

BRAZIL:

ALTA FLORESTA'S CRISTALINO JUNGLE LODGE

AUGUST 6 – 16, 2010

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*Alta Floresta features a south-bank (south of the Amazona) avifauna, with a number of localized, regional endemics and more widespread bamboo-specializing species. This is the richest known site in terms of avian species diversity in Brazil, with well over 500 species recorded. Most of our time will be spent in a single forest lodge located in a private forest reserve. The lodge boasts nice cabañas (with private baths) and great food. A canopy tower and extensive trail system make for superb forest birding. Mornings will be spent walking mostly flat trails (one trail with a moderate-to-steep climb for a few hundred meters) or atop the canopy tower; afternoons will be spent largely in small boats along a quiet, small river. VENT pioneered birding trips to Alta Floresta, sending the first two groups in 1991, and has conducted more birding tours here than any other major company. Kevin Zimmer authored the definitive survey paper on the local avifauna (Zimmer et al. 1997, in *Ornithological Monographs* #48). Special focus birds include Razor-billed Curassow, White-browed Hawk, Cryptic Forest-Falcon (newly described), Dark-winged Trumpeter, Crimson-bellied Parakeet, Kawall's (White-cheeked) Parrot, Red-necked and Curl-crested aracaris, Blue-cheeked Jacamar, Brown-banded Puffbird, Rufous-necked Puffbird, Black-girdled Barbet, Curve-billed Scythebill, Chestnut-throated Spinetail, Peruvian Recurvebill, Pará Foliage-gleaner (recent split from Olive-backed; see Zimmer, K. J. 2002, *Species Limits in Olive-backed Foliage-gleaners* [Automolus: Furnariidae]. *Wilson Bulletin* 114:20-37), Dusky-cheeked Foliage-gleaner, Manu Antbird, Bare-eyed Antbird, Snow-capped Manakin, Flame-crested Manakin, Dusky-tailed Flatbill, Amazonian Umbrellabird, Tooth-billed Wren, and Yellow-shouldered Grosbeak, among many, many others. This is also an excellent location for seeing primates and Brazilian tapir.*

This tour may be taken by itself or in combination with our July 27-August 8, 2010 Mato Grosso, Brazil: Pantanal Safari & Chapada dos Guimarães or August 14-27, 2010 Best of Brazil tours.

August 6-7, Days 1-2: Travel to Cuiabá via São Paulo. Participants not continuing from our Mato Grosso, Brazil tour will need to depart the USA on the evening of August 6 and arrive in São Paulo on August 7 in time to connect with any of several direct flights to Cuiabá. All arriving participants will be met and transferred to the Hotel Diplomata.

Participants wanting to avoid the risk of misconnecting with the group should consider arriving in São Paulo or Cuiabá on August 6 and spending the night. Upon request, VENT will be happy to assist with these arrangements.

NIGHT (August 7): Hotel Diplomata, Cuiabá

August 8, Day 3: Travel to Alta Floresta and on to Cristalino Jungle Lodge. Depending on our actual flight departure time, we may have time for some morning birding near Cuiabá.

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At mid-day we'll fly from Cuiabá to Alta Floresta (subject to change). Upon arrival, we'll transfer to the Floresta Amazonica Hotel for lunch. Afterwards, we will drive north for about an hour, stopping en route to check roadside moriche palm swamps for Red-bellied Macaw and Point-tailed Palmcreeper. Eventually, we will reach the Rio Teles Pires, one of the headwater rivers of the mighty Rio Tapajós, a major biogeographical barrier in eastern Amazonia. From here, it's a short boat trip (less than one hour) up the clear, black-water Rio Cristalino to our lovely lodge. En route, we'll stop for birds when appropriate, and, depending on our arrival time, we may make the first of many productive boat trips upstream from the Cristalino Jungle Lodge.

NIGHT: Cristalino Jungle Lodge

August 9-13, Days 4-8: Rio Cristalino Reserve. Our primary base in the Alta Floresta region will be the Cristalino Jungle Lodge, situated in the Reserva Florestal Cristalino, a privately owned forest reserve. This lodge is a birder's paradise! Nestled above the banks of a lovely black-water river, surrounded by lush forest with excellent trails, and totally secluded from outside-world distractions, it provides the perfect base for searching out the myriads of special forest birds. Furthermore, the simple rooms are clean and comfortable, the food is delicious, and the birds are right outside the door.

We have seen Black Caracara; Cryptic Forest-Falcon (recently described); Razor-billed Curassow; Red-throated Piping-Guan; Scarlet, Red-and-green, Blue-and-yellow, and Chestnut-fronted macaws; Long-billed Woodcreeper; and Cinnamon Attila all from the small camp clearing! The banks near the boat dock often harbor Sunbitterns, various kingfishers, and Drab Water-Tyrant. Nearby vareza thickets are home to Amazonian Streaked-Antwren, Band-tailed Antbird, and the endemic Glossy Antshrike.

A new canopy tower will allow eye-level viewing of canopy mixed-species flocks. Spurred on by the calls of White-winged Shrike-Tanagers and Slaty-capped Shrike-Vireos, these flocks can contain a dazzling array of birds including Black-girdled Barbet, Chestnut-winged Hookbill, Sclater's Antwren, Pink-throated and Chestnut-crowned becards, Tooth-billed and Thrush-like wrens, Dusky-capped Greenlet, Epaulet Oriole, Black-faced and Yellow-bellied dacnises, and Yellow-shouldered Grosbeak. We'll also be on the lookout for a knockout lineup of tanagers that includes Paradise, Opal-rumped, Green-and-gold, Turquoise, Bay-headed, Flame-crested, and Red-billed Pied. Screeching groups of macaws, parrots, and parakeets are best viewed from the tower, and may include the poorly known Kawall's (or White-cheeked) Parrot, Orange-cheeked Parrot, White-bellied Parrot, and the stunning Crimson-bellied Parakeet. Nearby fruiting trees often attract a variety of trogons and toucans, including Red-necked and Curl-crested aracarís and Gould's Toucanet.

We'll spend a lot of time in the forest interior searching for such specialties as Brazilian Tinamou, Dark-winged Trumpeter, Rufous-necked Puffbird, Rufous-capped Nunlet, Blue-cheeked Jacamar, Dusky-cheeked Foliage-gleaner, Striated Antbird, Snow-capped Manakin, and others. The loud calls of Cinereous Antshrikes signal the presence of large understory and mid-level flocks that may contain Gray, White-eyed, Ornate, and Plain-throated antwrens; Spix's Woodcreeper; Rufous-rumped Foliage-gleaner; Chestnut-crowned Foliage-gleaner; and others. As always, we will be especially alert for army ant swarms, which could be attended by the endemic Bare-eyed Antbird as well as by Black-spotted Bare-eyes. Nor will we neglect the Rio Cristalino itself, for boat trips along this lovely river have consistently produced such treats as Green Ibis, several species of macaws, Cream-colored Woodpecker, Amazonian Umbrellabird, Bare-necked Fruitcrow, Spangled Cotinga, Paradise Jacamar, and others.

Dense stands of bamboo within tall forest are an important microhabitat to many specialized birds. Here we'll look for a number of specialties, among them Curve-billed Scythebill, Dusky-cheeked and Chestnut-crowned foliage-gleaners, Chestnut-throated Spinetail, Peruvian Recurvebill, Manu Antbird, Amazonian Antpitta, and Large-headed and Dusky-tailed flatbills.

Whether your interest is in seeing a huge cross-section of widespread Amazonian species, encountering many of the big and flashy glamour birds (such as guans, macaws, toucans, cotingas, and tanagers), or in rooting out the rare and secretive antbirds and foliage-gleaners, Alta Floresta is sure to please.

NIGHTS: Cristalino Jungle Lodge (August 9-12) & Floresta Amazonica (August 13)

August 14, Day 9: Travel to Cuiabá. After a final morning of birding, we'll catch an afternoon flight to Cuiabá where we'll enjoy a farewell dinner and spend the night.

NIGHT: Hotel Diplomata, Cuiabá

August 15-16, Days 10-11: Departure for Home or Begin Best of Brazil. Participants not continuing on our Best of Brazil tour (August 14-27, 2010) will be transferred to the Cuiabá airport in time for the 11:30 a.m. departure of TAM Flight 3593 to São Paulo which is scheduled to arrive at 4:05 p.m., providing plenty of time to connect to overnight flights to the USA (arriving the morning of August 16, allowing time for homeward connections).

TOUR LEADER: Andrew Whittaker

Andrew Whittaker's passion for birding and natural history started at the early age of seven in the UK. Since 1982 Andy has worked with birds, traveling around the world studying bird migration in Canada, Israel, Borneo, and the UK. He has been based in Amazonian Brazil for the last 22 years. 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 VENT 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 7 participants.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS: The fee for this tour is **\$4295** per person in double occupancy. This includes all food from dinner on Day 2 to breakfast on Day 10, all lodging during the tour, ground transportation during the tour, the flights between Cuiabá and Alta Floresta, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does not include airfare from your home to Cuiabá and return, 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.

The single supplement for this tour is **\$505**. You will be charged a single supplement if you desire single accommodations or if you prefer to share but have no roommate and we cannot provide one for you.

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, a cancellation fee of **\$250** per person will be

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charged unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be **\$100** per person. 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. ***We strongly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance for your protection.***

If you cancel:

120 days or more before departure date
Fewer than 120 days before departure date

Your refund will be:

Your deposit minus \$250*
No refund available

*Unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be \$100 per person.

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

TRIP CANCELLATION & MEDICAL EVACUATION INSURANCE: A brochure and application form 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 as soon as possible to protect yourself against losses due to accidents or illness. VENT recommends Travel Insured International as our preferred insurance provider.** 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.** Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as work-related cancellation, medical upgrade, and a “Cancel for Any Reason” clause among others. **Contact Travel Insured International prior to registration for details.** Not all insurance providers provide the same levels of coverage. If you purchase insurance through a company other than Travel Insured International, please be advised that rules and stipulations may be different.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *Please read your itinerary carefully to see whether or not your tour/cruise requires MANDATORY Medical Insurance which covers you for emergency evacuation/repatriation during the trip.* This coverage is included in the Worldwide Trip Protector plan offered by Travel Insured International. If you do not choose to purchase the insurance through Travel Insured International, you will need to do so through another insurance provider. A good website for information and acquisition of emergency evacuation/repatriation insurance is: www.insuremytrip.com.

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.

Note that there are specific internal commercial Brazilian flights associated with this tour, the cost of which is not covered by the tour fee. Due to the complicated nature and limited availability of these flights, you are strongly encouraged to confirm reservations with Victor Emanuel Travel as early as possible.

CLOTHING: Weather will be generally warm to hot. Light field clothing, including several pairs of pants and shorts and comfortable shirts, will be appropriate. Although shorts and short-sleeved shirts are appropriate for evenings and mid-day breaks around the lodge, we recommend trousers and long-sleeved shirts for wear in the field. A hat,

sunglasses, and sunscreen are also recommended for protection. 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 is recommended. Dress will be casual throughout.

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 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.

CURRENCY: Brazilian Real. Master Card and Visa are more widely accepted than American Express, but all are useful, particularly in major centers. Travelers' checks are difficult to use in most areas of Brazil.

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. 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. Your leader will have iodine tablets should they be needed for water purification. A good source of general health information for travelers is the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, which operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers' Information Line (877) FYI-TRIP. You can check the CDC 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). We suggest that participants consult their physician as well as the CDC for current recommendations before beginning a prophylaxis regimen.

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. 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.

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

BAGGAGE: Please limit baggage to one suitcase and one carry-on bag if possible, as some of the vehicles have very 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 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 Radio Shack as well as a wide range of other stores, including most airport terminal gift shops that sell travel accessories) is recommended for participants wishing to charge camera batteries or other appliances.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Country Telephone Code: 55

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

IMPORTANT NUMBERS AND WEBSITES TO KNOW:

Health—Centers for Disease and Control (CDC)
Weather
Travel Advisories

877-FYI-TRIP or www.cdc.gov/travel
900-WEATHER or www.weather.com
202/647-5225

SUGGESTED READING:

Our website at 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, and for those out-of-print and hard-to-find titles, www.abebooks.com.

Birds

- Erize, Francisco, Jorge Rodriguez Mata, and Maurice Rumboll. *Birds of South America, Non-Passerines: Rheas to Woodpeckers*. 2007. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, USA. 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.)
- 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.
- Van Perlo, Ber. *A Field Guide to the Birds of Brazil*. Oxford University Press, 2009. This recently published 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.

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.

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)

TIPPING: 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 December 29, 2009 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.