

GRAND BRAZIL PART II: PANTANAL SAFARI & CHAPADA DOS GUIMARÃES

AUGUST 13-25, 2011

GRAND BRAZIL: ITATIAIA NATIONAL PARK EXTENSION

AUGUST 24-31, 2011

© 2011

In a country renowned for its diversity of habitats and avifauna, the Brazilian state of Mato Grosso stands out. From the vast marshes of the Pantanal to the spectacular country of the Chapada dos Guimarães, this region has something for everyone.

Lying in the seasonally flooded basin of the Paraguay River, these vast lowlands of the Pantanal are home to countless numbers of waterbirds, raptors, and other wildlife. The abundance and diversity of large mammals (capybara, giant otter, marsh deer, Brazilian tapir, black howler monkey, ocelot, crab-eating fox, coatimundi—even the rarely-seen jaguar is possible), coupled with throngs of herons, ibis, storks, ducks, raptors, and kingfishers will immediately recall Africa to those who have been there. Small birds are equally conspicuous, and daily lists of over 150 species are commonplace. Among the prizes we'll seek are Maguari Stork, Jabiru (sometimes more than 200 present in a single drying pool), Plumbeous Ibis, Southern Screamer, Chaco Chachalaca, Blue-throated Piping-Guan, Chestnut-bellied Guan, Bare-faced Curassow, Sunbittern, Sungrebe, the incomparable Hyacinth Macaw, Golden-collared Macaw, Black-hooded Parakeet, Turquoise-fronted Parrot, Long-tailed Ground-Dove, Nacunda Nighthawk, Swallow-tailed Hummingbird, Buff-bellied Hermit, Blue-crowned Trogon, Toco Toucan, Purplish Jay, Pale-crested and White woodpeckers, Great Rufous Woodcreeper, Red-billed Scythebill, Chotoy Spinetail, Gray-crested Cacholote, Mato Grosso Antbird, Black-backed Water-Tyrant, Fawn-breasted Wren, Green-backed Becard, Orange-backed Troupial, Epaulet Oriole, Scarlet-headed Blackbird, Yellow-billed Cardinal, Rusty-collared Seedeater and others.

The Chapada dos Guimarães is situated near the western rim of Brazil's Planalto Central—a land of beautifully eroded and fractured red rimrock formations, drained by spectacular waterfalls and dissected by deep ravines containing fingers of Amazonian forest. The surrounding countryside is “cerrado,” a strange chaparral-like habitat with sandy soil and low gnarled trees dispersed amongst a shrub-dominated plant community. Although it doesn't harbor as diverse an avifauna as the Pantanal, the Chapada region is home to many highly localized species that we won't see elsewhere. Huge Greater Rheas and bizarre Red-legged Seriemas frequent this open country, where the melancholy whistles of Red-winged Tinamous may be nearly drowned out by the rollicking duets of the endemic White-rumped Tanagers. Noisy mobs of Chalk-browed Mockingbirds, Curl-crested Jays, and Guira Cuckoos are among the more conspicuous birds, while more searching will be required to find such prizes as the recently described Chapada Flycatcher (described by

Kevin Zimmer and Andrew Whittaker in 2001), Blue-winged Macaw, Peach-fronted Parakeet, Checkered Woodpecker, White-eared Puffbird, Horned Sunbeam, Rusty-backed Antwren, Rufous-winged Antshrike, Collard, Campo Flycatcher, Plain-crested Elaenia, the curiously shrike-like White-banded Tanager, Black-throated Saltator, Yellow-billed Blue Finch, and Coal-crested Finch. Some of our groups have even been treated to sightings of magnificent Crowned Eagles and Orange-breasted Falcons. We won't neglect the wooded ravines either, for these harbor a very different fauna that includes Undulated Tinamou, Red-shouldered Macaw, Dot-eared Coquette, Little Cuckoo, Blue-crowned Trogon, Blue-crowned Motmot, Brown Jacamar, Black-fronted Nunbird, Large-billed Antwren, the spectacular Helmeted Manakin, Planalto Tyrannulet, White-bellied and Flavescent warblers, Saffron-billed Sparrow and many others.

An optional extension includes several days at one of our favorite locales in all of South America—lovely Itatiaia National Park. The road up the mountain passes through a lush bromeliad-laden cloud forest and dark tunnels of giant bamboo, where restless flocks of colorful tanagers forage and secretive antbirds skulk. A variety of trails through some of the most beautiful forest anywhere will allow us to sample the avifauna of different elevational zones. Here we may see such gems as the spectacular Black-and-gold Cotinga; Plovercrest; Tawny-browed Owl; Dusky-legged Guan; Large-tailed, Tufted, and Giant antshrikes; Rufous-backed Antvireo; Fork-tailed Tody-Tyrant; Itatiaia Spinetail; Brassy-breasted and Gilt-edged tanager; and many more.

These tours can each be taken by themselves or in combination with our August 5-15, 2011 Grand Brazil Part I: Alta Floresta's Cristalino Jungle Lodge.

August 13-14, Days 1–2: Travel to Cuiabá via São Paulo. All participants not continuing from Brazil: Alta Floresta's Cristalino Jungle Lodge will need to depart the USA this evening and arrive in São Paulo on August 14 in time to connect to the 10:35 a.m. departure of TAM Flight 3804 to Cuiabá (subject to change). After lunch we'll begin the three-hour drive to Pixaím in the Pantanal, with frequent stops for birding en route as the opportunity arises.

Participants wanting to avoid the risk of misconnecting should consider arriving in São Paulo on or before August 13 and spending the night at an airport-area hotel. Upon request, VENT will be happy to assist with these arrangements.

NIGHT (August 14): Hotel Pantanal Mato Grosso, Pixaím

August 15-20, Days 3–8: Pantanal. Dawn will bring an astonishing flurry of bird activity as we begin our Pantanal adventure. The riverine woodlands and brushy pastures here are alive with birds, among them Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Black-fronted Nunbird, White-wedged Piculet, Pale-crested and Golden-green woodpeckers, Red-billed Scythebill, Narrow-billed Woodcreeper, Pale-legged and Rufous horneros, White-lored and Rusty-backed spinetails, Great Antshrike, Band-tailed Antbird, Helmeted Manakin, Stripe-necked Tody-Tyrant, Fuscous Flycatcher, Rufous Casiornis, Purplish Jay, Masked Gnatcatcher, Ashy-headed Greenlet, Green-backed Becard, Orange-backed Troupial, Epaulet Oriole, Red Pileated-Finch and many others. Such is the diversity of birdlife here that we could easily have seen more than 100 species before breaking for lunch! Our exact schedule over the next few days will remain flexible, allowing us to exploit changing water levels and birding conditions to full advantage.

On many afternoons we'll bird by boat, stopping repeatedly to drift close to the variety of kingfishers, herons, anhingas, and the like. One of our primary targets will be the spectacular giant otter, one of the most impressive mammals in South America. River trips are also excellent for encountering birds like Sunbittern, Gray-necked Wood-Rail, and Boat-billed Heron. The late afternoon is a perfect time to see parrots and macaws returning to roost, as well as cracids such as the Chestnut-bellied Guan, Blue-throated Piping-Guan, and Chaco Chachalaca perched up in the open. As dusk gathers around us, the bugling of Green Ibis rings up and down the river, and spectacular Nacunda Nighthawks join the many Band-tailed Nighthawks in their pursuit of flying insects. On at least one day, we will make an extended morning boat trip, the focus of which will be upon finding a jaguar. These magnificent animals are elusive, and more often missed than seen, but this is a particularly good area for them and we will definitely make the effort. In the process, we'll be treated to

a good show of riverine birds from the region, including (probably) Large-billed and Yellow-billed terns, Black Skimmer, Pied Lapwing and a variety of raptors and water birds.

As the dry season progresses, the once vast marshes of the Pantanal become shrinking pools that concentrate wading birds, capybara, and yellow caiman. Herons and egrets (including Capped Heron and Rufescent Tiger-Heron), Wood Storks, magnificent Jabirus, Roseate Spoonbills, and four species of ibis (including Plumbeous Ibis and Buff-necked Ibis) are all in abundance. Raptors are conspicuous as well, with Snail Kites and Black-collared Hawks being particularly abundant. Five species of kingfishers frequent the stream and river edges, where we'll also remain alert for Sungrebes, Sunbitterns, and Gray-necked Wood-Rails. As we enter the increasingly open marshlands, giant Southern Screamers are more in evidence, as are Southern Lapwings and Wattled Jacanas. Both Large-billed and Yellow-billed terns cruise over the larger bodies of water, and the skies are frequently filled with martins and swallows. Stately Maguari Storks frequent these more open areas, and depending on water levels, it's here that we could be treated to large numbers of waterfowl including Muscovy, Brazilian Teal, and one-to-three species of whistling-ducks. Parrots are also well represented in the Pantanal, among them fast-flying groups of Yellow-chevroned Parakeets, screeching colonies of Monk Parakeets, Turquoise-fronted Parrots, and colorful Golden-collared Macaws. However, one member of this family stands out above all others, the fabulous Hyacinth Macaw—biggest and most spectacular of its tribe and a near endemic of this region. These incredible blue-and-yellow birds will be one of the primary targets as we travel through the Pantanal. At one of our lodges, these amazing birds frequently roost and feed right on the grounds near our cabins.

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

We'll likely make at least one extended night drive during our stay here, with large mammals (particularly jaguar, cougar, ocelot and Brazilian tapir) as our primary targets. These drives will also provide us with opportunities for seeing night birds such as Scissor-tailed, Little and Spot-tailed nightjars, Great or Common potoo, and Great Horned Owl.

On Day 8, we will drive to Pousada Alegre, which is located along the northern end of the Trans-Pantanal Highway. This area is drier and brushier, providing suitable habitat for some species that are rare or that do not occur in the lower, wetter portions of the Pantanal, such as Blue-crowned Parakeet, White-fronted Woodpecker and Black-bellied Antwren. Night drives in this area have produced such treats as giant anteater, crab-eating fox, crab-eating raccoon, and both Common and Great potoos.

NIGHTS: Hotel Pantanal Mato Grosso, Pixaím (August 15, 18-19)
Hotel Porto Jofre, Porto Jofre (August 16-17)
Hotel Pousada Alegre (August 20)

August 21, Day 9: Pantanal to Chapada. Today gives us further opportunity to bird the grounds of Pousada Alegre and the northern part of the Trans-Pantanal Highway. Although this is only the fringe of the Pantanal, birds are amazingly abundant and conspicuous, and frequent stops will be the order of the morning. Greater Rheas are frequently seen along here and this area seems to be particularly good for species such as Pearl Kite, Golden-collared Macaw, Blue-crowned and Peach-fronted parakeet, White-fronted Woodpecker, Long-tailed Ground-Dove, Rufous-fronted Thornbird, Black-bellied Antwren, Southern-scrub Flycatcher and Red-crested Cardinal. After lunch in Cuiabá, we'll drive north to Chapada dos Guimarães, a land of spectacular red rimrock formations clothed in a peculiar chaparral-like plant community known as "cerrado." Should time allow, we'll make a late afternoon visit to a spectacular nearby waterfall,

Grand Brazil Part II & Itatiaia National Park Extension, Page 4

where numbers of Blue-headed Parrots, White-eyed Parakeets, and even a few Blue-winged Macaws can often be seen coming to roost.

NIGHT: Pousada Penhasco, Chapada

August 22-23, Days 10-11: Chapada Area. We'll greet each dawn in the cerrado. Although avian diversity is lower here, this region contains many special birds that have limited distributions. Indeed, few of the birds here will be seen elsewhere on the tour. At first light we're treated to the noisy calls of Red-legged Seriemas, the haunting whistles of Red-winged Tinamous, and the rollicking duets of the endemic White-rumped Tanagers. Noisy mobs of Chalk-browed Mockingbirds, Curl-crested Jays, and bizarre Guira Cuckoos are among the more conspicuous birds whereas more searching will be required to find such prizes as Horned Sungem, White-vented Violetear, White-eared Puffbird, Rusty-backed Antwren, Rufous-winged Antshrike, Collared Crescent-chest, Chapada Flycatcher (described in 2001 by Kevin Zimmer and Andy Whittaker), Campo Suiriri, Plain-crested Elaenia, Rufous-sided Pygmy-Tyrant, White-banded Tanager, Black-throated Saltator, Yellow-billed Blue Finch, and Coal-crested Finch. Groups of huge Greater Rheas are also frequently seen lumbering across the landscape.

As activity wanes in the cerrado we'll descend into the wooded valleys below, where fingers of forest bring extensions of Amazonian flora and fauna into the region. Bird diversity is greater here, and there will be much to look for. Among the possibilities are Undulated Tinamou, Red-shouldered Macaw, Dot-eared Coquette, Cinnamon-throated Hermit, Blue-crowned Trogon, Blue-crowned Motmot, Yellow-tufted Woodpecker, Brown Jacamar, Black-fronted Nunbird, Planalto Woodcreeper, Ochre-cheeked Spinetail, Large-billed Antwren, the spectacular Helmeted Manakin, Band-tailed and Fiery-capped manakins, Planalto Tyrannulet, White-bellied and Flavescent warblers, Gray-headed and Guira tanagers, Saffron-billed Sparrow and many others.

An extensive wooden boardwalk at our hotel offers great opportunities for birding, especially for raptor watching from the many spectacular overlooks. Among the possibilities are King Vulture, Swallow-tailed Kite, White-tailed and Short-tailed hawks, Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle, Black-and-White and Black hawk-eagles, and even the rare and spectacular Crowned Eagle, which we have recorded on a few of our previous trips. Our 2008 group was treated to scope studies of a magnificent perched Harpy Eagle from these same lookouts. The hotel grounds are also an excellent place for seeing the tiny hoary fox.

NIGHTS: Pousada Penhasco, Chapada

August 24-25, Days 12-13: Chapada to Cuiabá; Departure for Home or Begin Itatiaia National Park Extension. After an early morning birdwatch to catch up on anything we may have missed, we will drive back to Cuiabá in time for the 4:50 p.m. departure of TAM Flight 3805 to São Paulo which is scheduled to arrive at 9:25 p.m. (subject to change), which will connect to most late flights to the USA (arriving on the morning of August 25, allowing time for homeward connections).

Participants wanting to avoid the risk of misconnecting should consider spending the night of August 24 at an airport-area hotel in São Paulo and departing for home on August 25. Upon request, VENT will be happy to assist with these arrangements.

GRAND BRAZIL: ITATIAIA NATIONAL PARK EXTENSION AUGUST 24-31, 2011

August 24, Days 1: Arrival in Sao Paulo. This evening will be spent in an airport-area hotel with a convenient shuttle service from Sao Paulo's Guarulhos International Airport.

NIGHT: Marriott Sao Paulo Airport Hotel, Sao Paulo

August 25, Day 2: Sao Paulo to Itatiaia National Park. This morning, we will depart for Itatiaia National Park. Upon arrival, we will wind our way up to near the top of the main park road. Our lovely hotel, to which we have been bringing groups since the 1980s, is family-owned and operated. Situated at about 3500', and surrounded by forest, with an expansive view of both the upper and lower slopes, it is an idyllic base for birders. We'll be quartered in roomy, private chalets, each with its own balcony and fireplace. The balcony outside of the dining room is lined with feeders that attract a number of hummingbirds, tanagers, chlorophonias, euphonias and even a resident family of spectacular Saffron Toucanets. We may fall asleep to the eerie calls of Tawny-browed Owls, and awaken to the pre-dawn wing-rattling of Dusky-legged Guans! This is truly a magical spot.

NIGHT: Hotel do Ypé, Itatiaia

August 26-29, Days 3-6: Itatiaia National Park. Established in 1937, Itatiaia was Brazil's first national park. It protects more than 65,000 acres of montane Atlantic Forest in the Serra da Mantiqueira range, which straddles the border between the neighboring states of Rio de Janeiro and Minas Gerais. Two full days and a third morning here will give us a nice introduction to its avian riches and allow us to savor the park's scenic beauty and pleasant climate. A combination of roads and trails will enable us to cover various elevational levels of the park, each with its own special birds. On one day we'll ascend to the high paramo-like grasslands at over 6500', in search of the Plovercrest (a spectacular little hummer with a "punk-rocker" crest, represented here by the purple-breasted, emerald-crested nominate subspecies), Velvety Black-Tyrant, and the endemic Itatiaia Thistletail. Most of our time will be spent farther down in the lovely, bamboo-rich forest. The list of special birds here is long, and should begin with the spectacular Black-and-gold Cotinga. Other possibilities include Tawny-browed Owl; Rufous-capped Motmot; Saffron Toucanet; Yellow-browed Woodpecker; Buff-fronted, White-browed, and Buff-browed foliage-gleaners; Rufous-breasted Leaf-tosser; Large-tailed, Tufted, White-bearded and Giant antshrikes; Spot-breasted and Rufous-backed antvireos; Star-throated Antwren; Rufous-tailed, Ferruginous, Bertoni's and Ochre-rumped antbirds; White-shouldered Fire-eye; Cryptic Antthrush; Speckle-breasted Antpitta; Rufous Gnatcatcher; Slaty Bristlefront; Mouse-colored Tapaculo; Drab-breasted and Brown-breasted bamboo-tyrants; Fork-tailed Tody-Tyrant; Shear-tailed Gray-Tyrant; Rufous-tailed Attila; Serra do Mar Tyrannulet; Olivaceous Elaenia; Brassy-breasted Tanager; Thick-billed Saltator; Bay-chested and Buff-throated warbling-finches; and many more.

Even the grounds of our charming hotel are exceptionally productive for birds and nearby hummingbird feeders can produce a nearly non-stop show. Photographers will enjoy the opportunity to train their cameras at leisure on such jewels as Black Jacobin, Violet-capped Woodnymph, and Brazilian Ruby.

NIGHTS: Hotel do Ypé, Itatiaia

August 30-31, Days 7-8: Itatiaia to Sao Paulo; Departure for Home. After a final morning of birding and lunch, we will drive to Sao Paulo's Guarulhos International Airport in time for a variety of evening departures which will arrive on the morning of August 31, allowing time for homeward connections.

TOUR LEADER: Kevin Zimmer (a second leader will be added if group size warrants)

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

Grand Brazil Part II & Itatiaia National Park Extension, Page 6

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.

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

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS: The fee for Grand Brazil Part II is **\$4895** per person in double occupancy. This includes all food from lunch on Day 2 to lunch on Day 12, all lodging during the tour, ground transportation during the tour, 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 Grand Brazil Part II is **\$645**. 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 Grand Brazil: Itatiaia National Park Extension is **\$2545** per person in double occupancy. This includes all food from breakfast on Day 2 to lunch on Day 7, all lodging during the tour, ground transportation during the tour, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does not include airfare from your home to Sao Paulo 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 Grand Brazil: Itatiaia National Park Extension is **\$325**. 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 per section. 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.***

If you cancel:
120 days or more before departure date

Your refund will be:
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.

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. One set of warm clothing should be included in the unlikely event of a cold front (which could bring the temperatures down into the 50s) reaching the region or more likely a cool early morning up on the higher ground of the Chapada. 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. Laundry can be done at Hotel Pantanal Mato Grosso and Pousada Penhasco.

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

Grand Brazil Part II & Itatiaia National Park Extension, Page 8

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 (800) CDC-INFO (232-4636). 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 piece of luggage 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

Electric Current: 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 and Prevention (CDC)

800-CDC-INFO or www.cdc.gov/travel

Weather
Travel Advisories

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 March 2, 2011 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.