

# HIGHLIGHTS OF BRAZIL'S ATLANTIC FOREST

**JANUARY 31 – FEBRUARY 9, 2009**

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*Brazil's Atlantic Forest region boasts more endemic species of birds than any other single region in South America. From stunningly beautiful hummingbirds and tanagers, to skulking antbirds and a challenging array of flycatchers, the Atlantic Forest has it all. To see all or nearly all of the endemics takes time and a fair bit of moving around, and that is the domain of our perennially popular Southeast Brazil Tours (Parts I and II). This tour is designed for those desiring a shorter trip that maximizes birding time, minimizes travel time, and still delivers an impressive diversity of Atlantic Forest endemics at a reasonable pace.*

*Intervales State Park is the ideal location in which to immerse oneself in the rich avifauna of Brazil's Atlantic Forest. Located within a four-hour drive from São Paulo's international airport at Guarulhas, blessed with a delightfully temperate climate, and nestled within an impressively large expanse of diverse foothill forest, Intervales offers a singular birding experience that is unexcelled in Southeast Brazil. Here, where Red-capped Parrots, Large-tailed Antshrikes and Diademed Tanagers can all be seen from the balcony of our lodge, and where Swallow-tailed Cotingas, White Woodpeckers and Red-eyed Thornbirds all nest in or around the clearing surrounding the dining hall, the birds are literally at our doorsteps. Nor will we have to venture far afield when it comes time to bird the forest interior, for Intervales is blessed with an extensive system of jeep tracks that are ideal for group birding. These tracks will give us access to some of the most exciting birding that South America has to offer, including many of the most sought-after Atlantic Forest endemics. Whether you are a first-timer to Brazil; a veteran still looking for such prizes as Black-fronted Piping-Guan, Long-trained Nightjar, Rusty-barred Owl, Blue-bellied Parrot, Plovercrest, Helmeted Woodpecker, White-bearded and Giant antshrikes, Atlantic Royal Flycatcher, Russet-winged Spadebill, Red-ruffed Fruitcrow, Spotted Bamboowren and Half-collared Sparrow; or someone who simply wants a week of exceptional, carefree birding in an exotic and pleasant locale, Intervales is the place to be.*

*Note that this tour can be combined with our Brazil: Amazonia on the Rio Roosevelt (January 22–February 1, 2009) for those with more time and desiring an unrivalled one-two punch of Atlantic Forest and Amazonian birding.*

**January 31–February 1, Days 1–2: Travel to São Paulo; Drive to Intervales.** There are direct overnight flights from Los Angeles, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Miami, and other cities which will arrive in São Paulo on the morning of February 1. Participants arriving on this day will clear immigrations and customs, whereupon they will be met outside the customs area by the leaders and any earlier arriving participants. Participants should plan to arrive in the Guarulhos International Airport no later than 10:00 a.m., in order to coordinate with the group transfer to Intervales.

Participants wishing to avoid the risk of misconnecting should consider arriving in São Paulo on January 31, and spending the night at an airport-area hotel. Any participants continuing from Brazil: Amazonia on the Rio Roosevelt (January 22–February 1, 2009) will spend the night of January 31 in São Paulo at no additional charge.

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Once we have convened outside of customs on February 1, we will allow a brief time for restroom breaks, money exchange, etc., before beginning our drive to Intervales. The drive will take approximately four hours, with lunch en route. We will arrive at Intervales sometime in the latter part of the afternoon, possibly with time for some birding around the clearing after check-in.

NIGHT (February 1): Intervales State Park

**February 2–7, Days 3–8: Intervales State Park.** We will have six full days and an additional morning to enjoy the avian riches of Intervales State Park. Our daily schedule will remain completely flexible, in order to take full advantage of current conditions on the ground, as well as to allow additional opportunities for finding some of the tougher target species. We will offer optional night birding excursions on two or more nights. Foremost among the nocturnal possibilities is the spectacular Long-trained Nightjar, whose tail has to be seen to be believed. Other nightbird possibilities include the rarely seen Silky-tailed Nightjar, Rusty-barred Owl, Mottled Owl, and Tropical Screech-Owl. Even the nearly mythical Buff-fronted Owl has been seen here before, although it is not to be expected.

Mornings will find us working a variety of jeep tracks through lush, foothill Atlantic Forest. These tracks are ideal for groups – wide enough to comfortably accommodate everyone, yet narrow enough to be part of the surrounding forest. Constantly moving mixed-species flocks of colorful tanagers and challenging woodcreepers, foliage-gleaners and tyrannulets will compete for our attention with the myriads of understory species, many of which will require special efforts to see. We will be especially alert to the presence of fruiting trees, which could serve as magnets for Black-fronted Piping-Guans or Blue-bellied and Red-capped parrots. The forest here is particularly rich in bamboo, whole stands of which periodically go to seed, attracting numbers of nomadic bamboo-specialists such as Temminck's, Buffy-fronted, and Blackish-blue seedeaters, and Uniform Finch. In between seeding events, these species can be essentially missing in action, sometimes going several consecutive years without being seen at any given site.

Special targets will include a search for the rarely seen Helmeted Woodpecker, one of the rarest and most localized of all Atlantic Forest endemics, but one which seems to be easier to find at Intervales than elsewhere. We will plan to visit leks of two endemic hummingbirds, the Dusky-throated Hermit and the Plovercrest. The subspecies of Plovercrest found here is the black-breasted, blue-crested *loddigesii*, considered by some to represent a species distinct from the purple-breasted nominate subspecies found to the north. Intervales is a particularly good spot for several of the more localized Atlantic Forest endemics, among them White-bearded Antshrike, Squamate Antbird, Slaty Bristlefront, Spotted Bamboowren, Atlantic Royal-Flycatcher, Oustalet's Tyrannulet, Bay-ringed Tyrannulet, Red-ruffed Fruitcrow, and Half-collared Sparrow. Likewise, the spectacular Swallow-tailed Cotinga is perhaps better found here than anywhere else in its range, and often nests near the clearing surrounding the dining hall. Southeast Brazil is known for harboring some spectacular large antshrikes—the so-called “Big Five” (Giant, Large-tailed, Tufted, Spot-backed and White-bearded)—and Intervales is an excellent spot for finding all five. All of our birding is likely to be conducted with the far-carrying and distinctive songs of Bare-throated Bellbirds and Hooded Berryeaters as a vocal backdrop.

In between “target birds,” we'll likely be up to our ears in the more common and widespread Atlantic Forest species, with ample time for repeat views of most things. It is difficult to overstate just how “birdy” this spot actually is!

**February 8–9, Days 9–10: Final Morning at Intervales State Park; Transfer to São Paulo for Flights Home.** We will have time for some final morning birding on February 8, and likely leave Intervales after lunch. The return drive to Guarulhos International Airport will take the better part of the afternoon, with most departures for the USA leaving in the latter part of the evening on February 8. These overnight flights will arrive in the morning on February 9 in time for homeward connections.

**TOUR LEADER:** Andrew Whittaker (a second leader will be added if group size warrants)

**Andrew Whittaker** has been based in Amazonian Brazil for the last 21 years. Andy's passion for birding and natural history started at the early age of seven in the UK. For the past 26 years Andy has worked with birds, traveling around the world studying bird migration in Canada, Israel, Borneo, and the UK. Working in the Brazilian rainforest for the Smithsonian Institution has made Andy an authority on Amazonian birds and the region's natural history, and he has authored many technical publications on the region. He was a consultant for the prestigious *Life of Birds* series by David Attenborough, and is a research associate of the Museum Goeldi, in Belém. At present Andy is working with Kevin Zimmer on a comprehensive field guide to the birds of Brazil. Andy has extensive tour leading experience, having led tours throughout South and Central American countries, the UK, and the Antarctic. He immensely enjoys sharing his fascination and knowledge of Neotropical birds, animals, and their conservation with others. Andy's special interest is bird vocalizations; his knowledge of Neotropical voices has enabled him to make several important ornithological discoveries and add 18 species to the Brazilian list. Andy is a member of the Brazilian Ornithological Committee, and lives in Manaus with his wife Nadime, their son Steven, and daughters, Luana and Suzana.

**TOUR SIZE:** This tour will be limited to 14 participants.

**FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:** The fee for this tour is **\$2945** per person in double occupancy from São Paulo. This includes all food from lunch on Day 2 to lunch on Day 9, lodging for seven nights during the tour, ground transportation during the tour, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does not include airfare between your home and São Paulo, airport departure taxes, alcoholic beverages, special gratuities, phone calls, laundry, or items of a personal nature. Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration, a small-party supplement may be charged.

There is no additional fee for single accommodations for this tour. However, due to the limited number of rooms at Intervalles State Park, if we have a large group, you may be asked to share.

**TOUR REGISTRATION:** To register for this tour, please contact the VENT office. The deposit for this tour is **\$500** per person. If you prefer to pay your deposit by check, your tour space will be held for 10 days to allow time for the VENT office to receive your deposit and completed registration form. If you prefer to pay your deposit using a credit card, your deposit must be made with MasterCard or Visa at the time of registration. The VENT registration form should then be completed, signed, and returned to the VENT office. Full payment of the tour fee is due 120 days prior to the tour departure date.

**EXCHANGE RATE SURCHARGES:** In the erratic global financial markets of today, it is difficult to predict foreign currency exchange rates over the long term or at the time of operation of a tour or cruise departure. Tour prices are based upon the rate of exchange at the time of itinerary publication. If exchange rates change drastically, it may be necessary to implement 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 are passed to VENT by its vendors and suppliers.

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** Cancellation Penalties and Refunds are based on the following schedule: if cancellation is made 120 days or more before the tour departure date, the deposit less \$300 per person is refundable. If cancellation is made fewer than 120 days before departure date, no refund is available. This policy and fee schedule also applies to pre-trip and post-trip extensions, as well as any transfers from one tour to another. ***We strongly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance for your protection.***

<u>If you cancel:</u>	<u>Your refund will be:</u>
120 days or more before departure date	Your deposit minus \$300.
Fewer than 120 days before departure date	No refund available.

**FUEL AND FUEL SURCHARGES:** In the uncertain, often volatile oil market of late, it is difficult – if not impossible – to predict fuel costs over the long term, and more specifically, at the time of operation of this departure. Our prices are based upon the prevailing fuel rates at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do

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everything possible to maintain our prices, if the fuel rates increase significantly, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

**TRIP CANCELLATION INSURANCE:** Application forms for optional coverage for baggage, illness, and trip cancellation can be obtained through the VENT office. We **strongly recommend** that you purchase trip cancellation insurance to protect yourself against losses due to accidents or illness. Check with your insurance agent regarding coverage you may presently have via other insurance policies that may cover illness during your trip. **Waiver for pre-existing conditions is available; however, stipulations apply, usually requiring the purchase of the insurance soon after registering. Contact the VENT office prior to registration for details.**

**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.**

**AIR INFORMATION:** 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. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements.

**DOCUMENTS:** A current U.S. passport and **VISA** are required to enter Brazil. Your visa must be obtained in the U.S. prior to departure and is issued by Brazilian consulates. For further information, you may wish to contact the Brazil consulate nearest you or Pinnacle Travel Document Systems ([www.traveldocs.com](http://www.traveldocs.com) on the web or 888-838-4867 by phone), a company which handles visa procurement. Currently, tourist visas to Brazil are valid for multiple entries up to five years from the initial entry. However, the first visit must be made within 90 days of obtaining the visa, or else the visa is invalidated.

**EQUIPMENT:** You should pack a pair of binoculars that are in good repair, along with a belt pack or day pack (for carrying books, sunscreen, extra film, etc.). As a precaution, it is a good idea to pack your binoculars, a change of clothing, toiletry items, medications, and travel documents in your airline carry-on bag. Your leaders will have a spotting scope, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so.

**TRIP CANCELLATION INSURANCE:** Application forms for optional coverage for baggage, illness, and trip cancellation can be obtained through the VENT office. We **strongly recommend** that you purchase trip cancellation insurance to protect yourself against losses due to accidents or illness. Check with your insurance agent regarding coverage you may presently have via other insurance policies that may cover illness during your trip. **Waiver for pre-existing conditions is available, as are other coverages such as terrorism protection; however, stipulations apply, usually requiring the purchase of the insurance soon after registering. Contact the VENT office prior to registration for details.**

**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.**

**CLOTHING AND CLIMATE:** Weather will be generally mild, but early mornings and evenings can be chilly. Temperatures generally vary from lows in the 50s (rarely the high 40s) to highs commonly in the 70s–80s. Light field clothing (drab colors such as olive or khaki preferred), including several pairs of pants and comfortable shirts, will be appropriate, but you should also pack a warm sweater and/or jacket. Because nights can be cold and damp, you may find long underwear useful for sleeping. A hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen are also recommended for protection. Be sure to have a pair of good hiking boots or comfortable walking shoes and a second pair to change into. Raingear is recommended. We can expect to encounter rain on at least a few days of the trip. Dress will be casual throughout. Rubber boots for possibly muddy trails are recommended. Also, a pocket umbrella is a good idea.

**DIFFICULTY:** All birding will be on foot, usually along jeep tracks through the forest, or around the various clearings at the lodge. Our vans will accompany us much of the time, and will seldom be far away. However, participants should be prepared to spend full mornings on foot. The distances covered on any one walk will seldom (if ever) be more than 1–2 miles, and most walking will be done along wide trails or roads that are nearly level or of modest grade. A couple of the tracks involve slightly more incline, but none are steep.

On most mornings, we will try to be in the field at or shortly after dawn. This is the time when tropical birds are most active and most vocal. Many of the more elusive species are unlikely to be seen unless we first hear them, and this requires early starts. Most days will involve a full morning of birding, followed by lunch and a mid-afternoon break of a couple of hours, during which participants may rest. These hours are quite often unproductive times for birding, and allow you to “recharge your batteries” prior to going out again in the latter part of the afternoon. Conversely, there is a wealth of birding opportunities within walking distance of the cabins, so participants not wanting to miss a minute of action can always bird on their own during the afternoon breaks.

**CURRENCY:** Brazilian Real. Master Card and Visa are more widely accepted than American Express, but all are useful, particularly in major centers.

**HEALTH PRECAUTIONS:** Yellow fever vaccination is highly recommended, as well as polio and tetanus. 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.

There have been some recent changes in recommendations for malaria prophylaxis. Mefloquine (Lariam) is now the drug of choice in all areas where chloroquine-resistant malaria is present. A single dose should be taken one week before the start of the tour, continued during the tour, and for four weeks after its conclusion. Mefloquine is available by prescription only and may not be suitable for those using cardio-vascular medication; consult your physician. Cholera has been reported in Brazil, but 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.

If you are taking prescription medication or over-the-counter medicine, 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. 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 877-FYI-TRIP (394-8747) or you can check their website at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://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](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new_e.html) (click on travel health).

**INSECT PROTECTION:** The use of a repellent containing DEET is recommended. We suggest bringing two squeeze bottles of Cutter's or some similar repellent.

**BAGGAGE:** We request that tour participants limit their baggage to one suitcase and one carry-on bag if possible, as the vehicles have limited luggage space. As a precaution, we recommend packing a change of clothes, your binoculars, toiletries, travel documents, and walking shoes in your carry-on.

**ITEMS TO BRING:** Pack a flashlight or headlamp, water bottle or small canteen, alarm clock, and daypack. Your leaders will have a spotting scope, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so.

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

**Country Telephone Code:** 55

**Electric Current:** 110 Volts in Rio, São Paulo, Brasilia, Belo Horizonte, Belém, Manaus, and 220 Volts elsewhere.

**IMPORTANT NUMBERS AND WEBSITES TO KNOW:**

<b>Health</b> —Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	877-FYI-TRIP or <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/travel">www.cdc.gov/travel</a>
<b>Weather</b>	900-WEATHER or <a href="http://www.weather.com">www.weather.com</a>
<b>Travel Advisories</b>	202/647-5225

**SUGGESTED READING:** Our website at [www.ventbird.com](http://www.ventbird.com) offers an affiliated online store which carries a wide variety of items for birding and nature lovers including over 6,000 books. A portion of the sales from the store benefits the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. You might also want to visit such other online stores as [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), and for those out-of-print and hard-to-find titles, [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com).

***Birds***

De la Pena, Martin R. and Maurice Romboli. *Birds of Southern South America* (Collins Illustrated Checklist). HarperCollins, 1999.

Erize, Francisco and Maurice Rumboll. *Birds of South America: Non-Passerines: Rheas to Woodpeckers* (Princeton Illustrated Checklists). Princeton University Press, 2006. This paperback field guide covers the non-passerine birds of South America, and thus, is a nice complement to the two Ridgely & Tudor guides to the passerine birds.

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.)

Hilty, Steven L. and Rodolphe Meyer. *Guide to the Birds of Venezuela*. Princeton University Press, 2002.

Meyer de Schauensee, R. *A Guide to the Birds of South America*. Livingston Publishing Company, 1970. (Reprinted 1982, paperback.) No pictures, but basic written descriptions of nearly all species. ABE Books ([www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com)) has a large section on Meyer de Schauensee's many works.) (<http://birds.cornell.edu>; select “Audio Guides”)

Narosky, T. and D. Yzurieta. *Birds of Argentina and Uruguay*. Zagier & Urruty, 1993. Although it is not a great field guide, it does illustrate many more of the birds of SE Brazil than does *Birds of Colombia*. (<http://birds.cornell.edu>; select “Audio Guides”)

Pena, Martin and Martin Rodolfo de la Pena. *Birds of Southern South America and Antarctica*. London: HarperCollins, 1999. (<http://birds.cornell.edu>; select “Audio Guides”)

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”)

Souza, Deodata. *Todas as Aves do Brazil: Guia De Campu Para Identificacao (All the Birds of Brazil: A Guide to Identification)*. Dall, 2002. Available from Buteo Books (1-800-722-2460 or [www.buteobooks.com](http://www.buteobooks.com)). Very basic illustrations and text, but it is portable and does present some sort of illustration of most of the species that we will encounter.

***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.

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.

***Recording***

Emmons, Louise H., Bret M. Whitney and David L. Ross. *Sounds of Neotropical Rainforest Mammals*. Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. ([http://www.birds.cornell.edu/lab\\_cds.html](http://www.birds.cornell.edu/lab_cds.html))

**TIPPING:** As noted in our itineraries, tipping (restaurants, porters, drivers, and local guides) is included on VENT tours. However, if you feel one or both of your VENT leaders or any local guides have given you exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that such tips are not expected and are entirely optional.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc. (VENT) and/or its Agents act only as agents for the passenger 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 passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT and its agents can accept no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger, as tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. The right is reserved to substitute hotels of similar category for those indicated and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by changes in air schedules. The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure, in which case full refund will constitute full settlement to the passenger. The right is reserved to substitute leaders on any tour. When this is necessary, notification will be given to tour members. No refund will be made for any unused portion of the tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. The prices of the tours are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on June 12, 2008 and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change therein. The right is reserved to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of any tour. Baggage is at owner's risk entirely. The airlines concerned and their agents and affiliates are not to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time passengers are not on board their aircraft. The passenger ticket in use by said airlines, when issued, shall constitute the sole contract between the airlines and the purchaser of these tickets and/or passenger. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for these tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airline Reporting Corporation.