

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

**SEPTEMBER 29 – OCTOBER 16, 2008**

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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 endemics that are 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: Espírito Santo & the Cherry-throated Tanager tour (October 14-24, 2008). Either tour can be taken independently as a wonderful, short introduction to the birds of this region, or, taken together 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 fair amount of overlap in possible species, the emphasis of Part II will be on the many specialties of Espírito Santo that are more difficult or not possible to see on Part I. More widespread species recorded on Part I will be searched for as time allows, but not at the expense of devoting time to the target species.*

*This tour will begin with a trip to Iguazu where the thunderous cataracts of Iguazu, 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 Robust, Blond-crested, and Helmeted (very rare) 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.*

*Curitiba 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 Sickie-winged Nightjar, Glaucous-blue Grosbeak, 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, Uni-*

*colored 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.*

*We'll finish this tour with 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; Itatiaia Spinetail; Brassy-breasted Tanager; and many more.*

*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.*

**September 29–30, Days 1-2: Travel to Iguacu Falls.** There are direct overnight flights from Los Angeles, Dallas/Ft.Worth, Miami, and other cities which will arrive in São Paulo on September 30. Participants arriving this day will clear customs and connect to our group flight to Iguacu Falls (TAM Flight 3559 which is scheduled to depart at 3:00 p.m. – subject to change).

Participants wanting to avoid the risk of misconnecting should consider arriving in São Paulo on September 29 and spending the night at an airport-area hotel. Alternatively, previous participants have opted to connect through to Iguacu a day in advance of the official start of the tour. The Tropical Das Cataratas Hotel 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 30 will likely preclude any extended birding, there should be time for a short birding walk to the Iguacu 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: Tropical Das Cataratas Hotel, Iguacu Falls

**October 1–2, Days 3-4: Foz do Iguacu 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 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. There is also potential for seeing the very rare Helmeted Woodpecker, which will nonetheless require much luck to find. Smaller birds will not be neglected, and indeed, much of our time will be spent searching for the 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: Tropical Das Cataratas Hotel, Iguaçu Falls

**October 3, Day 5: Iguaçu to Curitiba, with Local Birding Followed by Drive to Itapoá.** An early morning connection through Sao Paulo (TAM Flights 3556 and 3333 – subject to change) will take us from Iguaçu to Curitiba, our jumping-off spot for exploring the Serra da Graciosa and the coastal lowlands of southern Paraná and northern Santa Catarina states. Our exact itinerary on this day will remain somewhat flexible in order to accommodate any changes in air schedules, as well as to take into account the vagaries of weather. Regardless, we will leave time in the afternoon for a first try at the recently discovered Marsh Antwren. Described in 1998, this antbird is currently 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. 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 Vila da Glória, São Francisco do Sul

**October 4–5, Days 6 & 7: 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 Unicolored 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.

We'll also 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 7, we will drive to Curitiba.

NIGHTS: Pousada Vila da Glória, São Francisco do Sul (October 4); Holiday Inn Express, Curitiba (October 5)

**October 6–7, Days 8 & 9: 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 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. Al-

though 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 Anthrush; 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, Brassy-breasted, and Gilt-edged tanagers; Thick-billed Saltator; Red-rumped and Bay-chested warbling-finches; and Blackish-blue Seedeater.

Another option will be visiting the grasslands of Vila Velha State Park (known for its spectacular sandstone formations) and various marshes 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), Rufous-capped Antshrike, Sharp-tailed Tyrant, Lesser Grass-Finch, Black-and-rufous Warbling-Finch, Great Pampa-Finch, Glaucous-blue Grosbeak, 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 Band-winged 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: Holiday Inn Express, Curitiba

**October 8, Day 10: Curitiba to Pôrto Alegre and São Francisco de Paula.** This morning we'll transfer to the Curitiba Airport in time for the 10:50 a.m. departure of TAM Flight 3441 to Pôrto Alegre, an important shipping center of southern Brazil situated at the junction of five rivers (flight subject to change). Upon arrival we'll head to a locally renowned *churrascaria* (Brazilian barbecue) for a great lunch, 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 9–10, Days 11–12: Aparados da Serra National Park and the São Francisco de Paula Area.** We will have two 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 Red-rumped 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. Our 2006 and 2007 groups were treated to excellent studies of this species, making us perhaps the first organized tour group to see it since its formal description.

On the other day 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-Spintail; Olive Spintail; 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 11, Day 13: Hampel to Pôrto Alegre, Flight to Rio de Janeiro, and Drive to Itatiaia National Park.**

We should have a couple of hours of 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 12:50 p.m. departure of TAM Flight 3410 to Rio de Janeiro (flight subject to change). From Rio, we'll have a 2–3 hour drive to Itatiaia National Park and the lovely Hotel do Ypé, our base for the next four days.

NIGHT: Hotel do Ypé, Itatiaia

**October 12–14, Days 14–16: Itatiaia National Park.** It's no accident that we've chosen to end this tour at Itatiaia, for there is no more delightful place in southeast Brazil to bird. Three full days here allow us to thoroughly explore its avian riches and to savor the 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 in search of the Plovercrest (a spectacular little hummer with a punk-rocker crest), 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 and Ochre-rumped antbirds; White-shouldered Fire-eye; Cryptic Antthrush; Speckle-breasted Antpitta; Rufous Gnatcatcher; Slaty Bristlefront; Mouse-colored Tapaculo; Shear-tailed Gray-Tyrant; Rufous-tailed Attila; Serra do Mar Tyrannulet; Olivaceous Elaenia; Brassy-breasted Tanager; Bay-chested Warbling-Finch; and many more.

One or more visits to the marshes, second-growth woodlands, and lowland forest below the park boundaries should repay us with a number of special birds, among them, Swallow-tailed Hummingbird, Sapphire-spangled Emerald, Planalto Hermit, Red-eyed Thornbird, Streamer-tailed Tyrant, Hangnest Tody-Tyrant, White-rumped Monjita, Long-billed Wren, and Brazilian Tanager.

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

**October 15–16, Days 17–18: Itatiaia to Rio for Connections Home, or Begin Southeastern Brazil: Part II.**

After a final morning of birding in Itatiaia, we'll drive to Rio de Janeiro in time for those continuing on our Southeastern Brazil Part II: Espírito Santo & the Search for the Cherry-throated Tanager tour (October 14–24, 2008) to catch the 3:35 p.m. departure of TAM Flight 3088 to Vitoria (subject to change). Those not continuing on this tour

will be able to take an overnight flight to the USA, which will arrive in the morning on October 16 in time for homeward connections.

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

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

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

**FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:** The fee for this tour is **\$6395** per person in double occupancy from Iguaçu Falls (tour ends in Rio de Janeiro). The price includes all food from dinner on Day 2 to lunch on Day 17, 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 this tour is **\$610**. You will be charged a single supplement if you desire single accommodations, or if you prefer to share but have no roommate and we cannot provide one for you.

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

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** Refunds are made according to the following schedule: if cancellation is made 120 days or more before the tour departure date, the deposit less \$125 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 \$125.
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.

Note that there are several 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 Iguaçu. 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. 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. A swim suit is also suggested (there are swimming pools at the hotels in Iguaçu and Itatiaia) and raingear is recommended. 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. Also, a pocket umbrella is a good idea. There are three laundry stops: Hotel Cataratas (Iguaçu), Veraneio Hampel (São Francisco de Paula), and Hotel do Ypé (Itatiaia).

**DIFFICULTY:** The two days at Iguaçu, the mornings out of Curitiba and Itapoá, one morning at São Francisco de Paula, and all three days at Itatiaia 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 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. On a few days (particularly our day on the Agulhas Negras Road in Itatiaia National Park), we must drive for some distance from our hotel to reach the birding areas. To arrive at these locations at dawn will require departures in the neighborhood of 4:00 a.m. At Iguaçu, we typically do our owling excursions pre-dawn, which will also 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 Iguaçu, 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 the Agulhas Negras Road, where the distance from the hotel precludes an early return for less than the full group. It should be emphasized that our comfortable bus (outfitted with snacks and a variety of cold drinks) will be with us at all times on those days, and participants wishing to rest on the bus may do so at any time.

**DOCUMENTS:** A current U.S. passport and **VISA** are required to enter Brazil. Your visa must be obtained in the U.S. prior to departure and is issued by Brazilian consulates. For further information, you may wish to contact the Brazil consulate nearest you or Pinnacle Travel Document Systems ([www.traveldocs.com](http://www.traveldocs.com) on the web or 888-838-4867 by phone), a company which handles visa procurement.

**HEALTH PRECAUTIONS:** Yellow fever vaccination is highly recommended, as well as polio and tetanus. Malaria has been confirmed in Brazil, including the chloroquine-resistant strain, but is highly unlikely on this tour. We suggest that participants consult their physician as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for current recommendations before beginning a prophylaxis regimen.

There have been some recent changes in recommendations for malaria prophylaxis. Mefloquine (Lariam) is now the drug of choice in all areas where chloroquine-resistant malaria is present. A single dose should be taken one week before the start of the tour, continued during the tour, and for four weeks after its conclusion. Mefloquine is available by prescription only and may not be suitable for those using cardio-vascular medication; consult your physician. Cholera has been reported in Brazil, but no country requires cholera vaccination for direct travel from the USA and no vaccinations are required to return to the USA. Please consult your physician for any recommended preventative treatment.

If you are taking prescription medication or over-the-counter medicine, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

As standard travel precautions, you should always be up to date with tetanus shots, and strongly consider inoculations against Hepatitis types A and B.

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta. The CDC operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers' Information Line 877-FYI-TRIP (394-8747) or you can check their website at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel). Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new\\_e.html](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new_e.html) (click on travel health).

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

**BAGGAGE:** We request that tour participants limit their baggage to one suitcase and one carry-on bag if possible, as 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. A supply of resealable 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 877-FYI-TRIP 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**

*Birds of South America-Non Passerines: Rheas to Woodpeckers*. Princeton illustrated checklist.

\*1300 species illustrated with excellent plates and good range maps. NEW 2006.

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

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.)

Hilty, Steven L. and Rodolphe Meyer. *Guide to the Birds of Venezuela*. November 2002) Princeton University Press, 2002. A guide to the birds of De Schauensee, to be published in November 2002.

Meyer de Schauensee, R. and W.H. Phelps, Jr. *A Guide to the Birds of Venezuela*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978. By far the most useful guide to South America's avifauna prior to Steve Hilty's guide. (<http://birds.cornell.edu>; select "Audio Guides")

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

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

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

Ridgely, Robert S., and Guy Tudor. *The Birds of South America, Volume I: The Oscine Passerines: Jays, Swallows, Wrens, Thrushes and Allies, Vireos, Wood-warblers, Tanagers, Icterids and Finches*. Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1989. Very useful reference, with range maps and illustrations of many species not previously illustrated. (<http://birds.cornell.edu>; select "Audio Guides")

Ridgely, Robert S., and Guy Tudor. *The Birds of South America Volume II: The Suboscine Passerines: Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers, Antbirds, Gnateaters, and Tapaculos, Tyrant Flycatchers, Manakins and Cotingas*. Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1994. Very useful reference, with range maps and illustrations of many species not previously illustrated. (<http://birds.cornell.edu>; select "Audio Guides")

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

**Butterflies**

D'Abrera, Bernard. *Butterflies of South America*. Australia: Hill House, 1984. Good pocket guide, covers many genera, nice pictures.

**Mammals**

Emmons, Louise H. *Neotropical Rainforest Mammals*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997. Good pictures and excellent text. (An audio field guide CD also available from this author: see below.)

**General Nature**

Caufield, C. *In the Rainforest*. Chicago: Random House, 1985.

Forsyth, Adrian, Ken Miyata et al. *Tropical Nature*. Scribner, 1987. (paperback)

Kricher, John. *A Neotropical Companion*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.

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**

English, Peter H. and Theodore A. Parker, III. *Birds of Eastern Ecuador* Cornell: Laboratory of Ornithology, 1992. ([http://www.birds.cornell.edu/lab\\_cds.html](http://www.birds.cornell.edu/lab_cds.html))

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 February 14, 2008 and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change therein. The right is reserved to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of any tour. Baggage is at owner's risk entirely. The airlines concerned and their agents and affiliates are not to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time passengers are not on board their aircraft. The passenger ticket in use by said airlines, when issued, shall constitute the sole contract between the airlines and the purchaser of these tickets and/or passenger. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for these tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airline Reporting Corporation.