



Brazil: Birding the Wild Pantanal

Leader: Sue MacCallum

July 2–12, 2020

Deadline for Reservations: Jan. 20

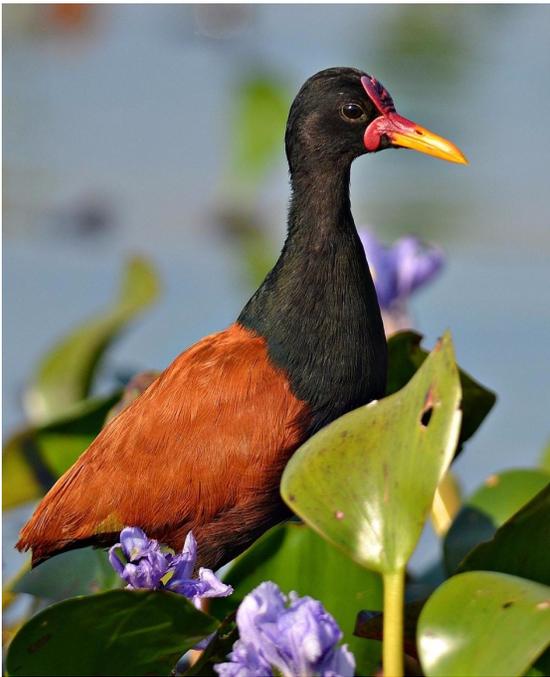
Brazil's Pantanal: a place of superlatives. Home to the world's largest freshwater wetlands, the Pantanal: ten times the size of the Everglades, draining into a single channel, the Paraguay River. We'll venture deep into this world-class wildlife hotspot on a long road that bisects the Transpantaneira wilderness, in search of an adventure that can't be missed.

In this famed region, we'll discover wildlife thriving in a mix of savanna, forest, and wetland habitats. Even a relaxed day can yield more than 100 species of birds and dozens of mammals—capybara are everywhere!

Brazilian Tapir, Maned Wolf, Giant Anteater, Giant River Otter, and yes, Jaguar (seven were seen on the 2017 trip!), are examples of the many incredible resident mammals, while Greater Rhea, Hyacinth Macaw, Toco Toucan, and Helmeted Manakin top the list of exciting bird species. Rare Green Anaconda, the world's largest snake, may be a lucky find, while the small crocodylian Yacaré can be seen by the thousands. For many, it is the sheer number and variety of species that leaves the most lasting impression.



Purple Gallinule, via Aguapé Lodge



Wattled Jacana, via Aguapé Lodge

ABOUT THIS TRIP

LODGING: Comfortable lodges and cattle ranches are our accommodations for much of the tour, each with their own distinctive wildlife community.

TRANSPORTATION: For most of the trip, we will be in a mini-bus with air-conditioning. The bus seats 22, with 14 seats having windows.

DOCUMENTS: US citizens need a passport valid until Jan 15, 2021.

WEATHER: July and August are generally the driest months, but some light rain is possible. Temperatures range from mid 60s to low 90s with moderate humidity of about 60%.

PACE & PHYSICAL DIFFICULTY: Our pace will be moderate, but we will start our days early, since the birding is better, and the temperatures are cooler. Breakfast will typically start around 6 am. On some days there will be downtime after lunch to relax. Most of the birding is done from flat roads and trails. You can expect to walk an average of 2-3 miles per day.

SPECIES HIGHLIGHTS

- Look for South America's Big Five of mammals: Brazilian Tapir, Maned Wolf, Giant Anteater, Giant River Otter, and Jaguar
- Witness the Big Five of birds: Harpy Eagle, Greater Rhea, Hyacinth Macaw, Toco Toucan, and Helmeted Manakin. Plus Southern Screamer, Sunbittern, Scarlet-headed Blackbird, and so many more!
- Indulge in delicious local cuisine and hospitality at *fazendas* (working cattle ranches)
- Cruise the famed Cuiabá River for an excellent chance at a Jaguar sighting
- See waterbirds in mass congregation—like those of the Everglades, but magnified!
- Look for at least four species of monkeys and several hundred species of birds



Maned Wolf, via Naturalist Journeys



Toco Toucan, via Naturalist Journeys



Jabiru by David Weaver

Day-to-Day Itinerary

Day 0, July 1: Travel to São Paulo, Brazil

Most flights from the US will originate on July 1. Plan to arrive in São Paulo, Brazil, by July 2.

Day 1, July 2: Arrival in São Paulo, Brazil

Please plan for at least two hours in Guarulhos International Airport (GRU) to get luggage and clear immigration and customs. Then board one of the convenient free shuttles to the hotel. No activities are planned until our welcome dinner so you can rest up from your travels.

In the evening, we will enjoy our first dinner together, where we'll get to know each other a bit, discuss our coming adventure, and perhaps try the famous Brazilian cocktail, *caipirinha*.

Overnight: Either Marriott or TRYP by Wyndham Sao Paulo Guarulhos Airport (D)

Day 2, July 3: Early Flight, then Explore the South Side of the Pantanal

Our flight to Campo Grande will depart early. We will meet our local guides there about 9:00 am. From the airport, we will drive to Aguapé Lodge (four-hour drive with stops for birds and mammals).

After checking into our rooms and eating lunch, we'll explore the grounds around the lodge until the end of the day, looking for birds like the Chaco Chachalaca, Hyacinth Macaw, Turquoise-fronted Parrot, Nanday Parakeet, Toco Toucan, Lineated and White Woodpecker, Narrow-billed Woodcreeper, Greater Thornbird, Giant Cowbird, Crested Oropendola, Purplish and Plush-crested Jay, Red-crested Cardinal, and many others.

Overnight: Aguapé Lodge (B,L,D)

Day 3-4, July 4-5: Pantanal Safari from Aguape Lodge

Aguapé is an excellent place for birdwatching: over 300 bird species have been recorded there. Over the next 2 days we will have full days of birding and exploring.

Interesting bird species are Southern Screamer, Blaze-winged Parakeet, Gilded Hummingbird, Toco Toucan, Pale-crested and White-fronted Woodpecker, Red-billed Scythebill, Helmeted Manakin, and the Scarlet-headed Blackbird.

Each morning after an early breakfast, we'll embark on a safari drive with good chances to see Undulated Tinamou, Capped Heron, Jabiru, Savanna Hawk, Rufescent Tiger-Heron, Buff-necked and Plumbeous Ibis, Roseate Spoonbill, Hyacinth and Yellow-collared Macaw, Red-billed Scythebill, Orange-backed Troupial, and others.

After lunch, we'll enjoy a siesta during the heat of the day, and then head out on another safari drive. We'll return after dark to increase our chances of spotting mammals like the Crab-eating Fox, South American Coati, Capybara, Marsh Deer, Southern Tamandua, Crab-eating Raccoon, Neotropical River Otter, and night birds such as Common and Great Potoo, Spectacled and Striped Owl, Pauraque, and Scissor-tailed Nightjar.

This area is the best place to spot Giant Anteater in the whole region, so we'll do our best to find one.

Overnight: Aguapé Lodge (B,L,D)

Day 5, July 6: Birding from Aguapé to Campo Grande

After an early breakfast, we'll take a walk to look for Great Rufous Woodcreeper, Blaze-winged Parakeet, Black-crowned Tityra, Chestnut-eared Aracari, and Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, among many more.

Then we'll head out by boat to explore the Aquidauana River. This river is rich with animal life like Giant River Otter, and special birds like Black-collared Hawk, five species of kingfisher, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Blue-throated Piping-Guan, and a variety of others.

We'll return to the lodge for check out and a drive back to Campo Grande to catch a flight to Cuiabá. From here we travel along the Transpantaneira Road to Pousada Piuval.

Overnight: Pousada Piuval (B,L,D)



Giant River Otter by Dave Larson

Day 6, July 7: Northern Transpantaneira

This morning begins the second (northern) half of our Pantanal adventure! Pousada Piuval is the first lodge on the Transpantaneira. It is small, about twenty rooms, and part of a large (17,000 acres) family-run ranch. There is also a lovely pool to enjoy. We will begin our day with an exciting bird walk around the range.

Birding is wonderful here because there is easy access to a variety of habitats: rivers, wetlands, flooded pastures, forest, and dry scrub. Some of the main highlights are the huge Hyacinth Macaws, Greater Rhea, Bare-faced Curassow, Chestnut-bellied Guan, up to four ibis species, Jabiru, Maguari Stork, and more!

Overnight: Pousada Piuval (B,L,D)

Day 7, July 8: Safari on Transpantaneira | Drive to Porto Jofre

We'll begin the day with wildlife viewing at the ranch, then head down the Transpantaneira, keeping an eye out for Red Brocket Deer, Marsh Deer, Crab-eating Fox, Greater Rhea, Chestnut-bellied Guan, Bare-faced Curassow, and a mix of wading birds. Bridges are excellent places to look for Green Kingfisher, Great Egret, Cocoi Heron, Bare-faced and Green Ibis, and White-lored Spinetail, among others.

We'll pass through a variety of habitats: palm woodlands, cerrado scrub, and seasonally flooded grasslands reminiscent of the Everglades. The roadside ponds and canals are usually filled with waders such as Roseate Spoonbill, Plumbeous Ibis, Limpkin, cormorants, herons, kingfishers, and their predator, Yacaré Caiman.

At Porto Jofre, the end of the road, in the palms are several resident pairs of Hyacinth Macaws. From this little town on the Cuiabá River, we'll board a small boat to reach our lodgings—two days on a houseboat. Rooms are air-conditioned, with private baths. This floating hotel will allow us to stay close to where the wildlife has been spotted; we'll explore from the houseboat each day on smaller boats.

We'll check into our boat cabins, have dinner, then have a briefing on safety and the wildlife we hope to see. If skies are clear, the stars in the night sky are breathtaking with views of the famous Southern Cross.

Overnight: Private cabins on a houseboat hotel (B,L,D)

Day 8, July 9: Full Day Looking for Jaguar, Jabiru & More | Jaguar Boat Excursion

We'll wake to the sights and sounds of macaws and other birds flying overhead. We'll board outboard motorboats to spend the day searching for the iconic Jaguar. They are good swimmers, and often lie down along the shore after a swim. Chances are good that we see at least one,

We'll lunch back on the houseboat, take a short siesta in our air-conditioned cabins, and head out again in the afternoon. Wildlife is plentiful in this remote part of the Pantanal: Giant River Otter, Black Skimmer, Pied Plover, Southern Screamer, and Yacaré Caiman. We'll also explore little streams for skulkers like American Pygmy Kingfisher and Sungebe.

By late afternoon we'll return to our houseboat to celebrate our sightings with *caipirinhas* before dinner.

Overnight: Private cabins on houseboat hotel (B,L,D)

Day 9, July 10: Wildlife & Birding on the Lower Transpantaneira

After our two days immersed in the wildest part of the Pantanal, we'll head back north, retracing our route, spending more time in the promising areas from our journey down.

Perhaps we'll see Black-and-Gold Howler Monkey, Chestnut-eared Aracari, Snail Kite, Rusty-backed Antwren, Common Tody-Flycatcher, White-browed Meadowlark, Cream-colored Woodpecker, Ashy-headed Greenlet, Short-crested Flycatcher, Mato Grosso Antbird, Great Antshrike, and Purple-throated Euphonia. Near water we'll look for Whistling and Capped Heron, American Pygmy and Ringed Kingfisher, Sunbittern, Black-collared and Great Black Hawk, and Rusty-backed Spinetail.



Jaguar sighting from boat, via Southwild Hotel

Once we arrive at our hotel in Mato Grosso, we'll check the feeders for brilliantly colored troupials; Palm, Silver, and Sayaca Tanager; and Red-crested Cardinal. At this point in our journey, we'll focus our efforts on finding anything missing from our list that we still hope to see.

Overnight: Southwild Pantanal (B,L,D)

Day 10, July 11: Pixaim River Area Wildlife & Birding

We'll start the day with a beautiful sunrise viewing while fortifying ourselves with delicious Brazilian coffee. This morning, depending what we still want to look for/see, we may do a safari drive, or we can take a small boat ride on the Pixaim River to spot secretive species like Agami and Zigzag Heron. This is a good spot for Giant River Otter, and with luck and some searching, a Brazilian Tapir.

Driving back to Cuiabá, the landscapes are iconic and make for great pictures. We will look for Black-capped Donacobius, Green-and-rufous Kingfisher, Little Blue Heron, and other species, like some very impressive iguanas. We can break up our drive with a walk in gallery forest habitat looking for special birds like Helmeted Manakin, Mato Grosso Antbird, Band-tailed Antbird, Hooded Tanager, Blue-crowned Trogon, and more.

Dinner will feature an enticing offering of authentic Grosso cuisine, including the legendary piranha and local beef.

Overnight: Southwild Pantanal (B,L,D)

Day 11, July 12: Wildlife Viewing | Return Drive to Cuiabá

In the morning, we'll head back to Cuiabá; the paved road will be a welcome sight after the marvelous but often dusty Pantanal. Our plan is to arrive in Cuiabá in time for a farewell dinner

Overnight: Hotel Odara, Cuiabá (B,L,D)

Day 12, July 13: Departure—Flights homeward from Cuiabá

Fond farewells over breakfast, then transfer to the airport for flights home. (B)

Mass Audubon Naturalist



Sue MacCallum is the Director of Mass Audubon's South Shore Sanctuaries in Marshfield. During her 20 years with Mass Audubon, she has coordinated and led natural history and birding trips to many North American hot spots.

Her international trips include many visits to Costa Rica, Ecuador, and the Galapagos Islands, as well as the Amazon Basin in Peru. These trips to the neotropics have sparked her fascination with tropical ecology, which she enjoys sharing.

She graduated from Western Illinois University with a bachelor's degree in zoology and a minor in botany.

Main Tour Price: \$6950 per person, double occupancy. Single supplement: \$950 (*single rooms are limited to 2*). Price based on a minimum of 8 travelers. Maximum number of travelers is 10.

Price Includes:

- All meals and accommodations as shown in the itinerary (from Dinner on July 2nd to Breakfast on July 13th)
- Services of Mass Audubon naturalist leader
- Local guides and naturalists
- All excursions and entrance fees to activities described in the itinerary
- Extensive trip preparation notes and bird checklist
- Transportation in mini-bus AND IN-COUNTRY FLIGHTS ON July 3 from São Paulo to Campo Grande and on July 6 from Campo Grande to Cuiabá.
- Medical evacuation insurance
- Carbon offset credits for your international flights
- All tips and gratuities (*included if we have the minimum of 8*)

Price Excludes:

- International airfare (flights to São Paulo and flights from Cuiabá homeward)
- Passport and visa fees; trip cancellation insurance
- Airport taxes; excess baggage charges
- Items of a personal nature, including alcoholic beverages, laundry, and telephone calls; other items not specifically mentioned as included. Activities available at the lodges but not mentioned in the itinerary (such as fishing or horseback riding)

HOW TO BOOK

Email or call us at travel@massaudubon.org or 800-289-9504 to reserve your place.

APPLICATIONS, RESERVATIONS, DEPOSITS

Early applications are strongly encouraged. Trip rosters usually must be finalized 4 months before departure! **All applications must be accompanied by a completed reservation form and \$500 deposit.** Deposits can be by check or credit card (Visa or MasterCard). We reserve the right to decline your application. In the case of questionable health, we reserve the right to require a physician's certification to affirm you are capable of the activities. Final payment is due 90 days before the departure date. **Final payment must be by check or money order.**

RATES: All tour prices are based on double occupancy. If you would like us to find you a roommate, we will do our best, but cannot guarantee a share. If we cannot find a share, you will need to pay the single supplement. All forms and fares are accurate at the time of publication (November 2019) but are subject to change at any time prior to departure. It is our policy to only pass on the actual amount of any increases in airfares or land costs such as those increases due to the devaluation of the dollar. Rarely, a price increase may be called for if the group falls below the minimum, as listed in the itinerary.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS: A U.S. passport valid for at least six months beyond the trip's departure date is required.

FLIGHTS: You, the traveler, are responsible for booking and paying for your own international flights. Once you reserve your space, we will provide you with suggested flights and tell you which flights our staff will take. You may book flights directly with the airline, online, or with a travel agent. Please be aware that most tickets are non-refundable, therefore you should not book your flight arrangements until you have checked with us to be sure the tour has the minimum number of participants for the trip to go. We ask that you provide us with your flight details so we can make your pick up arrangements.

TRIP INSURANCE: A brochure and application for optional trip cancellation, illness, and baggage insurance will be sent to you upon registration. We strongly recommend that you purchase trip cancellation insurance to protect yourself, your health and safety and your financial investment in the tour. See insuremytrip.com.

PHOTOS: Mass Audubon reserves the right to make use of any photographs taken on the tour. We guarantee that no photos of a compromising nature will be used. If you have questions or concerns, please contact us.

FRONT HEADER PHOTO AND BACK COVER PHOTOS: Boat ride, via Pousada Piuval; Giant Anteater and Red-legged Seriema, via Pousada Aguapé.

CANCELLATION POLICY: If you need to change your booking, you must inform us immediately in writing. All cancellations must be done in writing and are effective upon receipt in the Massachusetts Audubon Travel Office. Cancellations received up to 121 days prior to departure will be refunded deposits less a \$300 per person fee. For cancellations between 120 and 90 days prior to departure, no deposits will be refunded, but any payment balance will. There are no refunds for cancellations 90 days or less from departure. We strongly urge all travelers to purchase trip cancellation insurance. You will be sent information from the Massachusetts Audubon Society upon receipt of your deposit.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY: Although every precaution is taken to safeguard you and your belongings, group travel trips by

their nature involve a certain amount of risk. Trip participants should understand that the domestic and international trips sponsored/operated by Massachusetts Audubon Society (Mass Audubon Tours)—hereafter collectively M.A.S. —involve known and unknown risks. M.A.S. assumes no responsibility for injuries, death, financial losses or damage to clients' property caused by or occurring during participation in any of the travel trips sponsored/operated by M.A.S. Trip participants must assume responsibility for having sufficient skill and fitness to participate in the trips and activities offered or sponsored by M.A.S. Trip participants must also certify that they have no medical, mental or physical conditions which could interfere with their abilities to participate in the activities and/or trips they are participating in and they must assume and bear the cost of all risks that may be created, directly or indirectly, by any such condition. It is the responsibility of trip participants to have in place adequate insurance to cover any injury, damage or emergency transportation costs related to their travel and/or participation in trip activities and/or to bear the costs of such injury, damage or emergency transportation costs. Because of the risks associated with the travel trips sponsored by M.A.S. we urge all trip participants to supplement their own insurance with travel or vacation or emergency response types of insurance. M.A.S. requires that all trip participants acknowledge and assume these risks by reading and signing an M.A.S. Release and Waiver and Assumption of Risk contract prior to departure.

CONDITIONS OF TRAVEL: Travelers will be provided with an itinerary and trip preparation information. It is expected that travelers will read this information prior to trip departure. Travelers will be responsible for completing an application reservation form, including the personal information and a release of liability (see attached). Travelers will be expected to abide by the terms set for in the invoice. During the tour, travelers are asked to respect and follow the directions of their guide and leader.



