

# **SOUTHEASTERN BRAZIL PART I: COASTAL PARANÁ /SANTA CATARINA & RIO GRANDE DO SUL**

**SEPTEMBER 28–OCTOBER 10, 2012**

## **IGUAÇU FALLS PRE-TRIP**

**SEPTEMBER 26-30, 2012**

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*South America's largest country is also one of its richest for birds. Nowhere is this more apparent than in southeastern Brazil, where habitats range from coastal rain forest and wet pampas to montane cloud forest and plateau grassland. Long isolated from Amazonia by the dry brushlands of central Brazil (left in the wake of receding glaciers during the last ice age), the avifauna of southeast Brazil has radiated in a myriad of directions. Today there are more than 170 species of regional endemics that are confined to the Atlantic Forest and found nowhere else in the world. This truly is a must destination for birders.*

*Since it is impossible to encompass all of the diversity of this region of Brazil into a single short tour, participants can combine this tour with our Southeastern Brazil Part II: Heart of the Atlantic Forest & the Serra do Mar (October 8–24, 2012), as well as with Southeastern Brazil Part III: Espírito Santo's Montane & Lowland Endemics tour (October 22–November 1, 2012). Parts I, II and III can each be taken independently as a wonderful, short introduction to the birds of this region, or, they may be taken in various combinations for a more comprehensive survey that will maximize the number of endemics seen. The tours are meant to be complementary and although there will be a certain amount of overlap in possible species, the emphasis of Part I will be on the many specialties of the far south that are more difficult or not possible to see on Parts II & III.*

*On the optional pre-trip to Iguaçu, the thunderous cataracts of Iguaçu, comprising the world's largest waterfalls, will be the backdrop for some great birding. We will explore lush forests in search of 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, and Plush-crested Jay. Roving mixed-species flocks should provide us with many of the less spectacular but no less special birds such as Black-capped, Ochre-breasted, and White-eyed foliage-gleaners; Southern Antpipit; Southern Bristle-Tyrant; São Paulo Tyrannulet; and Creamy-bellied Gnatcatcher.*

*Southeast Brazil Part I will commence in Curitiba, which will be our jumping-off spot for exploring the varied Atlantic Forest habitats of Paraná state. The cloud forests of the Serra da Graciosa will provide the backdrop as we search for Solitary Tinamou, Canebrake Groundcreeper, White-bearded and Giant antshrikes, Slaty Bristlefront, White-breasted Tapaculo, Hooded Berryeater, Bare-throated Bellbird, Azure-shouldered and Brassy-breasted tanagers, and many more. Nearby grasslands and marshes may yield such specialties as the Sickle-winged Nightjar and the recently*

*described Wetland Tapaculo. We'll also visit marshes and restinga woodlands in adjacent Santa Catarina state, in search of the unique and recently described Marsh Antwren, as well as Yellow-legged Tinamou, Ochre-collared Piculet, Pale-browed Treehunter, Spot-backed Antshrike, Squamate Antbird, Unicolored Antwren, Restinga Tyrannulet, the recently rediscovered Kaempfer's Tody-Tyrant, and the spectacular Black-backed and Red-necked tanagers.*

*Rio Grande do Sul is a different world of strange araucaria forests, high plateau grasslands and marshes, and scenically spectacular canyons. Historically, this region was colonized by successive waves of European immigrants from Germany, Italy and Switzerland. That immigrant influence is reflected in the landscaping, architecture and cuisine of the area, which, combined with the temperate climate and moors-like nature of the high grasslands, lends a decidedly European feel. The birds are equally unique, with such specialties as Plumbeous Rail, Slaty-breasted Wood-Rail, Vinaceous-breasted Parrot, Blue-bellied Parrot, Long-tufted Screech-Owl, Mottled Piculet, Araucaria Tit-Spinetail, Straight-billed Reedhaunter, Black-and-white Monjita, Azure Jay, Chestnut-backed Tanager and Saffron-cowled Blackbird representing just a few of the many highlights that await us in Rio Grande do Sul.*

*A variety of habitats encompassing some spectacular scenery; a pleasant, largely temperate climate; good food and accommodations throughout; and one of the world's most unique and endangered avifaunas combine to make southeastern Brazil an unforgettable birding experience.*

## **IGUAÇU FALLS PRE-TRIP**

### **SEPTEMBER 26-30, 2012**

**September 26-27, Days 1-2: Travel to Iguazu Falls.** There are direct overnight flights from Los Angeles, Dallas/Ft.Worth, Miami, and other cities which will arrive in São Paulo on September 27. Participants arriving this day will clear customs and connect to our group flight to Iguazu Falls (TAM Flight 3559 which is scheduled to depart at 1:30 p.m. – subject to change).

Participants wanting to avoid the risk of misconnecting should consider arriving in São Paulo on September 26 and spending the night at an airport-area hotel. Alternatively, previous participants have opted to connect through to Iguazu 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 flights, and has great birding and sightseeing opportunities within an easy walk from the front porch. Upon request, VENT will be happy to assist with these arrangements.

Although our late afternoon arrival on September 27 will likely preclude any extended birding, there should be time for a short birding walk to the Iguazu Falls overlook before dark. Here, in addition to the awesome splendor of the world's largest waterfalls, we will be treated to the avian spectacle of thousands of Great Dusky Swifts as they swirl through the mists of the cataracts preparing to roost for the night. This is a particularly good area for seeing Toco and Red-breasted toucans, Plush-crested Jays, and Green-headed Tanagers, and with luck, we could turn up the rare Black-fronted Piping-Guan.

NIGHT (September 27): Hotel das Cataratas, Iguazu Falls

**September 28-29, Days 3-4: Foz do Iguazu Area.** Through special arrangements with the Brazilian Park Service, we'll visit some of the more remote, less accessible areas of the park where we will seek the larger, more reclusive birds of the area. We will also visit and bird the area surrounding the falls themselves. 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, 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; Swainson's and Three-striped flycatchers; Gray Elaenia; Southern Bristle-Tyrant; São Paulo Tyrannulet; Creamy-bellied Gnatcatcher, Rufous-crowned Greenlet; Blue-naped Chlorophonia; and Green-headed, Black-goggled, and Guira tanagers. As is the case anywhere in tropical forests, there are a number of skulking birds of the forest interior that will require special effort to see, among them Rusty-breasted Nunlet, Short-tailed Antthrush, Russet-crowned Spadebill, Southern Antpipit, and Eastern Slaty-Thrush.

NIGHTS: Hotel das Cataratas, Iguazu Falls

**September 30, Day 5: Departure from Iguazu.** Participants continuing on Southeastern Brazil Part I will be transferred to the Iguazu Falls airport in time for an early flight connection (specific flights to be determined) to Curitiba. Participants taking only the Iguazu Falls Pre-Trip can depart on the flight of their choosing.

## **SOUTHEASTERN BRAZIL PART I SEPTEMBER 28–OCTOBER 10, 2012**

**September 28-29, Days 1 & 2: Travel to Curitiba.** There are direct overnight flights from Los Angeles, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Miami, and other cities which will arrive in São Paulo on September 29 & connect with any of several direct flights to Curitiba. All arriving participants will be met and transferred to the Tulip Inn São Jose dos Pinhais where a room will be reserved in your name.

Participants wanting to avoid the risk of misconnecting with the group should consider arriving in São Paulo or Curitiba on September 28 and spending the night. Upon request, VENT will be happy to assist with these arrangements.

NIGHT (September 29): Tulip Inn São Jose dos Pinhais, Curitiba

**September 30, Day 3: Drive to Itapoá with Birding en route.** After returning to the airport to meet participants continuing from the Iguazu Falls Pre-Trip, we will have lunch in Curitiba prior to driving south to Itapoá. Our exact itinerary this day will remain somewhat flexible in order to accommodate any changes in air schedules, but we will plan for some birding en route to Itapoá. This will likely include time in the afternoon for a first try at the recently discovered Marsh Antwren. Described in 1998, this antbird was originally placed in the monotypic genus *Stymphalornis*, although recent molecular studies reveal that it belongs in the genus *Formicivora*, with which it seems to share many plumage and vocal similarities. Almost unique among antbirds is its preference for cattail marshes. If nearby rice fields are flooded, we could also be treated to good numbers of shorebirds.

NIGHT: Pousada Reserva Volta Velha or Pousada Vila da Gloria, Itapoá

**October 1-2, Days 4 & 5: Paraná/Santa Catarina Lowlands.** We'll have the better part of two full days to bird the rich coastal lowlands on the border of these two Brazilian states. Much of our time will be spent exploring *restinga* woodland; a unique, stunted forest that grows on the sandy soils near the coast. Our biggest targets here include four of Brazil's most localized endemics: the Unicorelled Antwren, the recently rediscovered (and still very poorly known) Kaempfer's Tody-Tyrant, the Restinga Tyrannulet, and the spectacular Black-backed Tanager. The presence of these four specialties would be reason enough to spend time here, but these woodlands are home to many more species of only slightly wider distribution, including many endemics. Among the many birds that we will be searching for are Yellow-legged Tinamou; Speckled Chachalaca; Plain Parakeet; Saw-billed Hermit; Violet-capped Woodnymph; Spot-billed Toucanet; Blond-crested, White-spotted, and Robust woodpeckers; Lesser and Plain-winged woodcreepers; Black-capped and White-eyed foliage-gleaners; Pale-browed Treehunter; Spot-backed Antshrike; Rufous-winged Antwren; Squamate Antbird; White-breasted Tapaculo; Rufous-tailed and Gray-hooded attilas; Eye-ringed Tody-Tyrant; Fuscous and Gray-hooded flycatchers; Azure Jay; Fawn-breasted,

Red-necked, Black-goggled, Rufous-headed, and Azure-shouldered tanagers; and Violaceous and Chestnut-bellied euphonias.

If needed, we'll return to the marshes for more encounters with *Stymphalornis*, as well as for other treats such as Blackish Rail, Spix's Spinetail, Long-billed Wren, and the dazzling Brazilian Tanager.

Late in the afternoon on Day 5, we will drive to Curitiba.

NIGHTS: Pousada Reserva Volta Velha or Pousada Vila da Gloria, Itapoá (October 1); Tulip Inn São Jose dos Pinhais, Curitiba (October 2)

**October 3-4, Days 6 & 7: Serra da Graciosa and the Curitiba Region.** Our schedule on these days will remain somewhat flexible, in order to take maximum advantage of local weather and birding conditions. On at least one morning we will be birding the highlands of the Serra da Graciosa, a southern extension of the Serra do Mar. Although only 3000 ft. in elevation, the forest here has a decidedly montane feel to it. Our primary target bird is the rare and poorly known Canebrake Groundcreeper, a large furnariid whose exact taxonomic affinities are uncertain. The groundcreeper is only one of many avian prizes to be found in these lush forests. We will also be seeking Spot-winged Wood-Quail; Slaty-breasted Wood-Rail; Scale-throated Hermit; Versicolored Emerald; Brazilian Ruby; Ochre-collared Piculet; Scaled, Lesser, and Olivaceous woodcreepers; Black-billed Scythebill; Rufous-breasted Leaf-tosser; White-browed Foliage-gleaner; Sharp-billed Treehunter; Gray-bellied Spinetail; Giant, Large-tailed, and White-bearded (rare) antshrikes; Dusky-tailed Antbird; Variegated and Speckle-breasted antpittas; Short-tailed Antthrush; Rufous Gnateater; White-breasted Tapaculo; Slaty Bristlefront; Hooded Berryeater; Bare-throated Bellbird; Rufous-tailed Attila; Mottle-cheeked, Greenish, and Gray-capped tyrannulets; Azure Jay; Rufous-crowned Greenlet; Azure-shouldered, Chestnut-backed, and Brassy-breasted tanagers; Thick-billed Saltator; Red-rumped and Bay-chested warbling-finches; and Blackish-blue Seedeater.

Weather and conditions on the ground permitting, we will plan to devote an afternoon (probably after birding the Serra da Graciosa in the morning) to a boat excursion to Superagui National Park, which straddles the boundary between the states of Paraná and São Paulo. This park protects a cluster of near shore islands as well as coastal mangrove forests and adjacent lower slopes of the Serra do Mar. Our main objective will be reaching a near shore island where large numbers of endangered Red-tailed Parrots come to roost for the evening. These spectacular parrots have one of the most restricted ranges of any of Brazil's Atlantic Forest endemics, occupying a narrow littoral strip that extends from São Paulo south to northernmost Santa Catarina. Their global population is estimated at less than 5,000 birds. Each day, the Red-tailed Parrots commute from their roosting/nesting island to the nearby mainland, where they spend most of the day feeding before commuting back to the island in late afternoon. We will plan to stake out the island just in advance of the time when the parrots return. Along the way we will likely see a variety of waterbirds, including Brown Booby, Magnificent Frigatebird, and various terns, herons, egrets, and shorebirds. With luck, we may find Scarlet Ibis, a spectacular bird that is only now starting to reoccupy much of its historical range in coastal Brazil, but which we have seen each of the past three years.

Another option will be visiting various marshes and brushy meadows that are scattered through the area. Here, in addition to a variety of more widespread waterfowl, waders, and grassland birds, we will search for the recently described Wetland Tapaculo (always difficult to actually see), Freckle-breasted Thornbird, Rufous-capped Antshrike, Sharp-tailed Tyrant, Lesser Grass-Finch, Black-and-rufous Warbling-Finch, Great Pampa-Finch and others. If conditions are favorable, we'll plan a nighttime excursion to look for owls and nightjars, with the rare Sickie-winged Nightjar as a particular objective. Other possibilities include Long-trained Nightjar, Striped Owl, Rusty-barred Owl, and Long-tufted Screech-Owl. We might also make a return visit to the Serra da Graciosa, depending on whether or not we are still missing any key species from that rich area.

NIGHTS: Tulip Inn São Jose dos Pinhais, Curitiba

**October 5, Day 8: Curitiba to Pôrto Alegre & São Francisco de Paula.** This morning we'll transfer to the Curitiba airport in time for the 7:00 a.m. departure of TAM Flight 3847 to Pôrto Alegre, an important shipping center of southern Brazil situated at the junction of five rivers (flight subject to change). After arrival we'll enjoy lunch at a locally renowned *churrascaria* (Brazilian barbecue) and then drive north to São Francisco de Paula and the Hotel Veraneio Hampel, located adjacent to a lovely araucaria forest. We should arrive early enough for some late afternoon birding on the grounds, with an opportunity for owling after dinner.

NIGHT: Hotel Veraneio Hampel, São Francisco de Paula

**October 6-8, Days 9-11: Aparados da Serra National Park and the São Francisco de Paula Area.** We will have three full days to explore this interesting region, which will yield a number of species not seen elsewhere on this tour. On one day we'll leave early to drive north through high plateau grasslands to the Aparados da Serra National Park. These are beautiful rolling grasslands, dotted with small marshes that harbor Yellow-billed Pintail, Plumbeous Rail, Straight-billed Reedhaunter, Spix's Spinetail, Saffron-cowled Blackbird, Yellow-rumped Marshbird, Lesser Grass-Finch, Long-tailed Reed-Finch, and others. The grasslands themselves may yield such species as Spotted Nothura, Red-legged Seriema, Whistling Heron, Maguari Stork, Buff-necked Ibis, Firewood-gatherer, Gray Monjita, Black-and-white Monjita, Hellmayr's Pipit, and Great Pampa-Finch. We will also look for the very localized Long-tailed Cinclodes (a bird described new to science in 1969).

This open grassland contains islands of araucaria forest. Araucarias are a group of ancient conifers restricted to the southern hemisphere, another example being the Norfolk Island pine. One of the largest remaining stands of araucarias is preserved in the Aparados da Serra National Park. Birdlife is limited here, but includes some rare and/or local species such as Vinaceous-breasted Parrot, Mottled Piculet, Striolated and Araucaria tit-spinetails, Azure Jay, and Gray-throated Warbling-Finch. We would be remiss not to mention spectacular Itaimbezinho Canyon, one of the true scenic wonders of Brazil. At various times of the day, impressive squadrons of big Biscutate and Sooty swifts wheel in and out of the deep-cut gorge, lending avian counterpoint to the geologic marvel. Should weather conditions allow (meaning no fog to obscure the view); we will make visiting this spectacular canyon a priority. Yet another objective in this area will be a search for the recently described (2005) Planalto Tapaculo. Starting in 2006, five of our last six tour groups have been treated to excellent studies of this species.

On the other days in this region we'll bird the grounds of the Hampel (which boasts a nice stand of araucaria forest complete with excellent trails) and other areas closer to home. Birds abound here. A variety of hummers buzz about the gardens and we may see Brown Tinamou; Dusky-legged Guan; Long-tufted Screech-Owl; Mottled Piculet; Planalto, Lesser, and White-throated woodcreepers; Araucaria Tit-Spinetail; Olive Spinetail; Buff-browed Foliage-gleaner; Variable Antshrike; Variegated Antpitta; Blue-billed Black-Tyrant; Rough-legged Tyrannulet; Azure Jay; White-rimmed Warbler; Green-chinned Euphonia; and Diademed Tanager among others. We'll pay special attention to the hotel feeders, which regularly produce eye-level views of the stunning Chestnut-backed Tanager. A visit to nearby bamboo-dominated forest on the rim of the escarpment may also yield such prizes as Vinaceous-breasted Parrot, Blue-bellied Parrot, Giant and Large-tailed antshrikes, Dusky-tailed Antbird, Brown-breasted Bamboo-Tyrant, and Chestnut-headed Tanager.

NIGHTS: Hotel Veraneio Hampel, São Francisco de Paula

**October 9-10, Days 12 & 13: Hampel to Pôrto Alegre, Flight to São Paulo; Departure for Home or Continue on Southeastern Brazil Part II.** Depending on air schedules, we may have time for some additional early birding on the Hampel grounds to search for anything we might have missed, or simply to enjoy repeat looks at many of the special resident birds. Afterwards, we'll drive to Pôrto Alegre in time for the 1:02 p.m. departure of TAM Flight 3294 to São Paulo (flight subject to change).

Participants not continuing on Southeastern Brazil Part II can choose from a variety of overnight flights to the U.S. which will arrive on the morning of October 10, in time for homeward connections.

## ***Southeastern Brazil Part I, Page 6***

Participants continuing with the leaders on to the Southeast Brazil Part II tour will be met at the São Paulo airport and begin Southeastern Brazil Part II with a group transfer to Intervales.

**TOUR LEADERS:** Kevin Zimmer & Andrew Whittaker

**Kevin Zimmer** has authored three books and numerous papers dealing with field identification and bird-finding in North America. His book, *Birding in the American West: A Handbook*, deals with finding and identifying birds in the western United States. Living in Alaska contributed to his affection for the Far North, where he has anchored VENT's tour program since 1986. For the past 20+ years he has concentrated his attention on the Neotropics, particularly on Brazil, Costa Rica, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela. He has directed VENT's Brazil program since 1991. Kevin has a PhD in biology (research emphasis in Avian Evolutionary Ecology) from New Mexico State University, and is currently a field associate of Cornell's Laboratory of Ornithology, a Research Associate of the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History, an elective member of the American Ornithologists' Union, and a member of both the A.O.U. South American Check-list Committee (SACC) and the American Birding Association (ABA) Check-list Committee. He has authored numerous technical papers on the taxonomy, distribution, and behavior of Neotropical birds, particularly those of the Amazon basin. In 2003 he completed (with co-author Mort Isler) the major chapter on the *Thamnophilidae* (antbirds) for the prestigious *Handbook of Birds of the World* series. In 2006, he and Curtis Marantz coauthored a six-CD compilation of *Bird Voices of Alta Floresta and Southeastern Amazonian Brazil* (produced by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's Macaulay Library of Natural Sounds) that represents the most comprehensive set of commercially available bird recordings for any part of the Amazon Basin. He and Andrew Whittaker are currently at work on a comprehensive field guide to the birds of Brazil, to be published by Princeton University Press. Kevin lives in Atascadero, California with his wife Susan. Their daughter Marina completed her master's degree in psychology at Dominican University in May 2008. Recently married, she and her husband Ryan are now living in Napa, California.

**Andrew Whittaker's** passion for birding and natural history started at the early age of seven in the UK. Since 1982 Andy has worked and studied birds worldwide in Canada, Israel, Borneo, and the UK before moving to Brazil where he has remained based in Amazonian Brazil for the last 23 years. Research work 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 led VENT tours for 19 years 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, including species new to science, the rediscovery of species thought lost to science, and the addition of 19 species to the Brazilian list. Andy is a member of the Brazilian Ornithological Committee, and lives in Manaus, Amazonas with his children Steven Luana, and Suzana.

**TOUR SIZE:** Each section will be limited to 14 participants.

**FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:** Those registering for Southeastern Brazil Part I prior to July 15, 2012 will receive a discount of \$500.

The fee for Southeastern Brazil Part I is **\$4545 (\$4045 with discount)** per person in double occupancy from Curitiba (tour ends in Pôrto Alegre). The price includes all food from dinner on Day 2 to breakfast on Day 12, all lodging as described in this itinerary, ground transportation during the tour, all park entrance fees, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does not include the flights between your home and Brazil, internal Brazilian flights (see "AIR INFORMATION" below), 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 Southeastern Brazil Part I is **\$410**. 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.

The fee for Southeastern Brazil: Iguacu Falls Pre-Trip is **\$2545** per person in double occupancy from Iguacu Falls. The price includes all food from dinner on Day 2 to dinner on Day 4, all lodging as described in this itinerary, ground transportation during the tour, all park entrance fees, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does not include the flights between your home and Iguacu Falls, internal Brazilian flights (see "AIR INFORMATION" below), 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 Southeastern Brazil: Iguacu Falls Pre-Trip is **\$465**. 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.

Participants combining the Southeastern Brazil: Iguacu Falls Pre-Trip with Southeastern Brazil Part I in double occupancy will receive a discount of **\$150**.

Participants combining the Southeastern Brazil: Iguacu Falls Pre-Trip with Southeastern Brazil Part I in single occupancy will receive a discount of **\$225**.

**TOUR REGISTRATION:** To register for this tour, please contact the VENT office. The deposit for each tour part 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 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.*

<u>If you cancel:</u>	<u>Your refund will be:</u>
120 days or more before departure date	Your deposit minus \$250*
Fewer than 120 days before departure date	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.

**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 some 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 AND CLIMATE:** Weather will be generally mild, but mornings in the mountains and in Rio Grande do Sul can be chilly. Occasionally it can be hot at Iguazu. Temperatures generally vary from lows in the 50s (occasionally the high 40s) to highs commonly in the 70s–80s, and sometimes in the 90s. **However, nights and early mornings in the São Francisco de Paula region are occasionally much cooler, and on one occasion we even awoke to a light frost!** Light field clothing (drab colors such as olive or khaki preferred), including several pairs of pants and shorts and comfortable shirts, will be appropriate, but you should also pack a warm sweater and/or jacket, as well as gloves. Some participants have found lightweight thermal underwear to come in handy at São Francisco de Paula. 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 essential, as is a pocket umbrella.** We usually encounter rain on at least a few days of the trip. Dress will be casual throughout. Rubber boots for possibly muddy trails are recommended. There are two laundry stops on the main tour: Tulip Inn (Curitiba) and Veraneio Hampel (São Francisco de Paula). For participants on the Iguazu Falls Pre-Trip, laundry service is also available at the Hotel das Cataratas.

**DIFFICULTY:** **The two days at Iguazu (Pre-Trip only), the mornings out of Curitiba and Itapoá, and one morning at São Francisco de Paula, may involve walking trails/roads all morning. These are mostly level and easy walking, but do involve being on foot for several hours.**

On most mornings, we will try to be in the field at, or close to 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. **At Iguazu, we typically do our owling excursions pre-dawn, which will involve departure times before 5:00 a.m.** Other days will involve more civilized (although still early) starting times. Many non-travel 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. On the long days at Iguacu, afternoon birding is optional, and those that wish to return early to the hotel for rest or to spend more time at the falls, may do so. This is not an option on our long day trip to Aparados da Serra National Park, or our day out of Curitiba to Serra da Graciosa and Superagui National Park, where the distance from the hotel precludes an early return for less than the full group. It should be emphasized that our bus/van (outfitted with snacks and a variety of cold drinks) will be with us at all times on those particular days, and participants wishing to rest in the vehicle may do so at any time.

**Our bus or van will always be outfitted with an ice chest with bottled water and a variety of soft drinks. In many areas we will also have snacks available, and this will certainly be the case on full days afield when we are also planning on a picnic lunch. In other areas, it may be difficult to provide snacks. Many participants have found it useful on those days to pack snacks for mid-morning from the extensive breakfast buffets that are standard at virtually all of our hotels and lodges. These typically include fruit, luncheon meats, cheeses, and various types of cakes and breads.**

**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. Multiple-entry, extended visas good for five or even ten years are now available. With Brazil hosting the World Cup in 2014 and the Olympics in 2016, demand for visas is increasing, and is slowing down the process. Because of this, you should allow at least 60 days to complete the visa process. 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.

**HEALTH PRECAUTIONS:** Throughout Central and South America, yellow fever vaccination is highly recommended for most individuals (some individuals may have medical conditions for which vaccination is contraindicated), as is vaccination for 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.**

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.

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 at 800-CDC-INFO (232-4636) 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 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 leaders will have a spotting scope, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so. If you have battery operated equipment such as cameras, MP3 players or other devices that need recharging, we recommend that you bring a travel kit with a converter as well as the full range of plug adaptors. **A supply of re-sealable plastic storage bags can be very handy for storing food items from the breakfast buffets, to be used as mid-morning snacks on the trails.**

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

**Country Telephone Code:** 55

**Currency:** Real

**Electric Current:** 110 Volts in Rio, Sao Paulo, Brasilia, Belo Horizonte, Belém, Manaus, but 220 in many other locales.

**IMPORTANT NUMBERS AND WEB SITES TO KNOW:**

**Health:** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 800-CDC-INFO or [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel)

**Weather:** 900-WEATHER (a toll call) or [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)

**Travel Advisories:** 202/647-5225 or [www.travel.state.gov/](http://www.travel.state.gov/)

**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***

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'Abbrera, 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](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 tip. We emphasize that such tips are not expected and are entirely optional.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc. (VENT) and/or their 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 January 13, 2012 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.