found online.
- Insect Shield® apparel: Clothing pre-treated with Permanone is made by a variety of manufacturers. It is available for purchase from some sporting goods suppliers. The clothing is advertised as retaining its repellency for up to 70 washings.

The US EPA offers a search tool to help choose a repellent that is best for a particular situation. For example, some repellents work for mosquitoes, but not for ticks.

https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/which-insect-repellent-right-you

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta Georgia. The CDC operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers' Information Line at 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636), or you can check their website at www.cdc.gov/travel. Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new_e.html (click on travel health).

Yellow fever vaccination is highly recommended for most individuals. Some individuals may have medical conditions for which vaccination is contraindicated.

Malaria has been confirmed in Brazil, including the chloroquine-resistant strain, but is highly unlikely on this tour. We suggest that participants consult their physician as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for current recommendations before beginning a prophylaxis regimen.

Cholera has been reported in Brazil but is highly unlikely to be contracted anywhere along our route. No country requires cholera vaccination for direct travel from the USA and no vaccinations are required to return to the USA. Please consult your physician for any recommended preventative treatment.

Two mosquito-borne diseases, **Dengue** and **Zika**, occur in Brazil, but we believe the risk to VENT travelers is extremely low. These diseases are mosquito-borne infections transmitted by mosquitos of the genus *Aedes*, and are related to other tropical diseases: Yellow Fever, West Nile virus, and Chikungunya. This type of mosquito bites during the day and typically is found in areas of dense human habitation where sanitation and drainage of standing water is poor. We will not be in such areas.

Your safety is our highest priority, and we want to emphasize that the best way to avoid mosquito-borne diseases is to take appropriate precautions in avoiding mosquito bites:

- Stay informed about these diseases and recent outbreaks
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants, socks and shoes, and a hat
- Use effective insect repellents (those containing DEET) and reapply regularly

A Note About Chiggers: This tour visits areas where chiggers are known to occur. Chiggers are tiny parasitic mites found in most warm weather areas of the southern United States and the world's tropics. They are especially numerous in grassy areas, where, in the immature stage, they attach themselves to other animals or humans who make contact with the grass as they pass by. Chiggers do not suck blood and

the majority of species do not carry disease. They do feed on bodily fluids through a process in which a digestive enzyme is produced by the chigger which essentially liquefies the skin around the area where the chigger is attached. The chigger is not usually attached to the skin for more than a few hours before it either falls off or is knocked off. Our bodies respond by producing a hardened area as a defense against the chigger's digestive enzyme. Though the chigger may be long gone, it is the presence of the hardened area, and the body's natural process of reabsorbing it that typically causes intense itching, often lasting for a week or more. Chiggers like to attach themselves to areas of thin skin, like around the ankles, beltline, undergarment lines, knees, and elbows.

Chiggers can be avoided by following these procedures:

- Avoid walking or standing in areas dominated by grass. These areas are where one is most likely to encounter chiggers.
- Tuck your pants into your socks to avoid direct skin-to-grass contact. Chiggers can find their way through clothing, but this is a standard and effective prevention technique.
- Apply insect repellent to your skin and clothing. Please refer to the Insect Repellent section for important information about selecting and applying repellent.
- Powdered sulfur applied to waist, bottoms of pants, sock and boots is also effective at repelling chiggers. However, be warned that clothes will retain the sulfur odor for several washings. If using sulfur, never touch your eyes, nose, or mouth before washing your hands first.
- Shower at the end of each day in the field. Use a washcloth to vigorously rub your legs, feet, and ankles.

By following these methods, you should be able to avoid all chigger bites, as well as tick bites. If, however, you are bitten by chiggers anyway, you can reduce or eliminate the symptoms by applying benzocaine or hydrocortisone creams, calamine lotion, After Bite, or any number of anti-itch products.

As standard travel precautions, you should always be up to date with tetanus shots, and strongly consider inoculations against hepatitis types A and B.

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta. The CDC operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers' Information Line 800-CDC-INFO (232-4636) or you can check their website at

www.cdc.gov/travel. Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new_e.html (click on travel health).

SUGGESTED READING & TRIP PREPARATION

A number of traditional booksellers and online stores list excellent inventories of field guides and other natural history resources that will help prepare you for this tour. We recommend **www.amazon.com** which has a wide selection; **www.buteobooks.com** and **www.nhbs.com** which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and **www.abebooks.com** for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

FIELD GUIDES:

Gwynne, John A., Robert S. Ridgely, Guy Tudor and Martha Argel. ***Wildlife Conservation Society Birds of Brazil: The Pantanal & Cerrado of Central Brazil*****.** Ithaca and London: Comstock Publishing Associates, 2010. This excellent field guide should be considered the primary bird identification reference for the vast Pantanal Region as it covers virtually every species possible on the Pantanal portion of this tour**.**

Ridgely, Robert S., John A. Gwynne, Guy Tudor & Martha Argel. ***Wildlife Conservation Society Birds of Brazil: The Atlantic Forest of Southeast Brazil including São Paulo & Rio de Janeiro.*** Ithaca and London: Comstock Publishing Associates, 2016. Most of the species we will find at Iguaçu Falls are illustrated in this field guide and are of better quality than those in the Van Perlo Guide. Unfortunately, the maps do not include Iguaçu Falls, but the descriptive text is much better.

Van Perlo, Ber. ***A Field Guide to the Birds of Brazil.*** Oxford University Press, 2009. This guide has minimal text, and somewhat uneven quality of illustrations, but it is a significant improvement on all previous attempts at a Brazilian field guide, and does offer range maps, text and illustrations for virtually all of Brazil's birds in a single volume. You will not need this guide for the Iguaçu Falls Pre-trip if you have the one recommended above.

Other Resources:

Erize, Francisco, Jorge Rodriguez Mata, and Maurice Rumboll*.* ***Birds of South America, Non-Passerines: Rheas to Woodpeckers.*** Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2007. Generally good illustrations and useful written descriptions of the non-passerine birds of South America. A good complement to the two volumes by Ridgely and Tudor listed below.

Hilty, Steven L. ***Birds of Tropical America*****.** Shelburne, VT: Chapters Publishing Ltd., 1994. Subtitle: "A watcher's introduction to behavior, breeding and diversity." (Paperback: April 1996.) This wonderful guide delves into the ecology of tropical birds beyond "What is it?" Written for the lay person, this is a highly "readable" book that avoids overly technical jargon and that does not bog down in heavy science. A valuable resource and an excellent field guide companion.

Ridgely, Robert S., and Guy Tudor. ***The Birds of South America, Volume I: The Oscine Passerines: Jays, Swallows, Wrens, Thrushes and Allies, Vireos, Wood-warblers, Tanagers, Icterids and Finches*****.** Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1989. Very useful reference, with range maps and illustrations of many species not previously illustrated. (http://birds.cornell.edu; select "Audio Guides")

Ridgely, Robert S., and Guy Tudor. ***The Birds of South America Volume II: The Suboscine Passerines: Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers, Antbirds, Gnateaters, and Tapaculos, Tyrant Flycatchers, Manakins and Cotingas*****.** Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1994. Very useful reference, with range maps and illustrations of many species not previously illustrated. (http://birds.cornell.edu; select "Audio Guides")

Ridgely, Robert S., and Guy Tudor. ***Field Guide to the Songbirds of South America: The Passerines*****.** Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009. This book condenses the text from the two previous references into a single volume with many additional illustrations (400+ species). It has more of a field guide format, and provides consistently excellent illustrations and text for the vast majority of Brazilian passerines. This plus the Erize, Mata & Rumboll guide to the Non-Passerines would give good coverage of the vast majority of Brazilian birds.

Butterflies:

D'Abrera, Bernard. ***Butterflies of South America***. Australia: Hill House, 1984. Good pocket guide, covers many Genera, nice pictures.

Mammals:

Emmons, Louise H. ***Neotropical Rainforest Mammals***. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997. Good pictures and excellent text. (An audio field guide CD also available from this author: see below.)

General Nature:

Caufield, C. ***In the Rainforest****.* Chicago: Random House, 1985.

Forsyth, Adrian, Ken Miyata et al. ***Tropical Nature***. Scribner, 1987. (Paperback)

Kricher, John. ***A Neotropical Companion***. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.

Pierson, David L., and Les Belesky. ***The Ecotravellers' Wildlife Guide Brazil Amazon and Pantanal***. Academic Press, 2001.

Stap, Don. ***Parrot without a Name: The Search for the Last Unknown Birds on Earth***. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991. An account of field expeditions with Ted Parker and John O'Neill, among others.

CLO Apps

eBird. **Cornell Lab of Ornithology.** Among the largest and most successful citizen science projects in existence, eBird is an essential tool in promoting bird study and conservation. Among a range of benefits, eBird allows users to keep a variety of lists in a single application. When taxonomic splits are incorporated, lists are automatically updated. Additionally, trip leaders can share daily lists, so one only need accept a shared list and it will upload to your files. Highly recommended.

Merlin Bird ID. **Cornell Lab of Ornithology.** Merlin is an app designed as a birding coach for beginning and intermediate birdwatchers. Excellent for use in the field, Merlin asks the observer a series of questions about his or her bird sighting, including date and location, and color, size, and behavior of a bird. Merlin then processes the viewer's responses to present a shortlist of possible identifications, from which the user can choose the likely bird. Species profiles include a brief physical description, photographs, and sound samples. The Photo ID feature allows anyone with a camera to snap a photo and obtain a list of suggestions. Merlin's Sound ID feature allows identification of birds through audible recognition. To use Merlin, download the app and the appropriate regional "pack." Highly recommended.

TERMS, CONDITIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc., a Texas corporation, and/or its agents (together, "***VENT***") act only as agents for the participant in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the participant or in carrying out the arrangements of the

tour. VENT accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in airfare or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will be borne by the participant, as tour rates only provide for arrangements for the time stated.

VENT reserves the right (i) to substitute hotels of similar category, or the best reasonable substitution available under the circumstances, for those indicated and (ii) to make any changes in the itinerary that are deemed necessary by VENT or which are caused by third party transportation schedules (i.e. railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, etc.).

VENT reserves the right to substitute leaders or guides on any tour. Where VENT, in its sole discretion, determines such substitution is necessary, it will notify tour participants.

VENT reserves the right to cancel any tour prior to departure with or without cause or good reason. See the VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy set forth above.

Tour prices are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on November 23, 2026 and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change thereto.

VENT reserves the right to decline any participant's Registration Form and/or refuse to allow any participant to participate in a tour as VENT deems reasonably necessary, in its sole discretion. VENT also reserves the right to remove any tour participant from any portion of a tour as VENT deems necessary, in its sole discretion, reasons for such removal include but are not limited to, medical needs, injury, illness, inability to meet physical demands of a tour, personality conflict or situations in which such removal is otherwise in the best interest of the tour, the tour group and/or such participant. A participant may also voluntarily depart from a tour. If a participant is removed from a tour or voluntarily departs from a tour, such participant will be responsible for any expenses associated with such removal or departure, including but not limited to, transportation, lodging, airfare and meals, and VENT will have no obligation to refund or reimburse any such removed or departed participant for any tour payments or deposits previously paid by such participant.

Baggage is carried at the participant's risk entirely. No airline company, its employees, agents and/or affiliates (the "***Airline***") is to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time participants are not on board the Airline's aircraft. The participant ticket in use by any Airline, when issued, will constitute the sole contract between the Airline and the purchaser of the tickets and/or the

participant. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for VENT tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airlines Reporting Corporation.

View the complete Terms and Conditions on our website.

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