

MANAUS, BRAZIL: AMAZON RAINFOREST & RIVER ISLANDS

OCTOBER 8-21, 2020

©2019

The Brazilian city of Manaus is nestled deep in the heart of the incomparable Amazon rainforest, the greatest avian-rich ecosystem on the planet! This colorful, bustling city is perfectly positioned at the junction of the world's two mightiest rivers, the Amazon and Rio Negro, where vast quantities of the warm, black water of the Negro collide with immense volumes of cooler, silt-laden whitewater of the Amazon flowing down from the Andes. The two rivers flow side-by-side for kilometers before completely mixing (due to the major difference in temperature), forming the famous "wedding of the waters" where two species of freshwater dolphins are regularly seen, including the legendary Pink River Dolphin (males reaching 185 kilograms (408 lbs.) and 2.5 meters (8.2 ft.) in length).



A male Guianan Cock-of-the-rock on a lek has to be one of the world's most spectacular birds.

© Andrew Whittaker



Guianan Red-Cotinga (an immature male here) is one of our many colorful prime targets in this area. © Andrew

The Amazon and its immense waterways have formed many natural biogeographical barriers to countless birds and animals, allowing for heightened speciation over countless millions of years. The result is a legion of distinctly different yet sibling species found on opposite river banks. Prime examples on this trip include Gilded versus Black-spotted barbets, Amazonian versus Guianan trogon, Black-necked versus Guianan red-cotinga, White-browed versus Dusky purpletufts, White-necked versus Guianan puffbird, Orange-cheeked versus Caica parrots, White-cheeked versus Rufous-throated antbird, and Rufous-bellied versus Golden-sided euphonia, etc., thus making Manaus a perfect base for the exploration of the exotic mega rich avifauna of the unique heart of Amazonia. You can expect close to 400 species on this exciting trip! Beyond birds, the natural barriers that spur such avian diversity have also produced an astonishing diversity of different plants and animals, including many exciting primates such as the endemic and endangered Pied Tamarin and the cute, poorly-known Spix's Night Monkey.

In the early twentieth century, Manaus gained fame as the epicenter of the worldwide rubber boom. In fact, it was the most prosperous city in South America at the time. This boom financed the city's famous Opera House (now restored to its full glory) and the historical wrought iron food market (designed by Eiffel). A revolutionary floating metal harbor constructed by the British in 1902 is still intact and receives ocean-going vessels an amazing 1,500 kilometers inland from the Atlantic Ocean. Manaus during its heyday even had the first electric trams in South America and the old lines in the city center can still be seen today.

We have specially designed this tour to sample the birds of both the Imeri and Guianan endemic centers in comfort, based at well-positioned forest lodges with air conditioning. We will bird trails and dirt roads leading through towering lowland rainforest and orchid and bromeliad-rich, stunted "campina" (sandy-belt forest), witnessing leks of colorful manakins such as the bizarre Wire-tailed Manakin. With luck, hopefully we will



encounter ant swarms and their attendant obligate bird followers such as the stunning White-plumed, White-cheeked, Rufous-throated, and possibly even the rare Chestnut-crested antbirds or Reddish-



Wire-tailed Manakin on its lek; image from 2016 VENT tour
© Andrew Whittaker

winged Bare-eye. We'll be continually vigilant for huge mixed-species understory and canopy bird flocks or working on seeing shy forest-falcons, skulky antbirds, and gnateaters. On several exciting night excursions, we'll seek the fabled Rufous and White-winged potoos along with several species of neat owls. For heightened excitement, we'll visit with one of most spectacular birds in the world, the incomparable Guianan Cock-of-the-rock. With easy access to one of the largest known leks, it's a regular occurrence to view 10-15 stunning males in attendance at once!

On our relaxing boat trips to Amazon River islands, we will explore seasonally flooded "igapó" (forest flooded with blackwater)

and "varzea" (whitewater) bird-rich successional forests and neat secluded lakes. Here, the annual flood cycle causes these mighty rivers to rise and fall a staggering 15 meters (40 ft.) or more! We will seek many unique river island specialists (birds known only from either of the two dynamic river island habitats) and also enjoy observing the two species of freshwater river dolphins, including the legendary Pink River Dolphin (truly pink), which has to be seen to be believed!

One of the many highlights of our trip will be the rare opportunity to enter the "rainforest canopy" of this mystical forest. We will visit a spectacular, large and well-built canopy tower, the famous INPA Canopy Tower, situated within an immense, remote forest reserve where we will be in the realm of dazzlingly colorful cotingas, macaws, parrots, toucans, trogons, puffbirds, jacamars, tanagers, and primates—all passing by at eye level. On previous trips, we have seen both Harpy and Crested eagles, the rare Crimson Fruitcrow, and the sought-after Dotted Tanager.



Purple-breasted Cotinga (male) at a fruiting tree on our 2016 VENT tour
© Andrew Whittaker

This tour will provide exceptional opportunities to see some of South America's most wanted birds such as Guianan Toucanets, Guianan Cock-of-the-rock, Crimson Topaz, Red-fan Parrot, Pompadour, Purple-breasted and Spangled cotinga, both Black-necked and Guianan red-cotingas, the amazing and odd-looking Capuchinbird, Dusky and White-browed purpletufts, White-winged and Rufous Potoo and a great many others. Beyond our birding pursuits, this trip offers a wonderful opportunity to sample Manaus's marvelous culinary delights such as exotic fresh Amazonian fish, freshly squeezed Amazonian fruit juices, and wonderfully cold caipirinhas (our national drink), a fine Brazilian rum with freshly squeezed limes and lots of ice with a touch of sugar.



Crimson Topaz; image from 2015 VENT tour © Andrew Whittaker

No one knows the Manaus area and its fauna and flora better than your tour leader, Andrew Whittaker, who lived here for almost three decades. Andy began working here in 1987 with the Smithsonian Institute, doing research and banding rainforest birds north of Manaus. Nowadays he is considered an authority on Amazonian birds and the region's natural history, having authored many technical publications on the region's avifauna and rediscovered and described several Amazonian species new to science such as the Cryptic Forest-Falcon. His incredible passion for this, his favorite biome, is contagious and there is nothing more that he likes than sharing it with each and every one of you.

The most complex ecosystem on Earth...magnificent panoramic sunsets...starlit nights along secluded rivers...searching for dazzling cotingas, manakins, macaws, toucans, barbets, trogons, tanagers and mythical potoos ...gazing upon the breathtaking Milky Way...all this is the magic of Amazonia!



The magical Amazon rainforest canopy from a canopy tower © Andrew Whittaker



**Magnificent sunset, Anavilhanas Archipelago, Rio Negro; image from 2015 VENT tour
© Andrew Whittaker**

October 8-9, Days 1-2: Travel to Manaus; Optional Pre-Tour Activities. Participants arriving in Manaus anytime on October 9 will be met and transferred to our hotel, where a room will be reserved in your name.

American Airlines Flight 1265 is a daily flight scheduled to depart Miami at 5:30 p.m. and arrive in Manaus at 10:48 p.m. There is non-stop service between Panama City and Manaus on COPA Airlines as well. All flight information is subject to change.

There are direct overnight flights from Washington-Dulles, Dallas/Ft. Worth, and other airports which depart on October 8 and arrive in São Paulo Guarulhos International Airport (GRU) on October 9 in time to connect with the 11:30 a.m. departure of GOL Flight 1642, which is scheduled to arrive in Manaus at 2:15 p.m.

Participants wanting to avoid the risk of misconnecting with the group should consider arriving in Manaus on or before October 8 and spending the night. Upon request, VENT will be happy to assist with any additional lodging arrangements.

On October 9, early-arriving participants have the option to join an exciting morning's visit to bird off the newly constructed MUSA canopy tower. After an early pre-dawn breakfast, we will drive 30 minutes to the edge of the Reserva Ducke forest reserve for a pre-dawn arrival at the 50-meter (164 feet) canopy tower. Sturdily constructed, the tower forms an ideal, stable platform for spotting scopes, with no shaking whatsoever. We will be in place as the dawn breaks over a green carpet to enjoy an action-packed morning of the mind-blowing variety of Guianan rainforest birds and all at eye level! Species we expect to see include macaws, Caica, Red-Fan and Red-lored "Diadema" parrot (the endemic



Rufous Potoo on its nesting stump; image from 2016 VENT tour © Andrew Whittaker

sub species *diadema*, certain to be split), White-throated and Channel-billed toucans, Green Aracari, Green-backed Trogon, Black Nunbird, Pied Puffbird, Waved Woodpecker, Spangled Cotinga, Guianan Woodcreeper, Yellow-throated Flycatcher, Painted Tody-Flycatcher, and many species of colorful canopy tanagers along with exciting mixed-species canopy flocks. We also stand a good chance of encountering a group of the endemic and endangered Pied Tamarin. Depending on any local hot tip-offs (from my birding friends), we may also either visit a small private reserve for cotingas, manakins and a tanager bonanza at fruiting trees in a forest clearing, or visit the Ducke reserve itself (on past trips we have visited an active Harpy Eagle nest and seen Rufous Potoo nesting). As temperatures rise later this morning, we will return to our hotel for a good lunch and a well-earned rest (after your international flights) during the heat of the day or a relaxing dip in the hotel pool.

We will also offer an optional late afternoon birding walk in the forested gardens of our hotel and pool where we can expect to see Gray-lined and Roadside hawk, Variable Chachalaca, Red-bellied and Scarlet macaws, Blue-headed Parrot, White-eyed and Winged parakeets, Blue-rumped Parrotlet, Silver-beaked and Blue-gray tanager, Spotted Tody-Flycatcher, Purple-throated and Thick-billed euphonia, and Yellow-browed Sparrow.

Alternatively, we can arrange a taxi for those who wish to visit the famous Opera House (restored to its former glory), a stark reminder of the importance of this great historic city during the rubber boom of the early twentieth century.

NIGHT (October 9): Novotel, Manaus

October 10, Day 3: Morning Birding on the River Islands; Afternoon in the Varzea Forest. Today will start with a pre-dawn transfer from the hotel to the banks of the mighty Amazon River, where we'll board our small covered motorboat in advance of a very exciting morning of birding exploring several dynamic river islands and secluded sandbars (depending on water levels). We'll head first to Machantaria Island, an amazingly birdy whitewater river island smack in the middle of the mighty Amazon.

As the main island is several miles long (and many smaller islands each year are appearing and growing), we will explore each of the classic river island habitat types, from early successional scrub at the lower end to thicker, taller cecropia-dominated secondary growth at the upper end. The islands are a haven for spinetails, where half a dozen species may be found including the lovely Red-and-White, skulky White-bellied, Dark-breasted, Parker's, Pale-breasted and Yellow-chinned too. The fast, explosive, loud duets of both the Lesser and the endemic Band-tailed hornero will echo around seasonal agricultural fields as we search for Orange-headed and Hooded tanagers and the enigmatic Black-and-white Antbird, while Brownish Elaenia and Pearly-breasted Conebill can be found in the cecropia-dominant stands. Duetting cute Lesser Wagtail-Tyrants can be approached at close range as dainty River Tyrannulets hover to glean insects. Nearby willows hold Olive-spotted Hummingbird, Spotted Tody-Flycatcher, Riverside Tyrant, and austral migrants such as Striped Owl, Dark-billed Cuckoo, and Large Elaenia, as well as the spectacular, colorful Oriole Blackbirds with their harsh calls. Other species we will search for are Chestnut-fronted Macaw; Black-bellied Whistling-Duck; the elusive Azure Gallinule; Lesser Yellow-headed vultures; Cocoi and Striated herons; Black-collared and Savanna hawks; Snail Kite; Pied and Collared plovers; an assortment of migrant shorebirds; Ladder-tailed Nightjar; Ringed, Green, and Amazon kingfishers; Lesser Kiskadee; White-headed and Black-backed water-tyrants; stunning Orange-backed Troupials; Yellow-hooded and Red-breasted meadowlark; and Chestnut-bellied, Wing-barred and Lined seedeaters.

After a great buffet lunch at a nearby floating restaurant, we will explore the rich varzea forest along a raised wooden boardwalk up in the mid story. The secluded lake here holds the famous Giant Royal Water Lilies (*Vitoria rede*). In addition, this area can be excellent for primates including



Colombian Red Howler mother with youngsters.
© Andrew Whittaker

groups of Humboldt's White-faced Capuchin, Golden-backed Squirrel Monkey and with luck, Colombian Red Howlers can be heard or seen. Among the bird possibilities are Hoatzin, Ferruginous Pygmy-owl, Blue-crowned and Black-tailed trogon, Black-collared and Slate-colored hawks, Slender-billed Kite, the magnificent Long-billed

Woodcreeper, or a Spotted Puffbird. We will then return to witness the famous “meeting of the waters,” keeping alert for Pink River Dolphin and Tucuxi (Gray River Dolphin), both often seen here. We’ll return to Manaus and our hotel in the late afternoon, with time to clean up and rest a bit or explore the hotel grounds before the field list and dinner.

NIGHT: Novotel, Manaus

October 11, Day 4: Morning En Route to Novo Airão; Afternoon Introduction to the Anavilhanas Archipelago. After breakfast, we continue our Amazonian exploration by driving across the amazing and high suspension bridge over the mighty Rio Negro (second largest river in the world in volume of water) to start birding the west bank of the river (Imeri endemic center), with some birding en route to the quaint town of Novo Airão. On arrival, we will check in to our comfortable lodge, which features lovely forest views from the verandas and is nestled in a wooded area of this energetic small town. Here we are perfectly positioned for birding the breathtaking Anavilhanas Archipelago and surrounding rainforest.

After a nice break for an excellent lunch, we will take a rest during the heat of the day. As temperatures fall, we will hopefully experience a mammal highlight—viewing the family of Spix’s Night Monkey that sleeps by day in a nearby tree hollow.



A cute pair of roosting Band-tailed Nighthawks at the Anavilhanas © Andrew Whittaker

This afternoon we will begin our exciting exploration of the world’s largest riverine archipelago, the Anavilhanas, by boat. The calm and deep black waters of the magnificent Rio Negro afford amazing mirror reflections of this forested paradise and its myriad of long, thin, tall forested islands compared to the stark, stunted flooded igapó forest lining the large black water lakes. Afternoon sun along the forest edge is often excellent for producing raptors such as Tiny Hawk, Red-throated Caracara, Gray-headed Kite, Plumbeous Kite, Slate-colored Hawk and more. Recently, we have even had luck with a nesting Crested Eagle here, as well as one year observing both Harpy Eagle and Ornate Hawk-Eagle too, so keep your fingers crossed!

As dusk approaches, often with a spectacular sunset, flocks of Band-tailed Nighthawks emerge, acrobatically catching insects over the water while Ladder-tailed Nightjars sally out from low bushes. Above, fast flying bat-like Short-tailed Nighthawks hunt over the forested river islands as the night shift takes over.

NIGHT: Amazonia Park Suites, Novo Airão



The much sought after endemic Klages's Antwren's stronghold is the Anavilhanas. © Andrew Whittaker

October 12, Day 5: Novo Airão Area.

At day break we will be back exploring the wondrous Anavilhanas Reserve, weaving our way through the piranha-filled waters as the sun rises to another glorious Amazon day. With luck, we may well hear the odd, booming calls of Amazonian Umbrellabirds at their leks, the typical calls of the raucous Festive Parrots leaving their roosts, and the mournful calls of the fabulous Long-billed Woodcreepers as the forest awakens with the dawn chorus. The viney edges of the tallest forest are home to the recently rediscovered endemic Klages's Antwren; its loud two-note call allows us to locate this

poorly-known bird. Its close relative is Cherrie's Antwren, also a very range-restricted species found here around

the sandy borders of lakes. Other special birds include the near-mythical Zimmer's Woodcreeper, which at one point had gone unseen by ornithologists for over a century due to its great similarity to the Straight-billed Woodcreeper. The ever-present flocks of Festive Parrots greet our arrival; their loud voices sound like they are forever partying, accentuated by their habit of bouncing up and down while perched atop a tree, as if they were showing off. Flocks of Bare-necked Fruitcrows or a lone Amazonian Umbrellabird may fly across the river with their unusual but distinctive floppy flight. While walking on trails within the forest, we will seek mixed-species flocks containing Yellow-throated and Ringed woodpeckers; Black-fronted Nunbird; Leadened and Pygmy antwrens; Black-crested, Blackish-gray, and Spot-winged antshrikes; Striped and Straight-billed woodcreepers; Yellow-olive

Flycatcher; Speckled and Rusty-backed spinetails; Buff-breasted Wren; and Gray-chested Greenlet. We may be lucky and observe the dramatic Long-billed Woodcreeper feeding as it hops along a bough probing deep into bromeliads with its huge beak, searching the trapped leaf litter for invertebrates. Other understory birds we will search for include Green-tailed



Long-billed Woodcreeper in varzea forest; image from 2015 VENT tour © Andrew Whittaker

Manaus, Brazil: Amazon Rainforest & River Islands, Page 10

Jacamar, leks of Rupurumi Hermits, Ash-breasted and Black-chinned antbirds, Yellow-crowned Elaenia, Snethlage's Tody-Tyrant and the secretive Amazonian Black-Tyrant, among many more.

White-winged Swallows swoop along the secluded black lakes and hidden inlets hold pairs of Muscovy Ducks that flush on our approach, exposing the large white wing speculum of the male. Exuberant water shrubbery holds large flocks of Greater Ani, Red-Capped Cardinal, Varzea Shiffornis, Tropical Gnatcatcher, Purple-throated Euphonia, and snazzy Turquoise and Guira tanagers. Harsh calls from above may signal a group of Blue-and-yellow Macaws flying past, adding even more of a splash of color.

Other birds we may expect to be see this afternoon include Green-and-rufous Kingfisher; Cream-colored, Crimson-crested, and Lineated woodpeckers; Gray-rumped swifts; Green Oropendola; Swallow-wing and Pied puffbird; Pale-vented, Ruddy, and Scaled pigeons; Brown-chested and Gray-breasted martins; and Orange-fronted Yellow-Finch.

After a mid-day rest or a cool dip in the lodge pool, we will have an exciting opportunity to go and see the spectacular, endemic Pink River Dolphins (truly pink!) as a wild pod swims in to receive fish, before returning to the Anavilhanas for further exploration. As night falls, we will try for a couple of mythical potoos: the Rufous Potoo, found in the forested understory, and the White-winged Potoo, found in the canopy. Owl possibilities include Spectacled, Crested and Black-banded owls.

NIGHT: Amazonia Park Suites, Novo Airão



**The legendary Pink River Dolphin; image from 2016 VENT tour
© Andrew Whittaker**



Group birding the spectacular Anavilhanas archipelago © Andrew Whittaker

October 13, Day 6: West Bank Birding. Today we will explore the distinctive west bank of the Imeri endemic center. The Amazonian terra firme forest holds some of the world's richest avifauna. As dawn breaks, the forest awakens to the sounds of strange bird calls. A dirt entrance road is ideal for observation of canopy-level species including brightly colored cotingas, trogons, jacamars, parrots, puffbirds, and toucans. Another more covered



White-browed Purpletuft © Andrew Whittaker

forested dirt road provides a chance of encountering the famous army ant swarms, mixed-species understory flocks, and more secretive deep-forest birds. Ant swarms here are frequented by an incredible line-up of obligate antbirds including White-plumed, White-cheeked, and Chestnut-crested antbirds; and Reddish-winged Bare-eye (both rare). Other possible highlights are Ruddy Quail-Dove; Fork-tailed Woodnymph; Straight-billed Hermit; Gray-breasted Saberwing; Collared and White-necked puffbirds; Ocellated and Duida woodcreepers; Pearly

(uncommon), White-shouldered, and Undulated (rare) antshrikes; Yellow-browed, Black-faced, and Spot-backed antbirds; Rufous-capped Anthrush; Chestnut-belted Gnateater; Rio Negro Stipple-throated and Long-winged antwrens; Short-billed Leaf-tosser; Black-necked Red-Cotinga; White-browed Purpletuft; Spangled Cotinga; Amazonian Royal Flycatcher; Blue-backed, Blue-crowned, White-crowned, and Yellow-crowned manakins; and Collared Gnatwren.

Birding along the dirt road that slices through the tall forest offers an excellent opportunity to observe large mixed-species canopy flocks of insectivorous, frugivorous, and edge birds alike. We will be looking for Lined and Barred forest-falcons; Red-and-Green Macaw; Orange-cheeked, Black-headed, and Dusky parrots; Scarlet-shouldered Parrotlet; Cobalt-winged Parakeet; the poorly-known Brown-banded Puffbird and White-necked Puffbird; Black-eared Fairy; Black-bellied Cuckoo; White-fronted Nunbird; Paradise and Great jacamars; five species of trogons; Gilded Barbet; White-throated Toucan; Pompadour



Black-bellied Cuckoo © Andrew Whittaker

Cotinga; Red-necked, Scaly-breasted, and Yellow-throated woodpeckers; Bar-bellied Woodcreeper (rare); Rufous-tailed Xenops; Pearly and Fasciated antshrikes; Yellow-throated, Yellow-margined, and Three-striped flycatchers; Gray Elaenia; Lemon-chested Greenlet; Rufous-bellied Euphonia; and Paradise, Opal-rumped, Spotted, and Flame-crested tanagers.

Fruiting trees are often alive with activity. Possibilities include the gorgeous Ivory-billed Aracari and very rare Tawny-tufted Toucanet; Green, Short-billed and Purple honeycreepers; Blue and Black-faced dacnis; and the tiny Dwarf Manakin.



**The gorgeous Paradise Tanager is a regular crowd pleaser seen from atop the canopy towers.
© Andrew Whittaker**

NIGHT: Amazonia Park Suites, Novo Airão

October 14, Day 7: Morning in Novo Airão; Return to Manaus. After a final morning birding the rich west bank terra firme forest, and another excellent lunch, we will work our way back to Manaus and the Novotel for the night, with afternoon birding on the forested grounds. The hotel is well known for some of Manaus's best local delicacies, so be prepared for a wonderful dinner.

NIGHT: Novotel, Manaus

October 15, Day 8: Machantaria Island Boat Trip. Another exciting day begins with a pre-dawn start as we board our covered motorboat and cross the mighty Amazon River for a return trip to the wondrous, birdy Machantaria Island. This time our objective is to catch up on anything we may have missed on our previous visit, starting with the stunted transitional forest before concentrating on the tall, mature varzea forest at the island's upper end. We will seek river island specialists such as the odd looking Short-tailed Parrot and delicate Tui Parakeets, whose raucous calls give them away as they fly over. Skulkers such as the recently rediscovered Scaled Spinetail (now rare) will be sought in the mature vine-tangled forest along with Rusty-backed Spinetail, Castelnau's Antshrike, Yellow-crowned Elaenia, Chestnut-crowned Becard, White-eyed Attila, Fuscous Flycatcher, Black-throated and poorly-known Green-throated mangos, Spot-breasted and Little woodpeckers, Hooded Tanager, and anything else that we haven't yet seen. Depending on the level of the river, picturesque sand bars should be alive with birds—from recently arrived boreal migrant shorebirds—to displaying Sand-colored Nighthawks (that breed on these beaches)—to a backdrop of calling and nesting Collared Plovers, Large-billed and Yellow-billed terns, and Black Skimmers.



Common along the mighty Amazon are these two lovely Large-billed and Yellow-billed terns. © Andrew Whittaker

Again, we will have a wonderful meal at the floating restaurant before exploring lakes and a nearby channel at water level, where we will search for Horned Screamer, and both Agami and Capped herons are possible. By mid-afternoon we will be heading back to the hotel for a well-earned rest or a relaxed swim in the pool before another excellent dinner.

NIGHT: Novotel, Manaus

October 16, Day 9: Birding the INPA Canopy Tower and Forest Reserve. Today we have another very early start as we head for the famous INPA Canopy Tower (recently renovated), an extremely well-constructed 42-meter (138 feet) tower nestled within the pristine INPA Forest Reserve and isolated on a private dirt road. We will see straight away why this tower is known for providing one of the best canopy birding experiences anywhere in

South America, with forest stretching untouched as far as the eye can see. The tower will enable observation of an excellent number of Guianan specialties including many hard-to-see canopy inhabitants, and all at eye level.

After a field breakfast we will arrive early so as to be in position on top of the tower to listen as the forest awakens around us. A mighty roar may send chills down our spines as a group of Guianan Red Howler Monkeys vocalizes



Blue-and-yellow Macaws © Andrew Whittaker

from a nearby treetop, signaling the first birds to initiate the dawn chorus. The hollow deep calls of Amazonian Motmots and yelping Lined Forest-Falcons herald the flood of strange and beautiful voices. In the distance we may hear the weird Capuchinbird call like a chainsaw from its lek site in the sub-canopy, in hope of attracting a mate. The raucous calls of parrots signal the start of their daily flights out of roosting sites as they fly above the canopy to far-away feeding areas. Sightings of flocks of Red-fan, Red-lore, Mealy, Blue-headed, and Dusky parrots are likely, while the smaller Golden-winged Parakeet and the huge Red-and-Green and Blue-and-Yellow macaws are often seen here as well.

As the sun rises and the first rays of the day strike the highest treetops, we will watch for the superb Pompadour and Spangled cotingas as they show off their wonderful coloration while perched atop dead branches. We'll also keep a watchful eye out for the glistening crimson color of the rarely seen Crimson Fruitcrow. There are several other rare species we could encounter here as well including Guianan Puffbird, Glossy-backed Becard, Black-faced Hawk, and Olive-green Tyrannulet. Mixed-species flocks will also be a prize target as they move in the canopy at eye level, possibly containing Guianan Toucanet, Green Aracari, Black-spotted Barbet, Paradise Jacamar, Waved Woodpecker, Green Oropendola, Guianan and Black-tailed trogons, Guianan Woodcreeper (lineated split), Spot-backed and Ash-winged antwren, Yellow-throated and Yellow-margined flycatchers, White-lore and Guianan tyrannulets (split recently from Slender-footed), Gray Elaenia, and Slaty-capped Shrike-Vireo. Fruiting trees should produce a host of superlative tanagers including Paradise, Spotted, Opal-rumped, Red-billed Pied, Flame-crested, and even the rare Dotted Tanager. A flowering tree may be visited by the diminutive Racket-tailed Coquette; White-necked Jacobin; Rufous-throated Sapphire; Gray-breasted Saberwing or Fork-tailed Woodnymph; along with colorful flocks



**Lined Forest-Falcon, a shy deep-forest bird of terre firme forest
© Andrew Whittaker**



One of the many special canopy inhabitants of these Guianan forests is the Guianan Puffbird. © Andrew Whittaker

of nectar-seeking canopy species such as Short-billed, Purple, Red-legged and Green honeycreepers; Blue and Black-faced Dacnis; and Moriche Oriole.

As temperatures rise, soaring raptors such as Ornate Hawk-Eagle, White Hawk, Double-toothed Kite, and King Vulture may appear. Both Chapman's and Band-rumped swifts may sail close by, catching insects on the wing. Primates could include Midas (Golden-handed) Tamarin, Guianan bearded Saki Monkey, and Guianan Capuchin. On previous tours, both Harpy and Crested eagles have been seen here as well.

Later, we'll descend to the cooler forest below for a walk on the wide trail. With a bit of luck, we might

encounter a flock of marvelous Black Curassows as they cross the dirt road leading to the tower. What we can be sure of, however, is hearing the wild calls of the Screaming Piha, which at times dominates all other forest sounds.

Depending on our time and weather, we might also visit the lovely INPA Campina Forest Reserve. Here, the short-stunted trees are festooned with bromeliads and orchids, and several special birds are found including Pelzel's Tody-Tyrant, recently rediscovered after 161 years in 1992 by Kevin Zimmer and your leader Andy. We will also search for the Saffron-crested Tyrant-Manakin with its bizarre mechanical churring calls, Bronzy Jacamar, Guianan Slaty-Antshrike, and Spotted Puffbird.

Later in the afternoon we will drive to Presidente Figureido (known for its spectacular waterfalls) for lunch. Our pleasant but fairly simple lodge (with air conditioning, private bathrooms, and refrigerators in your room) is nestled in the terra firme forest and offers fantastic forest birding right outside our doorsteps!

In the late afternoon we will bird the very rich entrance road where we may be rewarded with a secretive Spotted Antpitta, or we may attempt to see a flashy perched Guianan-Red Cotinga or Red-Fan Parrot. As dusk falls, we will listen to the forest critters going to sleep as the sun sets after another fantastic day of birding. If the acai palm trees are in fruit around our cabins, they can attract Green Aracari, Channel-billed Toucan, Painted Parakeet and Sulphury Flycatcher.

NIGHT: Hotel Iracema Falls, Presidente Figueiredo



The poorly-known forest raptor, the Black-faced Hawk © Andrew Whittaker



Green Aracari © Andrew Whittaker

Crimson Topaz (a regular in the hotel garden); Fork-tailed Woodnymph; Long tailed and Straight-billed hermits; the exquisite Fiery-tailed Aowlbill (rare); Collared and White-chested puffbirds (rare); Great Jacamar; Black Nunbird; the poorly-known and rarely seen Dusky Purpletuft; Mouse-colored Antshrikes; and Black-headed, Guianan Warbling, Ferruginous-backed, and Dusky antbirds. Deep calls could alert us to the presence of either a shy Spotted or Thrush-like antpitta. We may encounter a chattering distressed hummingbird as it mobs a tiny diurnal owl, the recently split Amazonian Pygmy-Owl, perched in a roadside cecropia quietly hunting, disguising its true front (and danger!) through the display of false “eyes” on the rear of its head. Other interesting species are Chestnut-rumped, Cinnamon-throated, Spot-throated, Olivaceous, and Wedge-billed woodcreepers; Golden-headed, White-crowned, and White-fronted manakins; Tiny Tyrant-Manakin; Fulvous-crested and Blue-backed tanagers (rare); White-lored and White-vented euphonias; Painted Tody-Flycatcher; McConnell’s Flycatcher; and Neotropical River Warbler. Grassland and bushes around the clearing hold Common Ground-Dove, Versicolored and Glittering-throated emeralds, Smooth-billed Ani, Yellow-crowned Tyrannulet, White-thighed and Southern Rough-winged swallows, Lesser Seedfinch and cool looking Chestnut-bellied Seedeater.

October 17-18, Days 10 & 11: Hotel Iracema Falls Area.

From our comfortable base, we will have two exciting days to bird the forest surrounding the Hotel Iracema Falls and another forest reserve nearby. As dawn breaks, we may first hear the shrieking calls of the large, powerful Red-billed Woodcreeper or the rhythmic series of piercing whistles emanating from the shy Black-throated Antshrike, or the distant repeated barking notes of a Barred or Collared forest-falcon, signaling its presence. We can be sure of enjoying a great variety of forest birds and many regional Guianan specialists including Black Curassow; Marial Guan; Black-faced and White hawks; Caica Parrot; Golden-collared, Chestnut, and Golden-green woodpeckers; Golden-spangled Piculet;



Red-fan Parrots are regularly seen from the canopy towers or along forested roads. © Andrew Whittaker

On nocturnal expeditions we may try again if we have not already seen Rufous or White-winged potoos. Owl possibilities include Spectacled, Crested, and Black-banded owls; and Northern Tawny-bellied Screech-Owl. Common Pauraque and Blackish Nightjar are both fairly common here.



Collared Puffbird is a classy interior species of pristine, mid-story forest; image from 2016 VENT tour © Andrew Whittaker

A trip highlight certainly will be a visit to an incredible lek of one of the most spectacular birds in the world: the dazzling Guianan Cock-of-the-rock. Here at a private reserve, up to 15-20 males can be found in attendance and are used to birders, so be prepared for stunning close views and have your cameras ready for an overload of amazing color!



**The lovely Ferruginous-backed Antbird is a forest-floor gem.
© Andrew Whittaker**

Cotingas are such a wonderful bird family and one of the oddest of them all is the Capuchinbird; its exceptionally odd call just has to be heard to be believed! The explosive voice is on par with the “voice of the Amazon,” the Screaming Piha (another cotinga). However, the Capuchinbird’s song can best be described as a chainsaw starting up, while its call sounds more like the roar of a Jaguar! We will be able to have an exciting visit to a lek of this totally bizarre looking and sounding species. This species’ lek, in fact, was David Attenborough’s highlight in his famous BBC *Life of Birds* television series in Manaus many years ago. (Your leader set up the filming for him.)



The White-plumed Antbird is a lovely Army Ant specialist © Andrew Whittaker

While exploring cooler tall-forest trails, we will also visit one or two of the wonderful secluded forest waterfalls that the region is so famous for. We also may be lucky enough to encounter the local group of marvelous Gray-winged Trumpeters as they strut quietly through the forest or across a dirt road. Other special birds may include Screaming Piha, Rufous-bellied Antwren, Rufous-tailed Xenops, Curve-billed Scythebill, or Wing-banded Wren. With luck we may encounter an antswarm, with the striking White-plumed and Rufous-throated antbirds attending, or hear the mesmerizing, pure notes of one of the world's greatest songsters, the Musician Wren.

We will explore a nearby campina area of white sandy soil with short stunted trees festooned with bromeliads and orchids. In this poor soil area, ancient exposed rocky outcrops (uncommon in this region) hold a unique plant community, where we hope to find and hear the superb song of the very poorly-known White-naped Seedeater. Other special birds in this unique habitat include Green-tailed Goldenthrout, Bronzy Jacamar, White-fringed Antwren, Guianan Slaty-Antshrike, Black Manakin, Pale-bellied Mourner, Rufous-crowned Elaenia, Plumbeous Euphonia, Scaled Pigeon, and Red-shouldered Tanager. Forest trails provide an opportunity for Orange-winged Parrot, Sapphire-rumped Parrotlet, Red-necked and Ringed woodpeckers, Black-throated Trogon, Yellow-billed Jacamar, Short-billed Leaf-tosser, Cinereous Antshrike, Pygmy and White-flanked antwrens, Scale-backed and Ringed antpipits, Long-billed Gnatwren, Corya Wren, White-eyed Tody-Tyrant, Blue-black and Yellow-green grosbeaks, flashy Pectoral Sparrow, and many more.



Bronzy Jacamar is a gem of the campina forest, and often confiding; image from 2016 VENT tour © Andrew Whittaker

NIGHTS: Hotel Iracema Falls, Presidente Figueiredo

October 19, Day 12: Final Morning in Iracema Falls; Return to Manaus. After a final morning of birding around Iracema, we will have lunch and then transfer back to Manaus, where we will enjoy our farewell dinner. Participants scheduled on American Airlines Flight 964, which is scheduled to depart Manaus at 11:48 p.m. and arrive in Miami at 5:16 a.m. on October 20 (subject to change), will be provided with a transfer after dinner.

NIGHT: Novotel, Manaus

October 20-21, Days 13 & 14: Departures for Home. On October 20, individual transfers will be provided to the Manaus airport in time for all morning or afternoon departures, which will enable connections with homeward flights arriving late on October 20 or the morning of October 21.

TOUR LEADER: Andrew Whittaker



Andrew Whittaker, a senior member of the VENT staff, has led VENT tours since 1993 throughout Brazil, Peru, Chile, Bolivia, Colombia, Argentina, Costa Rica, Panama, Europe, and Antarctica. An avid birder from an early age (thanks to his father), he later became a licensed bander/ringer. Andy immensely enjoys sharing his fascination and deep knowledge of birds, animals, and all aspects of nature in a really fun way. Since 1982 Andy has worked on birds around the world, studying migration at bird observatories in Eilat, Israel; Borneo; Long Point, Canada; and at two in Britain including the top UK observatory on Fair Isle, Scotland. Andy was born in England; however, he considers himself Brazilian, having lived more than 30 years in this mega biodiverse country, first working for the Smithsonian Institution, studying

Amazonian rainforest birds in Manaus. He is best known for his passionate and intimate knowledge of bird vocalizations and taxonomy, which has enabled him to discover several new species (such as the Cryptic Forest-Falcon in 2003) and rediscover others thought to be extinct. He loves nothing better than finding and showing rare skulkers to groups. In 2010 Andy, along with colleagues, produced a DVD-ROM of Brazilian bird songs, calls, and photos of 1,250 species. Andy was a consultant for the prestigious *Life of Birds* series by Sir David Attenborough and is considered an authority on Amazonian birds, having authored numerous technical publications on the region's avifauna. At present Andy is working with Kevin Zimmer on a comprehensive field guide to the birds of Brazil to be published by Princeton University Press. Andy is a member of the Brazilian Records Committee, an associate researcher at the Museum Goeldi, and is also an active conservationist and orchid lover living with his partner in life, Jaqueline, in Porto Alegre, southern Brazil.

TOUR SIZE: This tour will be limited to 8 participants.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS: The fee for Manaus, Brazil: Amazon Rainforest & River Islands is **\$5,595** per person in double occupancy from Manaus. It includes all lodging during the tour, all meals from dinner on Day 2 to dinner on Day 12, soft drinks and water, ground transportation during the tour, and guide services provided by the tour leader. It does not include airfare from your home to Manaus 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 have to be charged.

The single supplement for Manaus, Brazil: Amazon Rainforest & River Islands is **\$455**. 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.

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 a tour or cruise departure. Prices are based upon the prevailing fuel rates at the time of itinerary publication. While VENT will do everything possible to maintain the original price of the cruise or tour, if fuel rates increase significantly, it may be necessary to implement a fuel surcharge. If a surcharge is necessary, every effort will be made to minimize the amount. In most cases, these additional fuel costs are being passed to VENT by its vendors and suppliers who reserve the right, in their agreements to provide services for VENT, to raise their prices due to significant changes in fuel costs.

EXCHANGE RATE SURCHARGES: Again, in the uncertain, often volatile 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 being passed to VENT by its vendors and suppliers.

REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT: To register for this tour, please contact the VENT office. The deposit for this tour is **\$1,000** per person. If you would like to pay your deposit using a credit card, the deposit must be made with MasterCard, Visa, or American Express at the time of registration. If you would like to pay your 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. The VENT registration form (available from the VENT office or by download at www.ventbird.com) should be completed, signed, and returned to the VENT office.

PAYMENTS: All tour payments may be made by credit card (MasterCard, Visa, American Express), check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). These include initial deposits, second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc. Full payment of the tour fee is due 150 days prior to the tour departure date (May 11, 2020.)

CANCELLATION & REFUNDS: Refunds are made according to the following schedule: If cancellation is made 180 days or more before the tour departure date, a cancellation fee of **\$500** 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 between 179 and 151 days before departure date, the deposit is not refundable, but any payments covering the balance of the fee will be refunded. If cancellation is made fewer than 150 days before departure date, no refund is available. This policy and fee schedule also applies to pre- and post-tour extensions. **For your protection, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance that covers trip cancellation/interruption.**

If you cancel:

180 days or more before departure date

179 to 151 days before departure date

150 days or less before departure date

Your refund will be:

Your deposit minus \$500*

No refund of the deposit, but any payments on the balance will be refunded

No refund available

*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. To qualify, cancellation must occur 180 days or more before departure date; deposit transfers must be made at the time of cancellation; and one transfer per deposit.

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.

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; 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.***

DOCUMENTS: A passport valid for the duration of your visit is required to enter Brazil. Visas are no longer required for United States and Canadian citizens. Non-U.S. citizens should check with their local Brazilian consulate or embassy for instructions.

CLIMATE: Although our Amazonian tour is scheduled for the dry season, we still may encounter some rain. Expect the weather to be hot to warm and humid (we will always take afternoon breaks during the hottest times of the day), but this humid weather is what makes the birding so fantastic! Normal daytime temperatures in the Amazonian lowlands average from 80 to 90 degrees (F), with pleasant nighttime lows down to about 70 degrees (F). During our early morning boat trips, temperatures can feel chilly when speeding along the river at the beginning of the day pre-dawn, so you will need to consider bringing a wind proof layer.

CLOTHING: Lightweight field clothing is the rule. **Please do not bring white or brightly-colored clothes, including hats or bright raingear,** as it will certainly frighten shy forest birds and animals away. We suggest loose-fitting khaki clothing or other cotton clothing in dark green, dark blue, gray, or brown shades. Also, **please avoid nylon or plastic jackets and/or rainwear of similar materials (a short folding black umbrella is in fact perfect** for this trip). **“Noisy” clothing is annoying to others and will frighten birds and animals.** Although long pants and long-sleeved shirts are recommended, during most of this tour, biting insects are not a problem at all. However, mosquitoes could possibly be a problem in the early hours while visiting river islands.

Bring a broad-brimmed hat or cap for sun protection while in the forest. Footwear should include boots or sturdy walking shoes. Some also may find a pair of sneakers useful. Although they are **not essential** and can be hot, tall rubber boots (such as Wellingtons) can be easier to remove than regular boots and may possibly be useful on sand bars along the river islands and in tall, wet grass in the early morning. Dress will be casual throughout.

EQUIPMENT: You should pack a pair of binoculars that are in good condition, along with a belt pack or daypack (for carrying books, sunscreen, camera, etc.). As a precaution, it is always advisable to pack your binoculars, a change of clothing, toiletry items, medication and travel documents in your airline carry-on bag.

Your leader will have a spotting scope, but if you have one (or want to do a lot of digiscoping) and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so. For owling and looking for potoos, **please bring either a rugged flashlight with extra batteries, a small light such as an LED or a small head lamp.**

CONDITIONS: Although walking conditions are generally along flat and dry terrain, we expect to have a few muddy landings on river islands and encounter the occasional muddy trail. As the mighty Amazon is dynamic, we never know exactly what conditions are to be found on our exciting and often **challenging river island trips. It could be damp grasses to having to climb up some muddy banks but the special island birds will be more than worth it!**

Our visit to the famous well-constructed and recently refurbished INPA tower involves climbing up eight flights of stairs, about 200 steps (set in the center of the large tower) with hand railing all the way. The new Ducke tower with well-made shallow steps makes it extremely easy to climb. We will mostly bird on the second from top level of the tower as the top is closed due to active research using highly sophisticated climatic monitoring equipment. We plan to have several very early departures on this trip to be in the birding spots at the best time. However, we will take afternoon breaks/siestas in our air-conditioned rooms during the hottest times of the day. This means a few very early departures to the INPA tower (breakfast at 3:00 a.m.) and river islands (breakfast at 4:00 a.m.). Other breakfasts will also be pre-dawn around 5:00 a.m. in order to experience the dawn chorus and have the best chance for forest-falcons and large woodcreepers.

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

INTERNET ACCESS: Expect Wi-Fi to be available at the Novotel Manaus and Amazonia Park Suites, but NOT at Hotel Iracema Falls.

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

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 Georgia. The CDC operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers' Information Line at 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636), or you can check their website at www.cdc.gov/travel. Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html (click on travel and tourism).

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 mosquitos 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 repellent 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. However, on this tour we will thankfully encounter hardly any biting insects such as mosquitos! We could possibly run into chiggers if it has been raining but these Brazilian chiggers live not in the grass, but in leaf litter within the forest. If you're susceptible to being bit, we suggest bringing a few small squeeze bottles of Cutter or OFF! as well as having your clothes treated with an insect shield just in case.

ITEMS TO BRING: Pack a **flashlight or headlamp**, water bottle, alarm clock, and day-pack or belt pack. Your leader will have a spotting scope, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Excellent for scenic shots, habitat, sunsets, culture and some magnificent chances of photography of Guianan Cock-of-the rock; with forest birds, it's hard except with flash; from the towers good opportunities too.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Country Telephone Code: 55

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

IMPORTANT NUMBERS AND WEBSITES TO KNOW:

Health-Centers for Disease and Control (CDC)

Weather

Travel Advisories

800-CDC-INFO or www.cdc.gov/travel

900-WEATHER or www.weather.com

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:

Van Perlo, B. *A field guide to the Birds of Brazil*. Oxford University Press, 2009. **This is the best available field guide at present for Brazil.**

Manaus, Brazil: Amazon Rainforest & River Islands, Page 24

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

Hilty, Steven. *Birds of Tropical America*. Shelburne, VT: Chapters Publishing Ltd., 1994. Subtitle: “A watcher’s introduction to behavior, breeding and diversity.” A wonderful introduction to help you understand all about the amazing tropical birds’ behavior from lekking to ant swarms etc.

Hilty, S.L. and W.L. Brown. *A Guide to the Birds of Colombia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986.

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”)

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.

Butterflies:

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

Mammals:

Emmons, L. *Neotropical Rainforest Mammals*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1990. Paperback with good pictures and excellent text.

General Nature:

Caufield, C. *In the Rainforest*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984. Paperback edition.

Forsyth, Adrian and Ken Miyata. *Tropical Nature*. New York: Charles Scribners’ Sons, 1984.

Kricher, J.C. *A Neotropical Companion*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989. (in the leader’s opinion, the best read for this trip.)

Pearson, David L., and Les Beletsky. *The Ecotravellers’ Wildlife Guide: Brazil, Amazon and Pantanal*. Academic Press, 2001. This is more of a general natural history guide that covers common plants, birds & animals.

Snow, D.W. *The Web of Adaptation: Bird Studies in the American Tropics*. New York: New York Times Book Co., 1976. Now a classic; good background on biology of some specialized fruit-eating birds.

Stap, Don. *Parrot without a Name*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990. An account of field expeditions with Ted Parker and John O'Neill, among others.

Recordings:

Naka, L. N. Stouffer, P. C., Cohn-Haft, M., Marantz, C., Whittaker, A., and Bierregaard Jr. R.O. Editora INPA, 2012 (second edition). *Voices of the Brazilian Amazon*. 4 CDs containing 340 bird and 7 primate species + booklet (40 pp.) (English, Portuguese and scientific names for each species, followed by the type of vocalization (song, call, etc.). Excellent recordings with a minimum of two recordings per species. Most recordings were made in the region of Manaus.

Marantz, Curtis M. and Kevin J. Zimmer. *Bird Voices of Alta Floresta and Southeastern Amazonian Brazil*. The Macaulay Library, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, 2006. (<http://static.birds.cornell.edu/Shop/agAlta.html>). This 6-CD-set is the single most comprehensive commercially available compilation of bird voices of the Brazilian Amazon. It covers nearly 450 species of birds, and an additional 10 species of mammals.

General Handbook:

South American Handbook. New York: Prentice Hall Travel. General travel reference.

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 December 31, 2019 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.