

AMAZONIAN BRAZIL

AUGUST 11-28, 2007*

**Please note that tour dates differ from those that appear in VENT's 2007 Tour Directory*
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For birders, naturalists, and adventurers of all ranks, few places can match the allure of the Amazon Basin. An unparalleled treasure trove of biological diversity, a symbol of wildness, and an endangered frontier being steadily eroded on many fronts—the Amazon is still a vast and indescribably precious wilderness that all too few people will ever have the chance to experience. Nowhere is this wilderness bigger or better than in Brazil.

The key to maximizing species diversity in eastern Amazonia is to work opposite banks of major rivers. Many sibling species replace one another across major rivers in this region, allowing birders to experience numbers of new species by simply crossing the big rivers. Accordingly, we will spend time birding north and south of the Amazon and east and west of the Rio Negro, giving us access to multiple regional avifaunas. The addition of a recently discovered site on the west bank of the Rio Madeira also affords the opportunity for many species of more western Amazonian affinities that are seldom recorded on most Amazonian Brazil itineraries.

Three key features to any Amazonian experience are (1) ample opportunity to bird quiet forest trails, (2) access to a canopy tower, and (3) time spent on the major rivers, which are the lifeblood of the region. Each of our stops will feature forest interior birding on trails, and the INPA tower will provide a sensational opportunity for viewing canopy species at eye-level. Working off a river boat gives us the ability to explore islands that in all likelihood have never been birded before. Past participants have rated this as one of their favorite aspects of the Amazonian Brazil trips.

Amazonian Brazil features both north-bank and south-bank avifaunas, with an additional emphasis on riverine avifaunas. These will include birds typical of successional habitats on whitewater river islands in the Solimões (Amazon), as well as those typical of seasonally flooded forest bordering the black-water Rio Negro. To bird these habitats, we will base ourselves off a lovely river boat with air-conditioned cabins and great food. We will have the boat to ourselves, allowing full control over our itinerary. From this larger boat, we'll take smaller, motorized canoes to go ashore on river islands, or to bird along forest edges. Much of the birding on this portion of the trip will be from boats, with occasional walking on river islands or mainland shores. Special focus birds include: Crestless Curassow, Azure Gallinule, Short-tailed and Festive parrots, Olive-spotted Hummingbird, Long-billed Woodcreeper, Zimmer's Woodcreeper, Lesser Hornero, Parker's Spinetail, Red-and-white Spinetail, Castelnau's Antshrike, Blackish-gray Antshrike, Black-and-white Antbird, Klages' Antwren, Cherrie's Antwren, Leaden Antwren, Ash-breasted Antbird, Brownish Elaenia, Lesser Wagtail-Tyrant, Riverside Tyrant, River Tyrannulet, White-eyed Attila, Amazonian Umbrellabird, Gray-chested Greenlet, Pearly-breasted Conebill, and many others.

The remainder of this tour will be land-based, first out of a lodge near Presidente Figueiredo (north of Manaus). This portion of the tour will feature birds of the tall terra firme forest (many with Guianan affinities), as well as some species typical of campina (stunted woodlands growing on white-sand soil). Included will be a morning atop a wonderful canopy tower. Other birding will involve flat forest trails or roadside birding. Special focus birds include: Harpy Eagle (rare), Caica Parrot, Red-fan Parrot, Sapphire-rumped Parrotlet, Rufous and White-winged potoos (rare), Spotted Puffbird, Guianan Puffbird, Bronzy Jacamar, Black-spotted Barbet, Red-billed Woodcreeper, Point-tailed Palmcreeper, Spot-backed Antwren, Willis' Antbird, Ferruginous-backed Antbird, Glossy-backed Becard, Olive-green Tyrannulet, Pelzeln's Tody-Tyrant, Rufous-crowned Elaenia, Saffron-crested Tyrant-Manakin, Black Manakin, Pale-bellied Mourner, Crimson Fruitcrow (rare), Guianan Cock-of-the-rock, Guianan Gnatcatcher, Blue-backed Tanager, and White-naped Seed-eater. Note that guide Andy Whittaker has lived in Manaus for 15 years—no one knows the birds of this area better than Andy.

Our second land-based site will be on the south-bank of the Amazon, near the Rio Tupana. Some of our targets here will include White-browed Hawk, Starred Wood-quail, Kawall's Parrot, Rufous Potoo, Pavonine Quetzal, Brown-banded Puffbird, Curl-crested Aracari, Golden-collared Toucanet, Bar-bellied and Spot-throated woodcreepers, Pearly Antshrike, Sclater's Antwren, Chestnut-shouldered Antwren, Black Antbird, Hairy-crested Antbird, Sooty Antbird, White-throated Antbird, Reddish-winged Bare-eye, Rusty-belted Tapaculo, Citron-bellied Attila, Zimmer's Tody-Tyrant, Guianan Gnatcatcher, and many others.

This tour may be taken by itself or in combination with Mato Grosso, Brazil: Pantanal Safari & Chapada dos Guimarões (August 1-13, 2007).

August 11-12, Days 1-2: Travel to Manaus; Transfers to Hotel. Participants not continuing from Mato Grosso, Brazil: Pantanal Safari & Chapada dos Guimarões arriving in Manaus on the afternoon or evening of August 12 will be met and transferred to the Hotel Tropical where a room will be reserved in your name.

Newly arriving participants can depart the USA on the evening of August 11 and arrive in São Paulo on August 12 in time to connect with a direct flight or connection to Manaus. TAM Airlines offers an evening non-stop flight from Miami to Manaus.

On August 12, participants continuing from Mato Grosso, Brazil: Pantanal Safari & Chapada dos Guimarões will depart Cuiabá on TAM Flight 3898 to Brasilia and connect with TAM Flight 3542, which is scheduled to arrive in Manaus at 11:24 p.m. (subject to change). Upon arrival, the group will be met and transferred to our hotel. All flight details above are subject to change without notice. Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to assist with these arrangements.

NIGHT (August 12): Hotel Tropical, Manaus

August 13, Day 3: Birding Campina Woodlands en route to Presidente Figueiredo. Today will provide an excellent opportunity to sleep-in, and recover from flights prior to starting our Amazonian adventure. After breakfast, we will set out for Presidente Figueiredo, stopping en route to bird an excellent stand of *campina* woodland, a stunted type of forest that grows on white-sand soils. It was at this spot in 1992 where your guides rediscovered the long-lost Pelzeln's Tody-Tyrant, a bird that was previously known only from a single specimen collected in the upper Rio Negro drainage some 160 years earlier. The tody-tyrant will be a prime target, as will some other special birds that include Spotted Puffbird, Bronzy Jacamar, Northern Slaty-Antshrike, Saffron-crested Tyrant-Manakin, and Yellow-crested (Yellow-crowned) Manakin. We will also plan to stop at a moriche palm swamp, to search for the striking Point-tailed Palmcreeper, arguably the most attractive member of the large family Furnariidae. We'll plan to arrive at our hotel in time for a late lunch, leaving time for late afternoon

birding around the hotel grounds. The possibilities here are nearly limitless, from afternoon flights of parrots and macaws returning to roost, to fruiting trees visited by spectacular Spangled and Pompadour Cotingas. Our birding this afternoon will merely whet our appetites for the days that follow.

NIGHT: Iracema Falls Hotel, Presidente Figueiredo

August 14, Day 4: Presidente Figueiredo Area. We'll awaken to a dawn chorus and a great flurry of activity from the surrounding forest outside our cabin windows. Birding from the edge of a forest road will allow the opportunity for such special birds as Red-fan and Caica parrots, Pavonine Cuckoo, Red-billed Woodcreeper, Yellow-billed and Paradise jacamars, Black Nunbird, Black-headed Antbird, Willis' Antbird, the poorly known and rarely seen Dusky Purpletuft, Pompadour Cotinga, Wing-banded Wren, and the spectacular Blue-backed Tanager.

In the afternoon we'll visit a nearby area of *campina* woodland with several bird species that are restricted to (or typical of) woodlands that grow on white-sand soils. Some of these have been seen by very few people. Among the most desired species are White-fringed Antwren, Rufous-crowned Elaenia, Pelzeln's Tody-Tyrant, Black Manakin, Pale-bellied Mourner, Red-shouldered Tanager, Plumbeous Euphonia, and the enigmatic White-naped Seedeater. We should also find a number of more widespread *campina* birds, including Spotted Puffbird, Bronzy Jacamar, Northern Slaty-Antshrike, Saffron-crested Tyrant-Manakin, and others. This woodland also borders taller forest that could give us another opportunity to see Blue-backed Tanager, as well as the magnificent Guianan Cock-of-the-rock.

NIGHT: Iracema Falls Hotel, Presidente Figueiredo

August 15, Day 5: Birding near Iracema Falls. We'll devote this morning to birding more of the tall, lowland forest of the Presidente Figueiredo region, concentrating our efforts on a newly established trail system near Iracema Falls. There is a chance of seeing the bizarre Capuchinbird, surely one of the strangest members of the cotinga family, and one with an unforgettable voice. Other possibilities include Gray-winged Trumpeter, Dusky and Red-fan parrots, Guianan Toucanet, Black Nunbird, Red-billed Woodcreeper, Chestnut-rumped Woodcreeper, Ferruginous-backed and Black-headed antbirds, Guianan Red-Cotinga, Guianan Cock-of-the-rock, White-fronted Manakin, Wing-banded Wren, and Green Oropendola, among many others.

NIGHTS: Iracema Falls Hotel, Presidente Figueiredo

August 16, Day 6: Day Trip to the INPA Tower; Begin Rio Negro Excursion. On this day we'll travel to the INPA tower, a 42-meter high platform originally built by NASA for weather observation. A very stable tower (with stairs and handrails), it has multiple platforms, several within the canopy and one above it, allowing us the incredible opportunity to watch at eye-level (or even look down on) birds that are normally seen only as neck-straining specks high overhead. The panoramic view allows us to survey a sea of rainforest in all directions. We will want to be in place very early to catch the morning flights of raptors and parrots and to scan for two magnificent and rarely seen birds (but still regular here), the Harpy Eagle and Crimson Fruitcrow. Canopy flocks routinely circle through, affording intimate looks at antwrens, tanagers, and the like. Some of the birds that we might expect to see include White Hawk; Ornate Hawk-Eagle; Red-and-green and Blue-and-yellow macaws; Caica Parrot; Sapphire-rumped Parrotlet; Black-bellied Cuckoo; Green Aracari; Guianan Toucanet; Racket-tailed Coquette; Black-spotted Barbet; Guianan Puffbird; Yellow-billed and Paradise jacamars; Spot-backed and Ash-winged antwrens; Glossy-backed Becard; Gray Elaenia; Olive-green Tyrannulet; White-lore Tyrannulet; Yellow-margined Flycatcher; Slaty-capped Shrike-Vireo; Fulvous-crested Tanager; and three lovely Tangara tanagers: Paradise, Opal-rumped, and Spotted. Red Howler and Bearded Saki monkeys are also routinely seen. When activity in the canopy dies down, we will descend the tower to bird the forest interior below.

In the afternoon we will drive back to Manaus and the Hotel Tropical, where we will board our river boat and begin steaming up the mighty Rio Negro. The *Cassiquari* will be our home for the next several days. With its

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air-conditioned cabins, private bathrooms and showers, and typically great Brazilian food, it will make the ideal base for an intimate exploration of the natural wonders of the Rio Negro.

NIGHT: on board the *Cassiquiari*

August 17, Day 7: Morning Birding in the Anavilhanas Archipelago, with Afternoon Excursions Farther up River, and Evening Headed Toward Jaú National Park. Our exact timing over the next few days will be impossible to predict, and will depend largely on water levels in the various river channels that we navigate. Our plan will be to arrive in the Anavilhanas Archipelago, a vast series of more than 400 river islands in the center of the Rio Negro, by early morning. This will be our first experience with a new avifauna, that of the black-water river islands and the nearby seasonally-flooded forest or *igapó*. We will use motorized canoes to explore the network of islands, most of which have never been birded by anyone. There are plenty of specialty birds to be found here, among them Crestless Curassow, Band-tailed Nighthawk; Festive Parrot; Blue-and-yellow Macaw; Ringed and Cream-colored woodpeckers; Green-tailed Jacamar; Black-fronted Nunbird; the improbable Long-billed Woodcreeper and the long-lost Zimmer's Woodcreeper; Speckled and Rusty-backed spinetails; Ash-breasted and Black-chinned antbirds; Blackish-gray and Black-crested antshrikes; Klage's, Cherrie's, and Leaden antwrens; Snethlage's Tody-Tyrant; Cinnamon Attila; Amazonian Inezia; Amazonian Umbrellabird; Varzea Schiffornis; and Gray-chested Greenlet. This area is extremely birdy and is a true wilderness area, and being based off of a riverboat gives us the rare opportunity to experience this wilderness and its many birds at our figurative doorstep!

As bird activity wanes in the mid-day heat, we'll reposition the boat to an anchorage farther upstream, from whence we will make an afternoon excursion into the *igapó*. Then, we'll set off once again, steaming upstream toward the Jaú National Park.

NIGHT: on board the *Cassiquiari*

August 18, Day 8: Arrive in Jaú National Park. We'll likely still be cruising toward Jaú in the early morning hours, but should arrive by mid-day. This park, founded in 1980, is the largest in all of Brazil (and the second largest in all of South America), and encompasses 22,720 km² of true wilderness! We will plan our first birding foray in the park for the afternoon, with a special evening excursion to search for the beautiful and seldom-seen Rufous Potoo.

NIGHT: Jaú National Park, on board the *Cassiquiari*

August 19, Day 9: Birding Jaú National Park. Today will feature a long trail hike through fabulous forest, giving us ample opportunity to search for the many species typical of the Jaú River Basin. We will concentrate on birds restricted to the west bank of the Rio Negro, with a special objective of reaching some sandy soil, *campina*-like woodland. Here, our prize target will be the rare, and until recently nearly unknown Yapacana Antbird, an enigmatic species that has been seen by only a relative handful of birders. Although the antbird will be a definite focal point, we will not neglect the more common birds of the region. Indeed, this will be a day of great avian diversity, and a rare opportunity to experience true Amazonian wilderness.

In the late afternoon we will begin cruising back downstream, towards Anavilhanas.

NIGHT: on board the *Cassiquiari*

August 20, Day 10: Morning Birding at Anavilhanas; Afternoon Birding at Ilha Marchantaria. After another morning of sensational birding in the Anavilhanas Archipelago, we'll cruise back toward Manaus, from there making our way to nearby Ilha Marchantaria, an island located in the Rio Solimões (the name that Brazilians give the Amazon prior to its confluence with the Rio Negro). The islands in "whitewater" rivers like the Amazon are in a constant state of ecological flux. The upstream ends of the islands (which are older and support taller forest) are constantly being eroded, while the silt-laden waters of the Amazon continuously deposit new

layers of soil at the downstream ends. This keeps the downstream end of each island in an early vegetational succession, and it is this ephemeral second-growth that is habitat for several rare and highly specialized birds. Among our target species will be Azure Gallinule; Festive and Short-tailed parrots; Olive-spotted Hummingbird; Spot-breasted Woodpecker; Zimmer's Woodcreeper; an impressive array of spinetails that includes Dark-breasted, White-bellied, Red-and-white, Yellow-chinned, the recently split Parker's Spinetail, and the poorly known Scaled Spinetail; Lesser Hornero; Black-and-white Antbird; Castlenau's Antshrike; Amazonian Black-Tyrant; Lesser Wagtail-Tyrant; Riverside Tyrant; Brownish Elaenia; River Tyrannulet; Bicolored and Pearly-breasted (rare) conebills; Orange-headed Tanager; and Oriole Blackbird. The sheer "birdiness" of these river islands can be staggering, and the best that we can hope for on this afternoon is to make at least a large dent in the list of hoped-for species, leaving the others for our return tomorrow

NIGHT: on board the *Cassiquiari*

August 21, Day 11: Morning and Afternoon Birding on Ilha Marchantaria and Nearby River Islands.

We'll have the entire day to search Ilha Marchantaria and other nearby islands for the many river island specialties, some of which can be elusive. One of the challenges of searching for these river island specialists is that most of these birds are dependent on successional vegetation, which, by definition, changes in composition and stature through time. As the vegetation matures, one special bird after another drops out, moving to more suitable habitat on younger islands. Places that were excellent for certain species several years ago are no longer inhabited. Conversely, new islands that were little more than sandbars a few years back, are now excellent places to look for some of the most special birds. Because conditions can change from year-to-year, and can also depend on ephemeral water levels, we try to build in enough flexibility to maximize our chances for rooting out most of the special birds of the river islands. The one constant here is that no matter where we go on the islands, there will be birds, and lots of them! In fact, past participants have rated their days at Ilha Marchantaria among the best birding days of their lives, so our additional time here will be well spent. Mid-day heat will drive us back on to the boat for a refreshing shower, lunch, and an afternoon break, after which, we will continue our quest for the river island birds in the late afternoon. We'll reposition the boat in the evening, in order to be near Careiro for an early disembarkation tomorrow.

NIGHT: on board the *Cassiquiari*

August 22, Day 12: Disembark at Careiro: Drive to Tupana Lodge. We will disembark the boat at Careiro, on the south bank of the Amazon, first thing in the morning. Here, we will transfer to vans, and begin our exploration of the "South Bank" avifauna. Early morning birding outside Careiro can be lively, and it is an excellent place to find many species of secondary woodland and marsh habitats. We will also make a special stop to see the Giant Water Lilies, before driving the 150 kms south to Tupana Lodge. Upon leaving Careiro, we'll likely drive pretty directly to the lodge, with only opportunistic stops for birds en route.

Tupana Lodge is nicely situated close to this little-traveled highway, yet is surrounded by tall *terra firme* forest. Built in the style of a Native American "longhouse," the lodge features spacious rooms with king-sized beds, fans, private showers and toilets, good food, an excellent system of forest trails, and observation decks overlooking the surrounding forest. Nearby habitats (readily accessible by van) include sandy soil forest and black-water *igapó*.

NIGHT: Tupana Lodge

August 23–25, Days 13–15: Birding Tupana Lodge. We'll have three full days to enjoy the diverse avifauna of Tupana Lodge and the surrounding area. Most of our time will be spent birding forest trails in the *terra firme* forest, seeking out a number of south bank specialties, many of them found only west of the Rio Madeira. Canopy mixed-species flocks of tanagers, honeycreepers, foliage-gleaners and the like may also contain Sclater's and Chestnut-shouldered antwrens, a recently discovered and still undescribed species of *Herpsilochmus* antwren, Guianan Gnatcatcher, Short-billed Honeycreeper and Red-billed Pied-Tanager, among others. Army ant swarms are likely to be attended by Sooty, White-throated, and Hairy-crested antbirds, and possibly by the spectacular Reddish-winged Bare-eye. The ants are also a draw for many species of woodcreepers, among them, the

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little-known Bar-bellied Woodcreeper. Even the rare Red-billed Ground-Cuckoo is possible. In between mixed-species flocks and army ant swarms, we'll keep busy looking for such prizes as White-browed Hawk, Tiny Hawk, Starred Wood-Quail, Kawall's Parrot, Scarlet-shouldered Parrotlet, Rufous Potoo, Needle-billed Hermit, Pavonine Quetzal, Golden-collared Toucanet, Spot-throated Woodcreeper, Pearly Antshrike, Black Antbird, White-crowned Manakin, Brownish Twistwing, and Zimmer's Tody-Tyrant, all of which were seen on our scouting trips to the area. Explorations of nearby sandy-soil habitats may produce Red-bellied Macaw, Green-tailed Goldenthrout, Chestnut-capped Puffbird, Bronzy Jacamar, Point-tailed Palmcreeper, Black Manakin, Pale-bellied Mourner, Citron-bellied Attila and others.

NIGHTS: Tupana Lodge

August 26, Day 16: Tupana Lodge to Manaus. We'll have the better part of the morning to spend in continued exploration of the Tupana area, before returning to the lodge to pack up and eat lunch. After lunch, we'll begin the drive back to Careiro, where we'll catch the ferry back to Manaus, giving us one last look at the famous "meeting of the waters", where the beautiful, tea-colored waters of the Rio Negro empty into the silt-clouded "white" waters of the Rio Solimões (Amazon).

NIGHT: Hotel Tropical, Manaus

August 27-28, Days 17-18: Final Morning in Manaus; Departure for Home. Transfers will be provided for all flights departing Manaus this morning and afternoon. Depending on your actual departure time, the morning will be free for sleeping in, birding the hotel grounds, or an optional trip to the historical Manaus Opera House. TAM and Varig offer direct flights from Manaus to São Paulo which depart in the mid afternoon, in time to connect with flights to various U.S. cities leaving in the late evening (arriving on the morning of August 28, allowing time for homeward connections). TAM also offers a direct flight to Miami which departs in the early afternoon (subject to change).

TOUR LEADERS: Andrew Whittaker and Kevin Zimmer

Andrew Whittaker grew up in England where he started birding at the early age of seven, thanks to his father. Andy's great passion for tropical rainforests began in Borneo, which led him to move to the Amazonian rainforests of Brazil where he has spent the last 20 years. Working in the rainforest for the World Wildlife Federation and Smithsonian Institution has made Andy an authority on Amazonian birds and the region's natural history. He was a consultant for the prestigious *Life of Birds* series by David Attenborough, and has authored many technical publications on Neotropical birds. Andy speaks fluent Portuguese and is an experienced tour leader and excellent tour organizer, having led tours throughout South and Central America and the Antarctic for the past 18 years. His enthusiasm for showing and sharing with others his fascination for Neotropical birds and animals is contagious. Andy's special interest is Neotropical bird vocalizations; his knowledge of their voices has enabled him to make several exciting discoveries and add 16 species to the Brazilian list. Andy lives in Manaus with his wife Nadime, their son Steven, and daughters, Luana and Suzana.

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 16 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 research associate of Cornell's Library of Natural Sounds and the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History. He has authored numerous technical papers on the taxonomy, distribution, and behavior of Neotropical birds, particularly those of the Amazon basin. He recently completed (with co-author Mort Isler) the major chapter on the *Thamnophilidae* (antbirds) for the prestigious *Handbook of Birds of the World* series. 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 is in graduate school at Dominican University in San Rafael, California.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS: The fee for this tour is **\$5595** per person in double occupancy from Manaus. It includes all lodging during the tour, all meals from breakfast on Day 3 to lunch on Day 17, ground and boat transportation during the tour, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does not include airfare from your home to Manaus and return, flights from Cuiabá to Manaus, 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 have to be charged.

The single supplement for this tour is **\$765**. 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. This does not cover nor guarantee single accommodations aboard the *Cassiquiari* on Days 6-11. However, your preference will be noted and accommodated if possible at no additional cost. Single accommodations are limited at Tupana Lodge (Days 12-15) and you may be asked to share. If so, you will be credited appropriately. See **ACCOMMODATIONS** section below for more information.

TOUR REGISTRATION: To register for this tour, complete the VENT registration form and return it with a deposit of **\$500** per person (check or money order in U.S. dollars.) If registering by phone, the deposit must be received within 10 days or the space will be released. Full payment of the tour fee is due 120 days prior to the tour departure date.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Refunds are made according to the following schedule: If cancellation is made 120 days or more before departure date, the deposit less **\$75** per person is refundable. If cancellation is made fewer than 120 days before departure date, no refund is available. This policy and fee schedule also applies to pre-trip and post-trip extensions, as well as any transfers from one tour to another. ***We strongly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance to protect yourself.***

<u>If you cancel:</u>	<u>Your refund will be:</u>
120 days or more before departure date	Your deposit minus \$75 .
Fewer than 120 days before departure date	No refund available.

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

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

AIR INFORMATION: Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements.

ACCOMMODATIONS: VENT has privately chartered the *Cassiquiari* on Days 6-11. The only people aboard the ship will be tour participants, leaders and crew. Since there are a total of 9 cabins available for tour participants, it is possible that single participants will be asked to share. However, depending on group size and composition, some private cabins may be available. If so, they will be assigned to participants based on order of tour

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enrollment at no additional cost. Participants will be advised of their specific cabin or room assignments prior to departure. Please feel free to contact the VENT office with any questions or to enquire about space availability.

Since there are a total of 7 rooms for four participants at Tupana Lodge (Days 12-15), it is possible that single participants will be asked to share. However, depending on group size and composition, some single rooms may be available. If so, they will be assigned to single participants based on order of tour enrollment. Singles who are asked to share on these 4 nights will be provided with a partial refund of the single supplement fee.

CLOTHING: Weather will be generally warm to hot. Light field clothing, including several pair of pants and shorts (for wear around the lodges; not recommended for the field) and comfortable shirts, will be appropriate. 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. Rubber boots should be brought for the river island excursions. A swimming suit 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.

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

HEALTH PRECAUTIONS: Yellow fever vaccination is highly recommended, as well as polio and tetanus. Malaria has been confirmed in Brazil, including the chloroquine-resistant strain. 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. You may check with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta at 877-FYI-TRIP or www.cdc.gov/travel for further health information.

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

ITEMS TO BRING: Pack a flashlight or headlamp, water bottle or small canteen, towel, 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.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Country Telephone Code: 55

Electric Current: 110 Volts in Manaus and 220 elsewhere. This varies throughout the country.

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

De La Pena, M.R. and M. Rumboll. *Birds of Southern South America and Antarctica*. London: Harper Collins Publishers Ltd, 1998.

Dunning, J. *South American Land Birds*. Newton Square: Harrowood Books, 1982. A photographic aid to identification.

Hilty, S. L. *Birds of Venezuela*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002. A landmark second edition field guide that is very helpful for northern Amazonian Brazil (eg. Manaus and São Gabriel regions).

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