



Hyacinth Macaw



Brazil's Pantanal: Birding and Magnificent Wildlife Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival into Sao Paulo and flight to Cuiabá

After trip participants arrive into Sao Paulo; during the late afternoon the group will fly to the city of Cuiabá

After landing in Cuiabá, the group will drive to the local hotel and time permitting will have some birding at the Mãe Bonifacia Park before supper.

Lodging Tonight: Hotel in Cuiabá.

Day 2: Cuiabá to Pantanal. Birding transfer to Fazenda Pouso Alegre

We will likely leave Cuiabá at about 6:30 AM to get in some morning birding in the Pantanal. We will first travel to Fazenda Pouso Alegre, one of the many excellent locations to bird in the Pantanal. Hyacinth Macaws nest near here, and the grounds of the ranch/lodge host several good birding spots with a good mix of Pantanal habitats. We will also get a good start on some of the water birds as we drive toward the lodge before checking in.

We will have time for several hours of birding before it gets hot at mid-day. The mid-day heat of the Pantanal makes birding impossible for several hours each day so we will return to bird very near the lodge.

In the afternoon, we should find Greater Rhea, Gray-necked Wood-Rail, Chalk-browed Mockingbird, Black-backed Water-Tyrant, Chestnut-bellied Guan, and Long-tailed Ground-Dove. Water birds abound here, and we should find Limpkin, Buff-necked Ibis, Green Ibis, Plumbeous Ibis, Jabiru and several duck species.

We will arrive back at the lodge between 5:00 PM and 6:00 PM so we can have supper and get to sleep early so as to be ready for another early morning start.

Lodging this Evening: Fazenda Pouso Alegre.



White Woodpecker

Days 3 & 4: Two Full Days Birding in the Pantanal

Over the next day and a half, we will bird the various habitats of the Pantanal and focus our efforts on finding the endemics here, as well as enjoying the Pantanal landscapes, birds and other wildlife. We will bird in marshes and wetlands, grasslands and islands of forested habitat.

The Pantanal Brasileiro is one of the most amazing habitats in South America and is home to a wide variety of bird species. The bird watching will be complemented by countless sightings of different species of mammals.

In the early morning of our first full day, we will focus on some of the woodcreepers and other species that eat insects attracted to the lights at the lodge before the sun comes up. After an early breakfast, we will bird the trees right outside our breakfast area for a variety of parrot and parakeet species. Then comes the spectacle of the morning flight of the Hyacinth Macaws, the largest parrots in the world. They live on the reserve and are easily seen in trees surrounding the lodge. Numerous other species of macaws, parrots and parakeets, toucans, trogons, woodpeckers, birds of prey, and hummingbirds are abundant. Some of the species we are likely to see include White-headed Marsh-Tyrant, Scarlet-headed Blackbird, Whistling Heron, and many more. For half the year (including during our visit) the area also has a tremendous concentration of water birds, including numerous heron species and storks.

A number of good birding routes and trails will be available each day, and our guide will select the best routes and choices based upon the weather, road quality and the interests of the group participants.

Some of the bird species we will be looking for include: Greater Rhea, Maguari Stork, Jabiru, Bare-faced Curassow, Chaco Chachalaca, Chestnut-bellied Guan, Ash-throated Crake, Picazuro Pigeon, Long-tailed Ground-Dove, Scaled Dove, Hyacinth Macaw, Yellow-collared Macaw, Nanday Parakeet, Buff-bellied Hermit, Ruby-topaz Hummingbird, Gilded Hummingbird, Campo Flicker, White Woodpecker, Pale-crested Woodpecker, Great Rufous Woodcreeper, Planalto Woodcreeper, Red-billed Scythebill, Chotoy Spinetail, White-lored Spinetail, Gray-crested Cacholote, Mato Grosso Antbird, Long-billed Antwren, Black-chinned Antbird, White-rumped Monjita, Green-backed Becard, and White-naped Xenopsaris.

In addition to the birds, there are plenty of possibilities to see mammalian wildlife including Black Howler Monkey, Giant Anteater, Crab-eating Fox, Giant Otter, South American River Otter, Jaguarundi, Ocelot, Puma, Tapir, Marsh Deer, Pampas Deer, and Capybara.



Blue Finch

During the hot part of the day bird activity in the Pantanal dives to nearly non-existent. We will use this time to have lunch back at the lodge and to have an early afternoon nap. Several years ago, I spent three hours in the intense heat with a young ornithological research student to find a staked-out Great Potoo. We found the Great Potoo, but not much else.

If we are lucky it will rain, otherwise we will have to wait until about 2:00 or 3:00 PM to start afternoon birding. We will drive down the road from the lodge and try some reliable habitat for Mato Grosso Antbird, Band-tailed Antbird, Band-tailed Manakin, and Helmeted Manakin.

We will get back to the lodge by about 6:00 PM so we can have supper and get to bed in preparation for another early start the next morning. Before we all depart company for the evening, Lelis will review the day's sightings and checklist. Morning wake up plans will also be confirmed.

Lodging these Evenings: Fazenda Pouso Alegre.



Red Pileated Finch

Day 5: AM Pantanal Birding and PM Birding Transfer to Chapada dos Guimarões

The morning will present another opportunity to explore the Pantanal. We will spend a few morning hours birding before leaving for Chapada dos Guimarões. We will focus on finding any species we may not yet have seen. Our guide will identify a number of good bird spots to walk with the likelihood of adding new species to our trip list. Many trips through this area add Black-fronted Nunbird, Guira Cuckoo, Southern Screamer, Blue-throated Piping-Guan, and maybe a real gem like the Blue-crowned Trogon.

We will have lunch and drive to Chapada dos Guimarões National Park. This is entirely new habitat for the trip, so we should start to find a good number of new trip birds this day.

Lodging this Evening: Hotel In Chapada dos Guimarões

Day 6: Full Day Birding Chapada dos Guimarões

After the Pantanal the Chapada dos Guimarões offers us cool change in temperature and astonishing views.

Throughout the day, we will enjoy the steep canyons and waterfalls and eye-level views of several high-flying bird species. The moderate temperatures and the mild winds blowing through Chapada usually create the right conditions for a pleasant afternoon of bird watching. This will be a nice change from the mid-day heat of the Pantanal. The Chapada dos Guimarões National Park is located in the State of Mato Grosso and was created to protect the Cerrado habitat in an uplifted plateau. The area is dominated by Cerrado habitat with a few patches of forest. This mix creates additional opportunities to find new bird species. Some we may see include: Red-winged Tinamou, Red-legged Seriema, Scaled Pigeon, Blue-winged Macaw, Pearly-breasted Cuckoo, Great Dusky Swift, Biscutate Swift, Planalto Hermit, Swallow-tailed Hummingbird, White-vented Violetear, Dot-eared Coquette, Frilled Coquette (rare),

Horned Sungem, Amethyst Woodstar, Toco Toucan, Green-barred Woodpecker, Rufous-winged Antshrike, Large-billed Antwren, Collared Crescentchest, Planalto Tyrannulet, Chapada Suiriri, Rufous-sided Pygmy-Tyrant, Southern Antpipit, Cliff Flycatcher, Helmeted Manakin, Fiery-capped Manakin, Band-tailed Manakin, Curl-crested Jay, Coal-crested Finch, Green-winged Saltator, Black-throated Saltator, Yellow-billed Blue-Finch, White-banded Tanager and White-rumped Tanager.
Lodging this Evening: Hotel In Chapada dos Guimarães



Band-tailed Manakin

Day 7: AM Chapada Birding and Mid-Morning Travel to Cuiabá, late PM Birding Mãe Bonifacia Park

The entire morning will present another opportunity to explore the Chapada dos Guimarães National Park, and we will focus on birding in habitats where we can add some new trip birds, we could add Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, Black-and-white Hawk-Eagle, Amazonian Motmot, White-eared Puffbird, Chaco Puffbird, White-wedged Piculet, Crested Black-tyrant, Cinnamon Tanager, and Plumbeous Seedeater.

After lunch we will start our way back Cuiabá.

We will end the day birding at the Mãe Bonifacia Park where we will look for Russet-crowned Crane, Pheasant Cuckoo, Rufous-fronted Thornbird, White-bellied Seedeater, Variable Oriole, and Orange-backed Troupial.

Night Hotel in Cuiabá.

Day 8: AM Transfer to Cuiaba airport. Participants taking the Rio Cristalino Extension will fly to Alta Florest, Participants finishing the trip will fly back to Sao Paulo.