In a country renowned for its remarkable biodiversity, the Pantanal region of southern Brazil stands out. From the savannas and woodlands in the north to the vast marshes and winding rivers in the south, the Pantanal is home to concentrations of mammals and birds so extraordinary that it owns a reputation as one of the top wildlife viewing destinations in the Western Hemisphere.

For this trip, we present a wildlife safari extravaganza to explore the varied habitats of the vast Pantanal ecosystem, seeking the many special mammals, birds, and reptiles that lend the area its fame. In particular, this region has become the single greatest location for viewing Jaguars, with most visitors experiencing multiple sightings of South America’s greatest predator.

Lying in the seasonally flooded basin of the Paraguay River, the vast lowlands of the Pantanal are home to countless numbers of waterbirds, raptors, and other wildlife. The abundance and diversity of large mammals (Jaguar, Giant Anteater, Ocelot, Capybara, Giant Otter, Marsh Deer, Brazilian Tapir, Black Howler Monkey, Crab-eating Fox, and Coati-mundi) coupled with throngs of herons, ibises, storks, ducks, raptors, and kingfishers are reminiscent of the great wildlife spectacles of Africa.

By small bus, boat, and safari vehicle, we will explore the diversity of habitats that together comprise one of the world’s largest freshwater wetland ecosystems. Mammal viewing is of high importance, with Jaguar and Giant Otter topping the list, but we will also anticipate encounters with some of South America’s most remarkable birds including Greater Rhea, Red-legged Seriema, Jabiru, Southern Screamer, the incomparable Hyacinth Macaw, Toco Toucan, and Scarlet-headed Blackbird, in addition to many other species.
A central feature of this trip is a three-night stay on the Piquiri River, where boat excursions will likely produce multiple sightings of Jaguars, Giant Otters, and Yacare Caimans, along with chances for Brazilian Tapir and smaller mammals. Other highlights include boat trips on the Rio Pixaím, Jabiru nest viewing from an observation tower, Ocelot viewing from a photo blind, and two evening night drives to search for birds and mammals. Beyond birding and mammal viewing, this trip promises a complete natural history adventure in one of the world’s great ecosystems.

Those wanting an extended stay in Brazil should join our optional Iguaçu Falls Pre-trip where we will witness one of the great natural wonders of the world and experience fine birding in the forests of the surrounding Iguaçu Falls National Park.

Participants registering for Brazil: Pantanal Safari by January 2, 2019 will receive a discount of $500.

July 10-11, Days 1-2: Travel to Cuiabá via São Paulo. Participants not continuing from the Iguaçu Falls Pre-trip will depart the USA this evening and arrive in São Paulo on July 11 in time to connect with any of several flights to Cuiabá. Upon arrival, you will be met by a representative of our local ground operator who will provide transportation to our hotel. We will meet in the hotel lobby at a time to be announced for a trip welcome and orientation followed by dinner.

July 12, Day 3: Transpantaneira and the Pantanal. After breakfast we will begin the drive into the Pantanal.
Departing Cuiabá, our route will take us away from the city in a southwesterly direction, leading through small towns and rural areas en route to the town of Poconé, gateway to the Pantanal. Here, the famous Transpantaneira, or Trans-Pantanal Highway, takes off on an 88-mile traverse over savannas, pasturelands, and freshwater marshes before ending in Porto Jofre on the bank of the Cuiabá River.

We will spend the entire morning working our way about 40 miles down the highway, making frequent stops for wildlife viewing. Our destination is the SouthWild Pantanal lodge set amid an expanse of native habitat and ranchlands where the wildlife is often plentiful and where the restaurant serves a hearty Brazilian fare.

At Poconé, at the head of the Pantanal, we will pass through a gate marking the head of the Transpantaneira. We will have the entire morning for wildlife viewing as we make our way south along the road. The wildlife concentrations for which this region is so famous will be readily apparent. We will anticipate our first encounters with Jabirus and Hyacinth Macaws—two of the Pantanal’s signature bird species—and marvel at the assemblages of waterbirds and Yacaré Caimans that abound in seemingly every roadside waterhole. The array of wading birds that occurs here is nothing short of remarkable and includes a wonderful diversity of storks, herons, egrets, and ibises.
The Transpantaneira itself is a source of wonder. Developed in the 1970s as an ill-fated plan to connect the Brazilian interior with Bolivia via an overland route, the project ultimately halted in the wake of a funding shortage and insurmountable challenges attributable to geography and climate. Remarkably, the resulting road became a boon for wildlife viewing. Although a “highway” in some sense, it is really more of a glorified dirt road passing through a mosaic of farmlands, savanna, dry forest, and wetlands. Because portions of the highway are submerged in water for part of the year, the highway is linked continuously with the help of 122 wooden bridges, underscoring the significance of this feat of engineering. A project to replace all the bridges is underway now and all the bridges up to SouthWild Pantanal have been replaced.

Around mid-day we will arrive at SouthWild Pantanal on the banks of the Rio Pixaím. We will have lunch at the lodge, after which we will check in to our rooms and relax for a while before making a late afternoon boat trip along the Rio Pixaím. This evening we will visit the special photo blind, hoping to see Ocelots coming for food.

NIGHT: SouthWild Pantanal, Pixaím

**July 13-14, Days 4-5: SouthWild Pantanal and the Rio Pixaím.** We will explore the mosaic of gallery forest, pasturelands, and river that come together on the grounds of the SouthWild Pantanal Lodge. Our exact schedule will remain flexible, allowing us to take advantage of water conditions on the river and to follow up on recent wildlife sightings.

The coming of dawn in the Pantanal brings an astonishing flurry of bird activity. Just tearing ourselves away from the lodge feeders, which regularly host spectacular Toco Toucans, Bare-faced Curassows, raucous Chaco Chachalacas, Purplish Jays, and mobs of smaller birds including flashy Yellow-billed Cardinals, will be a challenge.

The boldly marked White Woodpecker and beautiful Orange-backed Troupial are often found in the trees around our rooms while the gallery forest and brushy pastures along the Rio Pixaím are alive with birds, among them Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Black-fronted Nunbird, White-wedged Piculet, Pale-crested and Golden-green woodpeckers, Red-billed Scythebill, Narrow-billed Woodcreeper, Pale-legged and Rufous hornedos, White-lored and Rusty-backed spinetails, Great Antshrike, Band-tailed Antbird, Helmeted Manakin, Stripe-necked Tody-Tyrant, Fuscous Flycatcher, Rufous Casiornis, Masked Gnatcatcher, Ashy-headed Greenlet, Green-backed Becard, Variable Oriole, Red-crested Finch and many others. Such is the diversity of birdlife here that we could easily have seen more than 100 species by dinner!

Birding, however, is not all the forest offers. The first section of trail overlooks the river where we should see Yacaré Caimans sunbathing on exposed sand bars and Capybaras, the world’s largest rodent, at very close range.
Further along, primates such as Brown Capuchin and Black-tailed Marmoset are seen with regularity, as is Azara’s Agouti, a shy forest rodent. Down in the wetter, tall forest, we may also have an opportunity to ascend a canopy tower. Stationed along the river, the sturdily constructed tower offers commanding views of the surrounding forest and pasturelands.

We will also take a walk in back of the lodge to view Jabiru storks at a nest-site. Only here at SouthWild Pantanal can one experience eye-level views of this majestic wading bird from the height of a viewing tower. Made from steel and secured by thick cables, the tower is situated near the nest tree at a distance the birds find unobtrusive, as they have nested here for years. In the same area, especially later in the day, we may be able to view Hyacinth Macaws returning for the evening roost. Decked in a uniformly dark-blue plumage, the Hyacinth Macaw is one of the largest macaw species and certainly one of the world’s most beautiful birds.

In the afternoon, we will enjoy a leisurely boat ride on the Rio Pixaím, stopping often to observe some of the amazing birdlife that occurs along the river and drifting close to a variety of kingfishers, herons, and hawks. One of our primary objectives is seeing the spectacular Giant Otter, one of the most impressive mammals in South America. This animal was once widespread throughout parts of lowland South America, but ongoing disturbance from human
activities has caused the animal to decline broadly across its range. Here in the Pantanal, however, the animal is still delightfully common, and our chances for seeing this sought-after animal are good.

River trips are also excellent for encountering birds like Sunbittern, Gray-cowled Wood-Rail, and Boat-billed and Agami herons. The late afternoon is a perfect time to see parrots and macaws returning to roost, as well as large turkey-like birds known as *cracids* such as the Chestnut-bellied Guan, Blue-throated Piping-Guan, and Chaco Chachalaca perched up in the open. As dusk gathers around us, the bugling of Green Ibis is heard up and down the river while spectacular Nacunda Nighthawks may join many Band-tailed Nighthawks in their pursuit of flying insects along the waterway. Dusk also represents our best chance for finding the rarely seen and very secretive Zigzag Heron.

Tonight, or on our return visit, we will do a post-dinner night drive searching for mammals. Among the possibilities are a range of animals large and small, with chances for Crab-eating Fox, Giant Anteater, and South American (Brazilian) Tapir. The latter two species are always high on the wish-list of visitors to the Pantanal.

**NIGHT: SouthWild Pantanal, Pixaím**

**July 15-17, Days 6-8: Transpantaneira (Pixaím to Porto Jofre) and the Rio Cuiabá.** Our Pantanal adventure continues today as we set our sights south toward the Rio Cuiabá and the land of the Jaguar!

We will depart the lodge after breakfast and continue working our way south along the Transpantaneira. At this time, a couple of months into the dry season, the vast marshes of the Pantanal are beginning to dry out, concentrating wading birds, Capybaras, and Yacaré Caimans. Herons and egrets (including Capped Heron and Rufescent Tiger-Heron), Wood Storks, magnificent Jabirus, Roseate Spoonbills, and four species of ibis (including Plumbeous Ibis and Buff-necked Ibis) are all in abundance. Raptors are conspicuous as well, with Snail Kites and Black-collared Hawks being particularly abundant.

Five species of kingfishers frequent the stream and river edges, where we will also remain alert for Sungrebes, Sunbitterns, and Gray-cowled Wood-Rails. As we enter increasingly open marshlands, giant Southern Screammers are more in evidence, as are Southern Lapwings and Wattled Jacanas. Both Large-billed and Yellow-billed terns cruise over the larger bodies of water, and the skies are frequently filled with martins and swallows. It’s here that we could be treated to large numbers of waterfowl including Muscovy Duck, Brazilian Teal, and one-to-three species of whistling-ducks. Parrots are also well represented in the Pantanal, among them fast-flying groups of Yellow-chevloned Parakeets, screeching colonies of Monk Parakeets, Turquoise-fronted Parrots, and colorful Yellow-collared

*Sungrebe and Sunbittern © Linette Mansberger*
Macaws. However, one member of this family stands out above all others, the fabulous Hyacinth Macaw—biggest and most spectacular of its tribe and a near endemic of this region. These incredible blue-and-yellow birds will be one of the primary targets as we travel through the Pantanal. We will also make a special stop to look for the stunning Scarlet-headed Blackbird, an uncommon and localized resident of marshes at the southern end of the Transpantaneira.

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

We could easily spend all day exploring our way to the end of the highway, but we will need to push on in order to reach the town of Porto Jofre around noon. There, we will be met by small boats that will take us up the Rio Cuiabá to the SouthWild Jaguar Suites, a well-appointed accommodation featuring large air-conditioned cabins, 24-hour electricity, and private bathrooms (hot water showers and flush toilets). Perhaps more importantly, the air-conditioned dining room offers excellent food and lots of ice-cold drinks (including some pretty spectacular caipirinhas!).

Over the next couple of days, staying at the SouthWild Jaguar Suites will provide us with the opportunity of lodging ourselves right in the middle of prime wildlife viewing habitat and, more specifically, right at the crossroads of multiple Jaguar home-ranges. These magnificent predators are the largest wild cats in the Americas, and although they range from northern Mexico (and rarely the extreme southwestern United States) south to Argentina, nowhere are they as readily seen as they are in the Pantanal. Furthermore, the local abundance of large prey (primarily Capybaras and Yacaré Caimans) has seemingly allowed the Jaguars of this region to grow distinctly larger (50% heavier) than their cousins in Central America and Amazonia—large males may reach 350 pounds! Until recently, Jaguar sightings were a rare event, even in the Pantanal, where densities are perhaps higher than anywhere else, but the establishment of a huge state park in this region has led to a relaxation of hunting pressure, which, coupled with an abundance of easy-to-catch prey and regular exposure to sport fishermen and birders, has resulted in a population of Jaguars that has lost some of its fear of humans. This has enabled the folks at SouthWild, without either radio-collaring or baiting, to regularly locate Jaguars for their guests. Indeed, many trips to this area result in prolonged observations of different Jaguars of both sexes and of varying ages.
Accordingly, finding a Jaguar will be a primary focus of our days here, although in the process, we will be spending lots of time looking for other mammals and birds. Most of our time will be spent working along the main channel of the Cuiabá River and its various tributaries from small boats, which not only will allow us to safely cover much more ground than we could on foot, but will also permit us to approach birds and other wildlife more closely.

We can expect an abundance of raptors (among them Great Black Hawk, Black-collared Hawk, Roadside Hawk, Savanna Hawk and Crane Hawk), waders and kingfishers, not to mention some spectacular breeding colonies of Neotropic Cormorants, Anhingas and herons. The many sandbars along the rivers provide nesting and loafing sites for Black Skimmers, terns, and shorebirds, while shaded riverbanks are prime places for spotting Bare-faced Curassows. This area also boasts the highest concentration of Giant Otters that we have ever encountered, and the opportunities for viewing and photographing these amazing creatures are unparalleled. We also stand an excellent chance of seeing Brazilian Tapir, the largest land mammal in South America.

Combined with abundant Capybaras, Yacaré Caimans, Black Howler Monkeys, other primates, and a non-stop parade of birds, our days here will be filled with adventure!

NIGHTS: SouthWild Jaguar Suites, Rio Cuiabá
**July 18, Days 9: Morning on the River; Return to SouthWild Pantanal.** After a final morning on the river, we will return to Porto Jofre by noon and start back up the Transpantaneira road. Our destination is the SouthWild Pantanal lodge where our arrival will likely occur in late afternoon. Time-permitting, we may take a walk on the lodge grounds just before dinner. Perhaps we will walk over to the river for a look at the Rio Pixaim, or maybe head out back to view the Jabirus in the waning light, or simply gather in the yard to enjoy the setting sun and the coming night.

**NIGHT: SouthWild Pantanal, Pixaim**

**July 19, Day 10: Early Morning at SouthWild Pantanal and Transfer to Pousada Piuval.** Day 10 will give us another opportunity to experience the early morning rush of activity along the Rio Pixaím before we start working our way back north along the Transpantaneira to our next lodge, Pousada Piuval. It is located along the northern end of the Transpantaneira, which is drier and brushier, providing suitable habitat for some species that are rare or that tend not to occur in the lower, wetter portions of the Pantanal, such as Greater Rhea, Red-legged Seriema, Blue-crowned Parakeet, Campo Flicker, White Woodpecker, and Black-bellied Antwren.

**Red-legged Seriema © Linette Mansberger**  
**Campo Flicker © Chris Conard**

Night drives in this area have produced such treats as Giant Anteater; Ocelot; Crab-eating Fox; Crab-eating Raccoon; Great Horned, Black-banded and Mottled owls; Scissor-tailed, Little and Spot-tailed nightjars; Nacunda Nighthawk and both Common and Great potoos.

**NIGHT: Pousada Piuval, Poconé**

**July 20, Day 11: Pousada Piuval.** This morning gives us a prime-time opportunity to bird the grounds of Pousada Piuval. Although this is only the fringe of the Pantanal, birds are amazingly abundant and conspicuous, and frequent stops in a range of habitats will be the order of the morning. Greater Rheas are frequently seen here and this area seems to be particularly good for species such as Crab-eating Zorro, Pearl Kite, Aplomado Falcon, Yellow-collared Macaw, Blue-crowned and Peach-fronted parakeets, Guira Cuckoo, Long-tailed Ground-Dove, Great Rufous Woodcreeper, Rufous-fronted Thornbird, Southern Scrub-Flycatcher and Red-crested Cardinal.
Following lunch, we will take a break during the heat of the day before reconvening for a final afternoon outing. Our activities will be determined in large part by searching for any species we haven’t yet caught up with, or perhaps we will simply spend a relaxed afternoon visiting various waterholes and forest patches as we enjoy our final day in the Pantanal.

**NIGHT: Pousada Piuval, Poconé**

**July 21-22, Days 12-13: Return to Cuiabá; Departure for Home.** After a final round of birding this morning (time permitting), we will return to Cuiabá in time for a mid-day flight to São Paulo, which will connect to most overnight flights to the USA (arriving on the morning of July 22), allowing time for homeward connections.

**IGUAÇU FALLS PRE-TRIP**

**JULY 7-11, 2019**

Comprising one of the largest waterfall complexes in the world, Iguaçu Falls surely ranks among the planet’s great natural wonders. Here in the southeastern Brazilian state of Paraná, on the border with Argentina, the Iguaçu River plunges off the Paraná Plateau in a multitude of thunderous cataracts. To the visitor, the sight is simply overwhelming. Across a 260° vista, curtains of water cascade with awesome force into the roiling lower Iguaçu River, with the resulting mist vaulting hundreds of feet in the air.
For this optional pre-trip, we will spend two full days and parts of two others exploring the Iguaçu Falls region. Activities will include walking a number of paths and trails to the various viewpoints and overlooks that reveal the falls in their full glory. A highlight experience is standing front and center on an observation platform before the Devil’s Throat or Garganta del Diablo, generally considered the Falls’ single-most astonishing site.
We will also explore the lush forests of the surrounding Iguaçu Falls National Park, searching for some of Brazil’s most spectacular birds, including Black-fronted Piping-Guan, Pavonine Cuckoo, Robust and Blond-crested woodpeckers, Red-ruffed Fruitcrow, Spot-billed Toucanet, Toco and Red-breasted toucans, Surucua Trogon, Rufous-capped Motmot, and Plush-crested Jay. We will also search for some of the rarer endemic passerines, such as Russet-winged Spadebill, São Paulo Tyrannulet, and Creamy-bellied Gnatcatcher.

July 7-8, Days 1-2: Travel to Iguaçu Falls. There are direct overnight flights from Los Angeles, Dallas/Fort Worth, Miami, and other cities, which depart on July 7 and arrive in São Paulo’s Guarulhos International Airport (code GRU) on the morning of July 8. Participants arriving this day will clear customs and connect to our flight to Iguaçu Falls (specific flight and time to be determined). It is strongly recommended that you have the VENT office book your intra-Brazil flights. Participants wanting to avoid the risk of misconnecting should consider arriving in São Paulo on July 7 and spending the night at an airport-area hotel. Alternatively, previous participants have opted to connect through to Iguaçu Falls a day in advance of the official start of the tour. The Belmond Hotel das Cataratas is an ideal spot to rest up and recover from the overnight international flight and has great sightseeing opportunities of Iguaçu Falls within an easy walk from the front porch. Upon request, VENT will be happy to assist with these arrangements. Jeri Langham, your tour leader, plans to arrive at the Belmond Hotel das Cataratas a day early (July 7) to be sure flight delays or cancellations will not prevent him from meeting all participants who arrive on July 8. Should you choose to arrive early also, arrangements can be made for the morning of the 8th for you to enjoy an optional (not covered by tour fee and roughly $100, including tip) outing on the Iguaçu River by boat. The special adventure begins with an open tram ride through several kilometers of prime forest and an 800-meter boardwalk to the boat dock. Bathing suits are recommended since the boat will make several passes under one of the waterfalls. Previous tour participants were still smiling when we met for dinner that night.
Although our afternoon arrival in Iguaçu Falls on July 8 will likely preclude any extended time for exploring the area, there should be time for a short walk to the Iguaçu Falls overlook before dark. Here, in addition to the awesome splendor of some 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.

NIGHT (July 8): Belmond Hotel das Cataratas, Iguaçu Falls

**July 9-10, Days 3-4: Foz do Iguaçu Area.** Through special arrangements with the Brazilian Park Service, we will visit some of the more remote, less accessible areas of the park where we will seek the larger, more forest restricted birds of the area. We will also visit and bird the area surrounding the falls themselves. Among the more spectacular birds we will be searching for at Iguaçu Falls National Park are Black-fronted Piping-Guan, Red-ruffed Fruitcrow, Plush-crested Jay, Spot-billed Toucanet, Toco and Red-breasted toucans, Rufous-capped Motmot, Surucua Trogon, and Blond-crested and Robust woodpeckers.

*Black-fronted Piping-Guan © Tari Voydanoff Plush-crested Jay © L. Mansberger Surucua Trogon © Chris Conard*
This area is a mecca for butterfly lovers. Chris Conard photographed over 30 species in 2018.

Smaller birds will not be neglected, and indeed, much of our time will be spent searching for 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; Fuscous and Three-striped flycatchers; Gray Elaenia; Southern Bristle-Tyrant; São Paulo Tyrannulet; Eared Pygmy-Tyrant; 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 Pavonine Cuckoo, Rusty-breasted Nunlet, Short-tailed Antthrush, Russet-crowned Spadebill, Southern Antpipit, and Eastern Slaty-Thrush. A solar powered electric vehicle will pull the open trailer we will use on parts of the Poço Preto road.
July 11, Day 5: Departure from Iguacu. It is said that the Brazilian side of the falls is best in the a.m. hours, when

the morning light illuminates the cascading water, producing a series of mist-shrouded rainbows. We will arise early this morning and venture to the many overlooks for our final views of the extensive, small to huge waterfalls.

We will have a little while this morning to wander around the area, take photographs, and enjoy our remaining time before returning to the hotel to gather our belongings and prepare for departure. In the late morning, we will

NIGHTS: Belmond Hotel das Cataratas, Iguaçu Falls
transfer to the Iguazu Falls airport in time for a late morning connection (specific flights and time to be determined) to Cuiabá to begin our Brazil: Pantanal Safari tour.

**TOUR LEADER:** Jeri M. Langham and a local leader

Jeri M. Langham has a Ph.D. in plant ecology from Washington State University, and after 38 years as a professor of biological sciences at California State University in Sacramento, retired in May 2008. He received the first Outstanding Teacher Award from the newly formed College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics in 1997; the Outstanding Faculty Award from the Science Educational Equity and Minority Organization of Science Students organizations in 2005; and his University’s third annual Lifetime Achievement Award for Community Service in 2006. Jeri has ardently birded all over North America, as well as Mexico, Costa Rica, Panama, Venezuela, Ecuador, the Galapagos Islands, Peru, Brazil, Argentina, Kenya, Borneo, South Africa, and Australia. Born and raised in Venezuela, he speaks fluent Spanish. Known for his enthusiasm and boundless energy, Jeri thoroughly enjoys searching for birds and sharing them with others. His passion for teaching and his natural teaching abilities soon become apparent as his tour participants enjoy learning more about the biological world around them. Jeri is a former member of the Bausch and Lomb Birding Council and the California Bird Records Committee. He is a Director for the Neotropical Grassland Conservancy.

**TOUR SIZE:** Each section will be limited to 12 participants.

**FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:** Participants registering for Brazil: Pantanal Safari by January 2, 2019 will receive a discount of **$500**.

The fee for **Brazil: Pantanal Safari** is **$7,145 ($6,645 with discount)** per person in double occupancy. This includes all food from dinner on Day 2 to breakfast on Day 12, all lodging during the tour, ground transportation during the tour, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does not include airfare from your home to Cuiabá and return, airport departure taxes, alcoholic beverages, special gratuities, phone calls, laundry, or items of a personal nature. Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration, a small-party supplement may be charged.

The single supplement for **Brazil: Pantanal Safari** is **$870**. 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. Rooms are limited at some locations and singles may be asked to share. If so, you will be credited appropriately.

The fee for the **Iguazu Falls Pre-Trip** is **$2,595** per person in double occupancy from Iguazu Falls for occupying a Superior Room (smaller room with no view of the falls) at Belmond Hotel das Cataratas. The price includes all food from dinner on Day 2 to lunch on Day 5, 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 Iguazu Falls, 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 the **Iguazu Falls Pre-Trip** for a Superior Room at Belmond Hotel das Cataratas is **$615**. You will be charged a single supplement if you desire single accommodations or if you prefer to share but have no roommate and we cannot provide one for you.

The fee for the **Iguazu Falls Pre-Trip** is **$2745** per person in double occupancy from Iguazu Falls for occupying a Deluxe Falls-View Room (larger room with view of the falls) at Belmond Hotel das Cataratas. The price includes all food from dinner on Day 2 to lunch on Day 5, 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 Iguacu Falls, 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 the Iguacu Falls Pre-Trip for a Deluxe Falls-View Room at Belmond Hotel das Cataratas 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.

**REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT:** To register for this tour, please contact the VENT office. The initial deposit for this tour is $500 per person per tour section. If you would like to pay your initial deposit by check, money order, or bank transfer, 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 the initial deposit using a credit card, your deposit must be made with American Express, MasterCard or Visa at the time of registration. The VENT registration form (available from the VENT office or by download at www.ventbird.com) should then be completed, signed, and returned to the VENT office.

**PAYMENTS:** Initial tour deposits may be made by American Express, MasterCard, Visa, check, money order, or bank transfer. All other tour payments, including second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc., must be made by check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). Full payment of the tour fee is due 120 days prior to the tour departure date.

**EXCHANGE RATE SURCHARGES:** In the erratic global financial markets of today, it is difficult to predict foreign currency exchange rates over the long term or at the time of operation of a tour or cruise departure. Tour prices are based upon the rate of exchange at the time of itinerary publication. If exchange rates change drastically, it may be necessary to implement a surcharge. If a surcharge is necessary, every effort will be made to minimize the amount. In many cases, these additional foreign exchange rate surcharges are passed to VENT by its vendors and suppliers.

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** Cancellation penalties and refunds are based on the following schedule: if cancellation is made 120 days or more before the tour departure date, a cancellation fee of $250 per person will be charged unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be $100 per person. If cancellation is made fewer than 120 days before departure date, no refund is available. This policy and fee schedule also applies to pre-trip and post-trip extensions. **We strongly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance for your protection.**

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*Unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be $100 per person.

Upon cancellation of the transportation or travel services, where you, the customer, are not at fault and have not cancelled in violation of the terms and conditions of any of the contract for transportation or travel services, all sums paid to VENT for services not received by you will be promptly refunded by VENT to you unless you otherwise advise VENT in writing.

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.

**FUEL AND FUEL SURCHARGES:** In the uncertain, often volatile oil market of late, it is difficult – if not impossible – to predict fuel costs over the long term, and more specifically, at the time of operation of this
departure. Our prices are based upon the prevailing fuel rates at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, if the fuel rates increase significantly, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

TRIP CANCELLATION & MEDICAL EVACUATION INSURANCE: To safeguard against losses due to illness, accident, or other unforeseen circumstances, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance as soon as possible after making a deposit. VENT has partnered with Redpoint Resolutions as our preferred travel insurance provider. Through Redpoint, we recommend **Ripcord Rescue Travel Insurance™**. Designed for all types of travelers, Ripcord is among the most highly regarded travel insurance programs available.

Critical benefits of **Ripcord Rescue Travel Insurance** include a completely integrated program with a single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims; **medical evacuation and rescue services** from your point of injury or illness to your hospital of choice; comprehensive travel insurance for **trip cancellation/interruption**, primary medical expense coverage, and much more. **Waiver for pre-existing conditions is available but must be purchased within 14 days of tour deposit.** Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as security evacuation coverage in case of a natural disaster or other security events, and a “Cancel for Any Reason” clause (must be purchased within 14 days of tour deposit). Ripcord is available to U.S. and non-U.S. residents.

For a price quote, or to purchase travel insurance, please visit: [ripcordrescuetravelinsurance.com/ventbird](http://ripcordrescuetravelinsurance.com/ventbird); or click the **Ripcord Rescue Travel Insurance™** logo on our website (click Help and Trip Insurance); or call +1-415-481-0600. Pricing is based on age, trip cost, trip length, and level of coverage.

**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. **Please be sure to check with the VENT office prior to purchasing your air ticket to confirm that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. VENT cannot be responsible for any air ticket penalties.**

**IMPORTANT:** Please note that most fares for intra-Brazil flights do not include fees for checked luggage. Expect these to be collected during online or airport check-in.

**JAGUAR SUITES ACCOMMODATIONS:** The Jaguar Suites, a floating hotel on the Cuiabá River, offers premium rooms more than 30 square meters in size with split A/C, a quiet, flow-through exhaust fan, two “super-twin” beds (about 13 inches wider than a normal twin bed), private river views from a balcony accessed through sliding doors, superior lighting, substantial table/shelf space and abundant electrical outlets for charging laptop and camera batteries, etc.

**BAGGAGE:** Please limit baggage to one piece of luggage and one carry-on bag if possible, as some of the vehicles have limited luggage space.

The airlines now strictly enforce baggage regulations. Excess baggage charges, which can be substantial, are the personal responsibility of each participant.

As a precaution against lost luggage, we suggest that you pack a change of clothes, toiletries, medications, important travel documents, optics, and any other essential items in your carry-on bag. Due to ever-changing circumstances in the government’s attempts to improve airport security, we recommend that you check the website of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for information pertaining to permissible carry-on items: [http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/prohibited/permitted-prohibited-items.shtm](http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/prohibited/permitted-prohibited-items.shtm).

**CLOTHING:** Weather will be generally warm to hot. Light field clothing, including several pairs of pants and shorts and comfortable shirts, will be appropriate. **DARK-COLORED OR NEUTRAL CLOTHING IS**
REQUESTED, AS WHITE AND OTHER BRIGHT COLORS MAY FRIGHTEN SECRETIVE BIRDS.
One set of warm clothing should be included to deal with possible cold fronts that reach the region, on occasion bringing the temperatures down into the 50s or, rarely, even the 40s. This should include a thermal fleece or warm sweater and/or lightweight jacket to cut the wind, all of which could also prove particularly handy on morning boat trips. Be sure to have one pair of good hiking boots or comfortable walking shoes and a second pair to change into. A swimsuit is also suggested, and raingear, although likely not needed, is recommended. Dress will be casual throughout.

FOOTWEAR: For footwear we recommend a good trail-walking shoe or light hiking boot when in the field, and a second pair to change into. Athletic shoes are acceptable but will not keep your feet dry and can become soiled from muddy conditions. Jeri always brings calf-high rubber boots, mostly for chigger protection.

LAUNDRY SERVICE: Laundry can be done at SouthWild Pantanal and Jaguar Suites.

EQUIPMENT: Pack a flashlight or headlamp, water bottle, alarm clock, and day pack. Your leader will have a spotting scope, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so. Many electrical outlets in Brazilian hotels and lodges require a different plug type than the standard outlets in the United States. Therefore, a set of plug adaptors (available at a wide range of stores, including most airport terminal gift shops that sell travel accessories) is recommended for participants wishing to charge camera batteries or other appliances.

BINOCULARS & SPOTTING SCOPES:

Binoculars – We strongly recommend good binoculars of at least 7x35, 8x42, 10x40, or 10x42 magnification. We recommend that you do NOT bring mini-binoculars of any kind. Some people like them because they are small and lightweight; but they have an extremely small field of view and very poor light gathering power. Trying to find a bird in your binocular using minis is like trying to read a book through a keyhole. You will be very frustrated, and even if you do manage to get the bird in your binocular before it flies, you will have a poor view. You will find that 7x35 or 8x42 binoculars are compact and light enough.

Spotting Scopes – Your tour leader will have his scope available for group use throughout the trip, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so.

CLIMATE & WEATHER: July is a dry-season month in the Pantanal region, which means the likelihood of rain is limited. Our days will typically start with cool mornings before the temperatures rise to the upper 80s or even low 90s during the heat of the day. As July falls in the austral winter in the southern hemisphere, we should come prepared for the possibility of a cold front penetrating from further south, in which case we may experience steady overcast skies and temperatures up to 20 degrees below average. It can be hot at Iguaçu Falls, where temperatures generally vary from lows in the 50s (occasionally the high 40s) to highs commonly in the 70s-80s, and sometimes in the 90s.

CONDITIONS: Your trip to Brazil will be an exciting and full travel experience in which wildlife viewing is paramount. Our time in the field will be spent seeking a number of the region’s signature birds, mammals, and other wildlife, in addition to learning about the region’s complex ecology.

Our days will typically begin with breakfast followed by a full morning in the field. After lunch we will break during the heat of the day before going out again later in the afternoon.

Travel will be aboard a combination of vehicles ranging from open safari-style trucks to a closed air-conditioned bus or van. At SouthWild Pantanal we will walk trails in the dry forest and take three boat trips on the Pixaim River. All walking will be on flat and well-maintained trails. Additionally, there may be an opportunity to ascend a canopy tower, which will require walking up a reinforced steel tower via a series of staircases. We will spend several days on the Rio Piquiri where we will stay in the SouthWild Jaguar Suites. Our days will be spent cruising portions of the main river channel and a number of smaller tributaries in search of wildlife,
especially Jaguars and Giant Otters. We will travel aboard a stable and comfortable motorboat designed to enter areas of shallow water. With a full group we may utilize two boats.

All accommodations are air-conditioned and contain en suite bathrooms.

Overall, physical demands will be easy, but please bear in mind that some of our excursions may involve a moderate amount of walking and standing. We emphasize that no one will be subjected to physical demands that exceed their capabilities. All walking will be done at a slow pace.

**DOCUMENTS:** A current U.S. passport and **VISA** are required to enter Brazil. An e-visa program has recently been implemented which is available to US and Canadian citizens. Applications can be submitted on [http://www.vfsglobal.com/brazil-evisa/](http://www.vfsglobal.com/brazil-evisa/). Expect to receive your visa by email within a week of application. Non-US and Canadian citizens should check with their local Brazilian embassy or consulate for instructions.

**CURRENCY:** Brazilian Real. MasterCard and Visa are more widely accepted than American Express, but all are useful, particularly in major centers. Travelers’ checks are difficult to use in most areas of Brazil. Sometimes the credit card machines malfunction and some places are reluctant to take dollars, so it might be a good idea to exchange some dollars for Brazilian Reals before leaving the U.S. or at the arrival airport in Brazil.

**INTERNET ACCESS:** Expect Wi-Fi to be available at all lodges and hotels.

**HEALTH:** Throughout Central and South America, yellow fever vaccination is highly recommended for most individuals (some individuals may have medical conditions for which vaccination is contraindicated), as is vaccination for 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.**

Cholera has been reported in Brazil but is highly unlikely to be contracted anywhere along our route. 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 800-CDC-INFO (232-4636) 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).

**Zika Virus** – This tour visits an area or areas where Zika virus is known to occur or could occur; however, we believe the risk to VENT travelers is extremely low. The Zika virus is a mosquito-borne infection transmitted by mosquitoes of the genus *Aedes*, and is related to other tropical diseases: Dengue, Yellow Fever, and West Nile virus. This type of mosquito bites during the day and typically is found in areas of dense human habitation where sanitation and drainage of standing water is poor. Zika virus presents the greatest threat to women of childbearing age. For others who become infected, the effects are usually nonexistent to mild, although some people exhibit symptoms such as mild fever, rashes, joint and muscle pain, and red eyes. If infected, the best treatment is plenty
of rest, nourishment, and other supportive care. There is no vaccine to prevent or cure the disease; however, Zika virus is not contagious and, therefore, cannot be transmitted through air, food, or water. Your safety is our highest priority, and we want to emphasize that the best way to avoid Zika virus (and other mosquito-borne diseases) is to take appropriate precautions in avoiding mosquito bites:

- Stay informed about the Zika virus
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants, socks and shoes, and a hat*
- Use effective insect repellents (those containing DEET) and reapply regularly

*We strongly recommend the use of Insect Shield® clothing. Insect Shield is a process by which clothing is treated with an EPA-approved formula of the insect repellent permethrin. Such clothing is highly repellant to insects and provides durable and long-lasting protection, even after dozens of washings. Outdoor wear with Insect Shield protection includes name brands such as Ex Officio and Tilley and can be purchased at outdoor recreation stores such as REI and from a variety of online retailers. In lieu of Insect Shield clothing, you should consider treating your clothes with permethrin, which has the same effect, and that can be purchased at outdoor recreation stores and from a variety of online retailers.

For the latest information and news about Zika virus, please visit the website of the CDC: https://www.cdc.gov/zika/.

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

MISCELLANEOUS:

Country Telephone Code: 55

Electric Current: 110 volts in Rio, São Paulo, Brasilia, Belo Horizonte, Belém, Manaus, and 220 volts elsewhere. Some of our lodges on this tour route typically have at least one 110 volt outlet/room. You need the three-prong adaptors.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS AND WEBSITES TO KNOW:

Health—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) 800-CDC-INFO or www.cdc.gov/travel
Weather 900-WEATHER or www.weather.com
Travel Advisories 202/647-5225

SUGGESTED READING: A number of traditional booksellers and online stores list excellent inventories of field guides and other natural history resources that will help prepare you for this tour. We recommend www.amazon.com which has a wide selection; www.buteobooks.com and www.nhbs.com which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and www.abebooks.com for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

Birds:

Field Guides:


This excellent field guide should be considered the primary bird identification reference for the Pantanal Region as it covers virtually every species possible on the Pantanal portion of this tour.
Most of the species we will find at Iguacu Falls are illustrated in this field guide and are of better quality than those in the Van Perlo Guide. Unfortunately, the maps do not include Iguacu Falls, but the descriptive text is much better.


This guide has minimal text, and somewhat uneven quality of illustrations, but it is a significant improvement on all previous attempts at a Brazilian field guide, and does offer range maps, text and illustrations for virtually all of Brazil’s birds in a single volume. You may not need this guide for the Iguacu Falls Pre-trip if you have the one recommended above.

**Other Resources:**


This wonderful guide delves into the ecology of tropical birds beyond “What is it?” Written for the lay person, this is a highly “readable” book that avoids overly technical jargon and that does not bog down in heavy science. A valuable resource and an excellent field guide companion.


Ridgely, Robert S., and Guy Tudor. *Field Guide to the Songbirds of South America: The Passerines*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009. This book condenses the text from the two previous references into a single volume with many additional illustrations (400+ species). It has more of a field guide format, and provides consistently excellent illustrations and text for the vast majority of Brazilian passerines. This plus the Erize, Mata & Rumboll guide to the Non-Passerines would give good coverage of the vast majority of Brazilian birds.

**Butterflies:**


**Mammals:**

General Nature:


Recording:


**TIPPING:** Tipping (restaurant staff, porters, drivers, local guides) is included on VENT tours. However, if you feel one or both of your VENT leaders or any local guides have given you exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that tips are not expected and are entirely optional. Tips should be given directly to your tour leader; they should not be sent to the VENT office.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc. (VENT) and/or its Agents act only as agents for the passenger in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT and its agents can accept no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger, as tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. The right is reserved to substitute hotels of similar category for those indicated and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by changes in air schedules. The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure, in which case full refund will constitute full settlement to the passenger. The right is reserved to substitute leaders on any tour. When this is necessary, notification will be given to tour members. No refund will be made for any unused portion of the tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. The prices of the tours are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on November 2, 2018 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.