









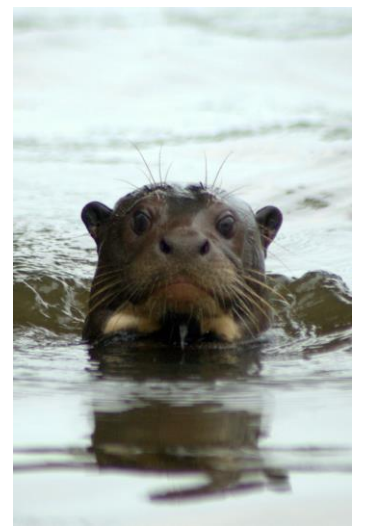
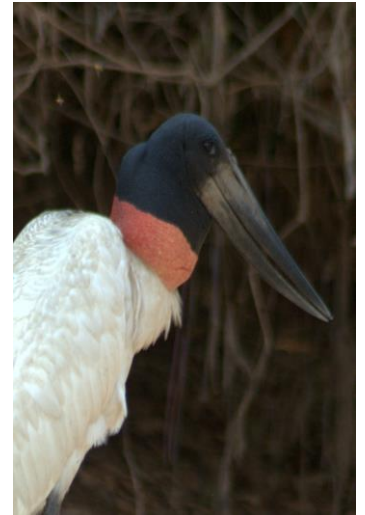


Pantanal Exploration

Destination: Pantanal, Brazil **Duration:** 16 Days **Dates:** 11th – 26th Sept

-  Having a total of 16 jaguar sightings and at least 13 different jaguars on the trip
-  Spotting the very elusive yellow anaconda along the banks of the Rio Cuiaba
-  Following a group of 12 giant otters over various days as they played and fished
-  Seeing over 20 hyacinth macaws and a total of 5 different macaw species
-  Having Rodrigao the habituated tapir wander through the lodge on two nights
-  Seeing 190+ species of birds including of South America's most colourful species
-  Spotting both species of peccary and anteater whilst at Embiara Lodge
-  As well as jaguars seeing two other very rare and elusive cats the ocelot & oncilla
-  Enjoying the wonderful & relaxing facilities at Embiara Lodge with the owner Paul
-  Enjoying a spectacular private flight over the southern Pantanal



Tour Leader / Guides

Martin Royle (Royle Safaris Tour Leader)
 Ailton (Guide / Naturalist & Panthera Researcher)
 Paul (Embiara Owner and Guide)
 Sam, Rodrigo Irastorsa & Adalton (Guides)

Participants

Mr. Joe Boyer
 Mrs. Rhoda Boyer

Overview

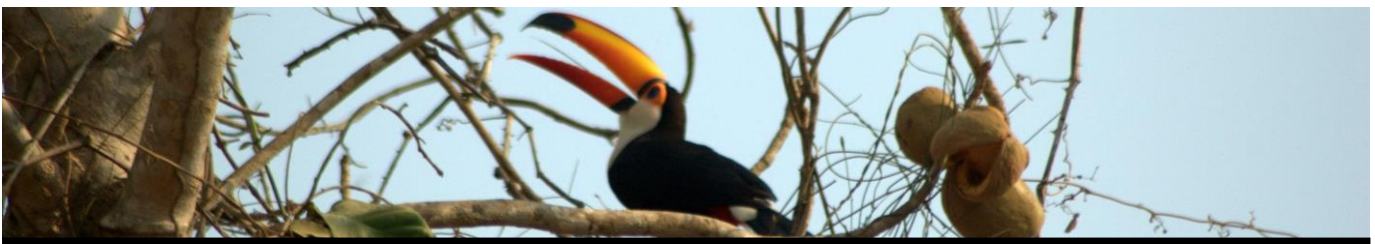
Day 1:	Cuiaba
Days 2-7:	Porto Jofre
Day 8:	Cuiaba
Days 9-14:	Embiara
Day 15:	Cuiaba
Day 16:	Home



Day by Day Breakdown

Overview

For a long time a forest enigma, a shadowy presence rarely seen and seldom understood the jaguar remained one of the last big cat species to be encountered with any regularity. But as research continues in Brazil's huge wetland area (known as the Pantanal) this big cat is beginning to reveal itself to the world. Despite this, few people are aware of the frequency that jaguars are seen here and as a result by joining this tour you could witness wonderful interactions between different jaguars, jaguars and giant otters or even a hunt and kill in the presence of just a dozen or so people and a few hundred yacre caiman. This big cat specialist trip aimed to bring you closer to a species which is so elusive elsewhere in its vast range through South and Central America; and there is no better place to do this than in the species' last stronghold the northern Pantanal. With the expert help of a local guide (Ailton Lara) we were in excellent hands as they guided us through the land of the jaguar. Whilst here in the north of the Pantanal you will be immersed into a world dominated by fast flowing waterways that intersect a burgeoning cattle ranching industry that suppresses all other. This is the number one beef area in Brazil, which in turn is the world's number one beef exporting nation. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that in an area full of valuable cattle that the world's highest density of jaguars hangs on a knife edge. Only by continued eco-tourism and invaluable research will this remain the jaguars last stronghold. And as the Pantanal receives more and more international acclaim and visitors the wealth of life here will flourish and show itself to a wider audience. From playful giant otters and the more elusive neotropical otters, to rare cats such as the ocelot, jaguarondi, oncilla and puma to thousands of capybara and millions of caiman, all species will benefit. But alongside the jaguars there is one group of animals that brightens up the Pantanal from sunrise to twilight and they are the birds. It is possible to rack up a huge number of species and seeing thousands of individuals everyday is a given. Kingfishers, terns, toucans, hyacinth macaws, storks, jacamas, parrots, egrets, darters, herons, donacobias, kisadees and dozens more. All of these species help to make this the jewel in South America's wildlife watching crown (and I am taking into account the mighty Amazon) and a place that should be at the top of every wildlife enthusiasts wish lists. In addition to the tracking down jaguars in the north of the Pantanal we also took a flight south to the capital of Mato Grosso do Sul, Campo Grande and from there headed into the heart of the cattle ranches to the very special private ranch / lodge of Embiara to experience a very different side of the Pantanal. Here there are fewer large rivers and far less 'swamp' habitat but instead a more dry savanna and scrub forest which is home to a whole different array of wildlife. By staying at Embiara we experienced a greater variety of wildlife that the Pantanal has to offer, seeing many species of birds and mammals that are very difficult or impossible to see in the north from the boats. Whilst here we will be able to experience the Pantanal in a variety of ways; via 4x4, horseback, boat or on foot. All in the expert hands of the local guides and ranch owner, this is a little piece of wildlife heaven and must be the closest thing to a private national park in the world. So which ever mode of transport used to explore the fields, forests rivers and lakes of Embiara, this beautiful boutique lodge will not disappoint.



Day 1 **Cuiaba**

Arrival

You met your zoologist escort, Martin Royle in Sao Paulo Airport at the gate to board the internal flight to Cuiaba. From here we had an uneventful flight to the quickly developing city to Cuiaba. Once we arrived at the airport we were met by Ailton Lara the owner and head guide from the Jaguar Camp in the heart of the Pantanal and where we would be based for the first week and hoped to getting jaguar sightings. We were taken direct to your hotel in the heart of Cuiaba and checked in, after a quick rest in the room we met and walked the short distance to a great local bar called Choppao. However for some reason this bar / restaurant was closed. Usually the heart and soul of Cuiaba we had to rethink and instead went to a nice burger restaurant closer to the hotel. The rest of the evening was laid back and after a long day of travelling and with a long day ahead of us tomorrow we all had an early night.

Day 2 **Transpantaneira**

Travel & Wildlife Watching

The Transpantaneira highway was originally planned to span the 350km between Pocone in the north and Corumba in the south and construction started in 1976. However after reaching Porto Jofre (148km from Pocone) the work was abandoned and it was too difficult and not cost effective to carry on *mostly due to the fact that when the road was proposed and construction started the whole of the Pantanal was contained in one state, Mato Grosso. However during the building of the road the state was split into two and the southern state, Mato Grosso do Sul



decided that their budget would not cover the construction of their half of the road so that it now stops at Porto Jofre on the banks of the Rio Cuiaba and the border of the two states. As a consequence of this the road has never been completed and remains unpaved and with no thoroughfare to the other side the heavy traffic bypasses the Pantanal. This has resulted in the highway becoming one of the best wildlife watching roads anywhere in the world. We spent most of the day travelling the road and stopped dozens of times to take in the plentiful bird, mammal and reptile life along the way. The plethora of life here is comparable to anywhere outside of Eastern Africa. We clocked up over 100 species of birds on our first day including peach-fronted parakeets, black-headed water-tyrant fork-tailed flycatchers, plumbeous ibis, savanna hawks, lesser kiskadees and toco toucans to name a few. Another highlight was trying to count the throngs of Yacre caiman which congregated in every pool, stream, pond, lake, brook and puddle! This is a fruitless task as there are literally millions throughout the Pantanal. Estimates of their population range from 10 – 35 million, either way there is no shortage of the jaguars favourite food (especially during the wet season). As well as the thousands of smaller birds and waterfowl here there a few species of truly monstrous birds. One being the bird of the Pantanal the mighty jabiru stork and another being the largest bird in the Americas the flightless greater rhea. Whilst the rheas nest on the ground in large communal crèches which the male incubates and then cares for the young the jabirus mate for life and nest high in old manduvi palms. Huge they build mountainous nets which are also used by another bird species; this is the monk parakeet. A very noisy and communal nester that uses the underside of the jabirus nest to build little tunnels and chambers for themselves. This symbiotic relationship works as the parakeets provide an efficient guard duty and defend the nest as well as the jabiru eggs/chicks whilst the monk parakeets spend less energy on the construction of their nest. Shortly before reaching our lunch stop we spotted a young male marsh deer eating just off the road. We then arrived at the famous Mato Grosso Hotel which lies half way down the transpantaneira. Here we had lunch as well as enjoyed the hundreds of birds feeding on the bird feeders in the hotel grounds. Amongst the yellow-billed cardinals, bay-winged cowbirds, shiny cowbirds, greyish saltators and lesser kiskadees there are common amandava lizards and even a capybara making itself at home on the lawns near the pool. After a good Brazilian lunch continued south, stopped for a large (2m) caiman lying on the middle of the road as well as stopped next to an abandoned ranger station. Here a couple of huge trees provide lots of shade and in these trees is a nesting pair of great-horned owls. Of which we spotted one and their 2 chicks as well as a ringed kingfisher killing and eating an unknown snake species. Further on we drove past two of the largest flocks of great egrets we had ever seen. Hundreds covered the pond shores and bushes and trees on either side of the road. Interspersed with the great egrets where the smaller snowy egrets as well as rufescent-tiger herons, cocoi herons, bare-faced ibis, ringed kingfishers, southern crested caracaras and dozens of other species. Including at least one stunning capped heron that was close enough for great photographs. On arrival the camp we stretched out legs and were shown to our tents before reconvening for dinner in the dining tent. After such a eventful day we decided on an early night as tomorrow would be a full day on the water in search of jaguars and other wildlife.

Day 3 North Pantanal

Wildlife Watching

Today was the first full day around the Rio Cuiaba and the world's number one hotspot for jaguar sightings. Our hopes were relatively high as Ailton had informed us that this year they had been seeing more jaguars than ever before and when you consider that he usually averages over 1.2 jaguar sightings per day, which is an incredible statistic. The day began early with breakfast at 05:30am. Martin collected the camera traps he set up around his tent that night so that we could place them at suitable jaguar trails for the next few days. Not very hopeful of anything this close to the camp and with many of the camp staff using the pathway regularly we were pleasantly surprised to find a nine-banded armadillo on the camera trap. After breakfast we departed in our specialist wildlife watching boat in the expert hands of Ailton. Within the first few minutes we spotted 4 adult giant otters as they herding some unseen fish into a narrow stream, where they would be much easier to catch. We tried to follow them but they were not in a playful mood and with only hunting on their mind we lost them after around 5 minutes. We then explored the various waterways around here before another boat informed us of a jaguar sighting. Ailton has a network of boats so we are able to hear about any sightings quickly and during our time here the secondary boat was taking a German film crew out so they stayed around areas when the jaguar had disappeared into the forest and waited in case it remerged. This freed us up to go and explore other areas. We stayed a while where the jaguar had been seen but in dense forest and with no movement we decided to leave. Which is when we spotted an ocelot, this smaller cousin of the jaguar is very hard to see and usually strictly nocturnal (being most active the first hour after dark), but there he was in broad day light drinking from the bank of the Piquiri River. The sighting didn't last very long but it was incredible to see such a beautiful and elusive cat in such good conditions. A little after this sighting we came across a neotropical otter fishing. The otter decided to inspect us and brought a fish close to the boat to eat. This is exceptional as the usually shy cousin of the much larger and much much noisier giant otter, usually stay away from boats. But this little one decided to give us very close up views and allowed to excellent photograph opportunities. A little further on along the Piquiri River, as we were heading towards the Three Brothers River we spotted a caiman (around 1.3m long) struggling to eat a very slender olive whip-snake close to the bank. This feeding sight was closely followed by the sight of a mature rufescent tiger heron killing and eating a very large and extremely beautifully coloured Amazon whiptail lizard. Both of these events were great to see first hand, particularly as snakes and lizards can be very hard to spot from the boat and both the olive whip-snake and



Amazon whiptail lizard have very vibrant colourations. By now we were beginning to wonder where all the jaguars were but our attention was quickly drawn to 5 giant otters fishing, the group consisted of 2 adults and 3 juveniles, one of the adults caught a dorado and soon had the juveniles begging (a high pitched whistling sound) and mobbing the adult. Although this was not successful and the adult continued to feed, forcing the juveniles to hone their own hunting skills. This was a very loud affair and at one point it felt like we had heard all of the 15 or so distinct calls that giant otters use when communicating. We followed the group as they travelled close to the bank of the river, occasionally stopping to catch and eat a fish, until they arrived at the holt. Here they disappeared inside briefly before leaving again and carrying on fishing. It was close to the holt that we set up one of the camera traps, along a pathway that Ailton has known jaguars to use, there was also an armadillo hole nearby so we were hopeful of collecting something of interest in a few days time.

After setting up the camera trap we left for a shallow channel where giant otters are often seen sunning themselves on a couple of fallen trees that stretch across the channel. However there was no recent otter sign but we did manage to get great views of the rarest of the 5 kingfisher species here. We watched a tiny American pygmy kingfisher fish and return to a perch around 3m away from us underneath the tangle of roots and vines of a huge tree that one day soon will give way and collapse into the channel as the sandy bank continues to erode from underneath it. The water in this channel has much fish activity as the fish leap into the air very quickly to help aerate the water and oxygenate it. Along these very slow moving, shallow channels the tannins released from the decaying vegetation in the river decreases the dissolved oxygen in the water so that the fish have to make their own in order to stay here. It was just downstream from the American pygmy kingfisher where we lunched under the shade of a couple of large trees. A great place to watch the caiman and birds as they continued their daily business up and down the channel. After lunch we decided to explore an island in the middle of the Three Brothers River, the channel around the island has some very shallow sections and not many boats (if any) travel around it; so we thought that it was worth seeing what was around here as there could be a jaguar which we would have all to our selves. Well we didn't get very far before the boat ran aground, luckily these boats are designed for very shallow water and with the help of Martin and Joe plus some weight redistribution in the boat we managed to get around some of the shallowest sections unscathed. At one point Ailton (whilst pushing the boat over a very shallow sandbank) stepped on a caiman! After this little scare the water became a little deeper and normal service was resumed and it wasn't long until we emerged at the other end. Our exploratory excursion only resulted in lots of caiman and birds as well as wet feet from pushing the boat forward. At the other end of the island we had a quick propeller repair to make and then met with another boat, with a film crew from ABC and headed by Brazil's preeminent wildlife filmmaker Lawrence Alouba, he told us of a jaguar sighting down the Piquiri river so we headed to the spot straight away. The light was beginning to fade and the jaguar had disappeared into the thick vegetation, so we anchored up and waited a while. After a few minutes Martin heard some branches snap and Ailton noticed the alarm calls of purplish jays coming from just downstream. So we repositioned ourselves and within a few seconds a large male jaguar (which sported one of the radio collars used by the big cat research and conservation organisation; Panthera) walk past our boat on the bank and back into dense forest. Well it was brief and he quickly moved away from the riverbank, at this point we got word from Lawrence Alouba (who had moved off in search of another jaguar) that a yellow anaconda had been seen, so we decided to go and see if we could see the anaconda before dark. We should see more jaguars whilst anacondas are only spotted once every 6 weeks or so. We arrived the location we were told and searched for a while until we saw the tangle of dark brown coils lit up by bright yellow spots, tightly curled up behind a bush on a high bank of the river. Eventually the anaconda moved around a little and shown its head to us and Martin managed to get some close up pictures as the sun was setting. So after a couple more minutes we headed back to the camp. What a first day and one that make Ailton remark that after 15 years of guiding here he had never had such a good day, an ocelot in broad daylight, excellent close up encounters with both giant and neotropical otters, yellow anaconda and of course a jaguar! We were a little unsure how we could improve on today and all we could do is get some dinner, sleep and see what we could see tomorrow.



Day 4 North Pantanal

Wildlife Watching

This morning started at the same time as yesterday but today we had spotted a jaguar within 10 minutes of leaving the camp. A young adult male was seen patrolling the shore of a small shallow channel. He intently smelt the ground and clumps of lilies, very possibly smelling the scent left by a female in oestrous. We watched him walk up and down the river bank for several minutes, smelling the ground and then looking for a place to cross the river. He eventually chose a suitable spot around 50m downstream from our boat, it was magical to watch him slowly glide into the water until just the top of his head, eyes, nose and ears were above the water. They are incredibly strong swimmers and will even rest semi-submerged in water on really hot days (similar to tigers). Having said that, today was already shaping up to be a very hot day here in the northern Pantanal and we were all very thankful for the



canopy over the boat. After he crossed the river he entered the thick forest on the opposite bank so we decided to leave and head further up the Rio Cuiaba. It wasn't long into this journey that we heard over the radio that a second jaguar had been seen along the main trunk of the Three Brothers River, so we rushed over to the location. It wasn't long that until we saw this male moving along the shore. We could view him in between sandbanks, vegetation before he left the beach and heading along the bank behind thicker bush. We followed him for around 30 minutes, but he seemed to have either disappeared away from the river or lay down for a rest as the temperature began to rise towards its midday peak. After half an hour we deciding to try our luck somewhere else and headed back downstream towards the confluence of the Three Brothers River where we spotted a number of boats lined up along the most southerly channel of the Three Brothers River. We went to see what they had seen and were pleasantly surprised by our third jaguar of the day. This adult male was a magnificent individual, with a large head and very broad shoulders and powerful forelegs. He walked purposefully along the shore line hunting for caiman amongst the thick lilies. Here the caiman can get tangled in the vegetation and not escape very quickly, making them easy pickings for the jaguars. In fact the caiman make up around 25% of their diet in the dry season and this rises dramatically to around 75% in the wet season. The reason for this increase during the wet season has 3 explanations. Firstly there is less dry land for the caiman to bask and warm up during the mid morning, meaning that these locations are hotspots for jaguar kills. Secondly is that the increase in water levels restricts the movements of other prey animals such as peccaries, capybaras and cattle so that they are harder to catch as they move to areas that are unsuitable for large predators and thirdly it is during the beginning of the wet season that the caiman begin to make nests and incubate their eggs. During the incubation stage the females vigorously guard their nests and this means that they seldom enter the water and again are easy prey for jaguars. We hoped that this male would find a suitable caiman but despite a couple of loud splashes made when he was in the thick lilies he didn't make a kill as we watched. We slowly followed him along the opposite shore for around 1km before he headed into the vegetation and went over to the next channel of the river. We followed and met up with him on the other side, he continued his hunting for a little while before disappearing into the bush. After this great prolonged view of a hunting jaguar we checked out the Piquiri River (after great success here yesterday we were confident again), that confidence was justified as Martin spotted the unmistakable head of a Brazilian tapir swimming from the left to right hand side of the river close to the shore. After we slowed down and approached the tapir he stopped swimming across and changed direction to run parallel to the river bank and our boat at a distance of around 25m. For around 15mins (~1km) we followed level with him as he swam, dove under and battled with overhanging vegetation. Being such a powerful animal (the largest in all of South and Central America) he was a remarkably fast swimmer. When he reached a small beach on the bank he stepped out of the water fully and showed us his full size and moved silently off into the forest. The pastures beyond the forest that borders the Piquiri River is a very good place to see tapirs, but not usually for so long and not usually in the middle of day. They sometimes cross the river during the early morning or late afternoon. So this became the latest incredible sighting in a growing list of exceptional sightings so far. After the large male tapir had disappeared into the forest we headed back towards the confluence of the Cuiaba and Piquiri Rivers. Whilst driving back we noticed that as well as the heat of the sun today begin very strong we also had a lot of smoke in the air. Unfortunately at this time of year there are many fires that sweep through the Pantanal. Most of natural and much needed for the overall health of the ecosystem but a growing number are human induced and whilst we couldn't see the source of the smoke it added to the hot and hazy atmosphere, somehow making it seem even hotter. Shortly before leaving the Piquiri River we spotted a small group of 4 adult giant otters travelling quickly parallel with the shoreline. We followed them until they sheltered underneath some dense roots of an overhanging tree, so we continued our exploration of the river systems here. The rest of the day on the boat was remarkably uneventful but tonight we were due to have a night drive, spotlighting down the Transpanteira highway.

So after dinner back at the camp we loaded up in the car and complete with a couple of high powered spotlights we went in search of the nocturnal creatures of the Pantanal. We were expecting crab-eating foxes and nightjars or possibly a tapir or crab-eating raccoon. But nothing could have prepared us for the first animal we spotted. Walking towards our vehicle in the road was a small spotted cat, being much the same size as a domestic cat and having a tail around the same length of its back legs, we were able to positively ID the cat as the elusive and exquisite oncilla. This seldom seen feline can be confused with an ocelot if people do not know what to look for, namely the size as ocelots are close to twice the size as well as the length of the tail. Three of the spotted cats of this region have very distinct tails (so even if scale is not something that you can use as a diagnostic tool then relative tail length will be); firstly the ocelot tail is always shorter than their rear legs, the oncillas is roughly the same length and the margay's tail is much longer. Well after a few seconds of staring at us the oncilla moved into the grass and we lost the eye-shine. Continuing on we saw two great-horned owls flying down the road in front of our car, this pair could have been the breeding pair we saw on the way in as we were very close to their nest. We carried on down the highway for another half an hour or so, just the orange eye-shine from the many caiman either side of the road was of note until we turned back and headed towards camp. It wasn't long into the return journey when a male jaguar ran into the road in front of us and after briefly looking back at us from the bushes ran out of sight into the bush. Our last encounter was close to Porto Jofre (maybe 5 minutes out) when we spotted an oncilla (most likely the same one) walking along the ledge of a bridge. Probably in search of rats underneath the oncilla saw us and slowly crossed the bridge and went to the other side (allowing Martin to get a nice video (albeit a little dark) which clearly shows scale and the tail length so a positive ID can be made). We drove to the other side and looked into



the bush where the oncilla had entered and low and behold it came out right in front of the car and stood in the main beam of the headlights and the spotlight and stared right back at us for around 5 seconds before casually and calmly moving off to the opposite side of the road and finally out of sight for good. What a trip and unbelievable we were up to 3 species of cats after day 4! What wonders would tomorrow hold, surely this amazing run of good luck couldn't continue.



Day 5 North Pantanal

Wildlife Watching

Today started the same as the previous couple of days, with the exception of us collecting a camera trap that we set up near a cow carcass that we knew died the day before. We set the camera up on the way back yesterday and hoped to get some footage of a scavenging jaguar; but there were no scavengers on the camera, except for many black vultures. Today was much cooler than yesterday morning and we were even treated to a refreshing rain shower (another advantage of the canopies that not all the boats have surprisingly). This morning was very quiet the only notable sightings being a pair of nesting jabirus in a tall manduvi palm that is often the nesting site of a pair of hyacinth macaws (although they hadn't been seen here so far this season); and a brief sighting of a neotropical otter feeding on a small fish underneath some overhanging roots. Due to the particularly dry dry season so far most of the caiman were inland in the marshes and away from the rivers (although there were still several hundred there were not the plagues of caiman that can occur here), this in turn means that the jaguars are spending proportionally more time inland hunting so the sightings were a little more difficult that usually. Especially in the mornings. We stopped at a large sandy beach to check for fresh jaguar signs or tracks, whilst here we spotted a male black howler in a nearby tree, so we went over to have a closer look. We saw the male all in black and the light brown female well albeit briefly before they entered a very thickly vegetated tree. Just as we were setting off we heard the distinctive short hooting-bark of the capybara alarm call. So we went to investigate. As we arrived at the location we saw a large caiman with a catfish and a couple of other caiman seemingly agitated and roaring. Ailton and Martin tried to piece together what could have been going on here when we heard the unmistakable yowling roar of a big cat from the tall reeds. We focused our attention in this area for the next 15-20 minutes but heard no further movement or sounds, the caimans also calmed down and the once panicked capybara also returned to the shore and began to feed. So with the jaguar's two main prey animals seemingly at peace here we decided to leave and have some lunch close by in case the jaguar returned. After lunch the temperature was beginning to climb to the high thirties so we kept the boat moving around the various waterways, we had still no jaguars today and as far as information from other boats went nobody had seen one today. For a couple of hours we spent time photographing some of the many bird species here, including ringed, green-and-rufous, Amazon and green kingfishers, American aningas, neotropical cormorants, great and snowy egrets, black-collared and great black hawks, southern crested caracaras, rough-winged and white-winged swallows, grey-breasted and brown-chested martins. The Pantanal is a birding hotspot and with well over 250 species easily seen with time and a keen eye there was a wealth of birdlife to occupy us, until all of sudden Rhoda and Joe had an unexpected visitor join them in the back of the boat. A pacu (a popular eating fish) jumped clean out of the water, hit Rhoda's foot and bounced straight back out the other side. This certainly livened up the mid-afternoon! The almost immediately afterwards we spotted 2 jaguar cubs on a beach in front of us. The cubs were around 80-90% of a fully grown adult size and thus around 18 months old. If they were males then they would be at dispersing age and possibly sticking together for protection and comfort as they go in search of unoccupied territories. That is something in short supply in this region of the Pantanal with the highest jaguar densities recorded anywhere in the world. However if they were females then the mother would probably be close by as the females stay a while longer and often take over a section of the mother's territory for a few years. However we were unable to sex either of the cubs, especially as one of them entered the forest shortly after being spotted. The second cub remained on the beach for a few more minutes, walking back and forth and taken some water but joining its sibling in the forest. Also in the area was a small group of black-striped tufted capuchin monkeys as well as a giant otter family, this was the first sighting we had of the large group of 12 giant otters that would later provide us with so much entertainment. The group seemed to be made up of one breeding pair and their offspring of various years and as we watched the adult female (complete with milk heavy teats) left the river and climbed into their holt. Moments later she emerged carrying a tiny (by giant otter standards and probably still 40cm long) very young kit in her mouth. This was greeted by much noise and excitement from the rest of the group whom gargled, whistled, growled, yowled, barked loudly. The kit was taken around 2m away from one holt and up into a newer holt with freshly excavated sand. The female was followed by a few of the other otters in turn as she eventually returned without the kit. We can only speculate as to this change of holts. Giant otters are well known to move holts and follow fish migrations through river systems but with a move only 2m away it is most likely that the old holt had become untenable. A section could have caved in, become water logged or maybe parasites or ants had taken over



the holt? Whatever the reason we were treated to some wonderful behaviours at close quarters. We then decided to leave these otters and head to the Piquiri River where we came across another group of giant otters, this was 7 strong and we found them as they rested on a partially submerged tangle of roots and mutually groomed each other with vigour and much enjoyment. Unbelievable to have two incredibly intimate giant otter experiences within 30 minutes of each other; and as the sun was beginning to get lower in the sky we had no idea that the sighting of the day was around the corner as a pair of mating jaguars appeared on a large beach. The female was collared and a darker colouration to the male, making her very distinctive, the male was also very unique in that fact that he was truly massive. Despite jaguars being the 3rd largest species of cat in the world and jaguars also exhibiting the 2nd largest sexual size dimorphism between males and females (behind the lion), this male was exceptionally large. He was close to twice the size of the female, who was a good size for a female jaguar. At first they were just resting on the beach around 10m away from each other, then the female rose and walked over to the male, rubbing her cheeks against his neck and then presenting her rear to him and crouching down, well the male didn't need to be asked twice and subsequently mated. This was repeated three times in the half an hour or so they were on the beach (before moving into the thick bush), the most exceptional of this was when the male seemed to take advantage of the female as she lay down to take a drink from the river's edge. He mounted her without the usual instigation from the female. It was also very interesting to see the male follow the female closely every time she got up and walked away, even if only walking a couple of meters away he would copy her every action. During the period when the female is in oestrous the male will keep a close eye on her day and night and guard her against other males. They will copulate around once every 15-20 minutes for 2-4 days, before separating and continuing their largely solitary existences. This was once again another amazing day on the rivers of the northern Pantanal and by now Ailton and Martin were beginning to worry about how to possibly better the sightings so far! This is the best 'problem' any guide can have I suppose and it was one that we would do our best to overcome with better and better jaguar sightings and other wildlife encounters hopefully. So we headed back to the camp and enjoyed a much needed evening meal and revelled in our continued success.



Day 6 North Pantanal

Wildlife Watching

Today was another day spent in pursuit of jaguars and after 20 uneventful minutes we came across the breeding pair we had seen the day before. They were a little further around the Piquiri River but seemed to be equally preoccupied with mating as the day before as we watched one copulation before the female got up and walked purposefully along the beach and into the dense bush, with the male closely following of course. We positioned the boat around the bend in the river in the direct we expected them to emerge and waited for a while. After 30 minutes or so we left and tried our luck on the Three Brothers River, the rest of the morning was pretty quiet with the notable sightings being a lone capuchin, two groups of black howler monkeys (one just being a female and the other a group of 70), a lone giant otter speeding off along the river bank and a cocoi heron struggling to swallow a large catfish. After lunch we carried on exploring the riversides and heard a capybara alarm call near the confluence of the Three Brothers and Cuiaba Rivers so we went in search of the culprit and found the large male capybara in the water without anything obvious having caused the alarm. As we waited around here we saw the same large family of giant otters travelling towards their holt as yesterday. So we followed them and once they got to the holt they treated us to a great display of playing and grooming for around 10-15 minutes at close distance. We were able to get great pictures and videos of this incredible animal as they interacted with each other in a very intelligent and noisy way. I am sure that we heard the fully repertoire of the giant otter whilst watching this family. As the day was beginning to come to a close we decided to leave and head back to the Piquiri River to see if the mating pair had moved into the open again. Before we arrived the semicircle of 6 boats around the beach showed us that they had and we anchored up to watch the abnormally large male and female as they relaxed. They didn't copulate again when we were there and only lay on the beach and tried to sleep, I saw try as the bugs were giving them a torrid time of relaxing. After the other boats had left and as the sunset lit the sky with reds and oranges Ailton pulled the boat a couple of meters closer to the beach for 2 or 3 quick photographs and we too headed back to the camp and collected the camera trap we had set near the carcass of the cow near camp. On checking the memory card we found lots of vultures and the underside of a cow standing over the camera trap but no jaguars, with so much natural prey as well as fresh cattle around here it is no surprise that the jaguars are not scavenging.



Day 7 North Pantanal

Wildlife Watching

Today was the last full day we would have in the north of the Pantanal and we wanted to make the most of the time here. So we were very excited when 10 minutes into the day we spotted a male jaguar swimming across the wide Cuiaba River right in front of our boat! We stopped and watched as he climbed the bank and turned to give us the typical big cat stare. The look that pierces the soul of even the most experienced wildlife watcher and reaches to the deepest darkest recesses of our conscious and just sends a shiver down your spine. After this 5 seconds or so, that seems like a lifetime he turned and ran up the bank and away into the forest. We then spoke to another boat nearby who said they had seen two different jaguars in the area, on the opposite bank so we stayed around here for a few minutes to see if they would show up. But we decided to try our luck on the very busy Piquiri River, usually the quieter of the main rivers here as far as jaguars go, the last few days had been very good here so we were not too surprised when we saw another male walking purposefully along the bank. We couldn't identify this male (at first thinking he was a well known male with a scared eye whom Panthera call Pink-Eye. He seemed to heading very quickly towards the beaches where the mating pair had been seen and very probably attracted by the scent of the female in oestrous we wondered if we would see a fight between the two males. In which case it would be difficult to see this 'normal' sized male beating the (now called) Goliath we had got used to seeing around here. But before he reached the beaches he disappeared into the forest and we moved on. The rest of the morning was very quiet and after lunch we went to collect the camera trap we set up along the river bank. We checked the memory card on site and it had captured some great capybara shots as well as beautiful male ocelot walking along the trail. It was a great video with the markings clearly visible even in black and white as the camera filmed the cat at night using the infrared. We then carried on our search for jaguars and other wildlife, spotting a beautiful blue-crowned trogon perched in a tree over the river. All day today the air was thick with the threat of rain and thunder rumbled in the distance, any second we were half expecting a torrential downpour but this never came fortunately. We then came across the same large group of giant otters and watched as they caught piranha and dorado very noisily and then something quite unexpected. We had positioned ourselves with the bow of the boat on a sandy beach so we were stable for photographs when a couple of the adult otters came onto the beach, inspected us and then rolled in the sand with some gusto. Ridding themselves of parasites and just having fun, one by one they all joined in. Seeing them completely out of the water was amazing and their true size was fully appreciated. Looking more like seals than otters they put on quite a show only 2m away from us. Evidently all of this commotion had attracted a 2m caiman to the beach too, possibly to pick off any fish that tried to escape the otters or maybe to also bask on this beach. But he was confronted by a juvenile otter, this smaller otter tried the intimidation tactic used by adult otters to bully caiman. Biting its tail and hissing, but this didn't seem to work and the caiman probably realised that it had the advantage over this younger otter, so the otter made a very distinct grunting cough which immediately alerted the adult female who went straight over to the caiman and bit its tail and low and behold the caiman moved off straight away. As we were also leaving the adult male came and stared at us giving us an unmistakable call telling us we were no longer welcome here! We decided to try the Piquiri River one last time and as we went further down the river we were hit by the very distinct and quite unpleasant odour of the white-lipped peccary fear response. When threatened this species of small pig (although evolutionary and genetically quite distinct from Old World pigs) raises its hackles and releases the foul smell through glands along its back. On speaking to a couple of the other boats around here we were told the reason for their fear, the pair of jaguars were seen moving downstream towards the peccaries and had obviously been detected by them. Whilst we were unable to see through the very thick forest we could smell and then hear the peccaries, all of a sudden they started to be very noisy, lots of rustling and cracking of brush signalled the foraging behaviour of the peccaries and then came the loud teeth snapping. They would clash their teeth together in another threat display and the noise was amazingly loud. We stayed around the sound and smell for a few more minutes to see if the peccaries or jaguars would come into view but eventually the failing light dictated to us we had to leave the rivers and head back to the jaguar camp for one last night.

Day 8 Transpantaneira

Travel & Wildlife Watching

This morning we began the long journey back up the Transpantaneira highway at 06:45am. Once again the birdlife was prolific and reached a peak when we had hundreds (if not a couple of thousand) great egrets and snowy egrets around water holes and perched on bushes on both sides of the road for around 500m. Alongside the innumerable and brilliantly white egrets were dozens of coqui & rufescent-tiger herons, jabiru & wood storks, ringed & Amazon kingfishers, limpkins, black-crowned night-herons, lesser kiskadees and black-collared hawks. Clearly this was a good fishing spot and just a little further up we spotted a small pond with several very active caiman, one in full mating display with head and tail raised out of the water and vibrating his back to make the water 'dance' in an



attempt to attract females. Whilst he tried that most of the other caiman were filling their crocodile skin boots catching fish as the water levels continued to drop. Although when looking at the clouds overhead and listening to the thunder it seemed like only a matter of time before the rains would arrive. As we drove further north towards Cuiaba we had two different groups of South American coatis cross the road, these relatives of the raccoon are a stunning reddish colour with ringed tails and a very flexible and sensitive nose for exploring the leaf litter for anything edible. A little while after these encounters we saw an incredible sight, another male jaguar walking along the road (by now the time was approaching 09:30am) ahead of us, he then crossed from one side to the other and back again before leaving the road and heading into the bush. A part from this being a top predator (the largest predator in South and Central America) walking down the road in the middle of morning, which in itself is amazing but he was heading towards the busy and active Mato Grosso Hotel only 1km further up the road. If there was ever an example of what the Pantanal is an exceptional place it would be seeing this before arriving at the hotel for a drink and toilet break. Whilst at the hotel we enjoyed the many bird species feeding on the feeders, including yellow-billed cardinals, shiny cowbirds, bay-winged cowbirds, greyish saltators, crested oropendulas and even three exquisitely coloured chestnut-eared aracarís. This smaller relative of the toucan has to be one of the most stunning species of birds in the world, never mind the Pantanal. On leaving the hotel we carried on until another rest stop in Pocone and also a chance for Rhoda and Joe to purchase a couple of souvenirs before carrying on to Cuiaba and checking into the hotel. We lunched here and then rested for the afternoon before heading down-town for dinner and an early night as yet another early morning awaited us tomorrow as we would begin our journey to the wonderful private wildlife paradise of Embiara Lodge in the south of the Pantanal.



Day 9 **Embiara Lodge**

Travel & Wildlife Watching

This morning Ailton came to drop us at the airport and after saying bye to him we duly completed the formalities at the airport before departing Cuiaba for the capital of Mato Grosso do So, Campo Grande. The flight was only 1 hour and when we arrived we were met by our driver Jefferson, he would drive us to Aquiduaana which is the closest town to Embiara and then a further 5 hours through the ranch land. We lunched at a roadside café before reaching Aquiduaana where we also picked up one of the lodges very able cooks. The drive to the beginning of the ranches was very uneventful, with just a heavy rainstorm to note. Then when we reached the beginning of the dirt road that would take us the 120km into the heart of the southern Pantanal we started to see the wildlife that makes this region so wonderful again. Many greater rheas, picui ground doves, monk parakeets and coatis made the journey very pleasant. We also got very good close views of a small group of calling black howler monkeys. Stopping we got out and watched as they stopped calling and moved out of view, the howlers here seem to be very shy and once they know you are watching them they disappear very quickly. After only 36 gates and a rickety bridge over the Pantanal's own Rio Negro (not the same one that meets the Amazon River in the north of Brazil) we arrived at Embiara Lodge. On arrival we were met by the barking of Nina the gorgeous (if not very shy) jack russel and the cawing of hyacinth macaws that had taken up residence in a tree in the middle of the lodge complex; after these noisy welcoming calls Rhoda and Joe were shown to their room by Sam (an really nice English man who is employed here as a guide during the tourist season) and then we were taken by Sam on a short walk around one of the closest lakes. This was a nice introduction to the area and we had fleeting glimpses of both the native white-lipped peccaries and the introduced feral pig. The feral pig is the only animal in the Pantanal that the local people can hunt and what they do is look out for young males that they lasso and castrate (to take to the bitter testosterone out of the meat) before cutting off half of the tail and making a nick in the ear and releasing the animal back. This is so that they know which males to kill once they reach a good size. It is a brutal process but it provides the local people with meat (other than beef) and the abundance of the introduced pigs is tolerated for this reason as well as giving the jaguars and pumas another easy prey source so they take less cattle and thus come into conflict with farmers less. We also saw black-bellied whistling ducks, Muscovy ducks and white-faced whistling ducks as well as a couple of dainty pampas deer before heading back to the lodge for dinner and meeting Paul Grol, the owner of the ranch and also the other guide Rodrigo, Uruguayan by birth but an excellent guide with 10 years of experience in the Pantanal. Dinner was exceptional as usual at Embiara and we decided what we would do tomorrow, our plan of action was to be jeep safari in the morning and then a boat trip down a section of the Rio Negro in the afternoon.

Day 10 **Embiara Lodge**

Wildlife Watching

This morning we started with breakfast in the small dining room. All around the lodge complex were dozens of resident bare-faced curassows as well as crested oropendulas, plush-crested jays, purplish jays, southern crested caracaras, white-tipped doves and pale-vented doves and we also had a visit from an Azara's agouti who skirted



the forest edge close to the dining room. After the breakfast and a little photography of the stunning birds here (the blue, purple and yellow markings one the plush-crested jay, making it one of the most attractive birds in the Pantanal) we boarded the African style open-air vehicle and left for a safari around some of the ranch. Whilst open for tourism the ranch still has a working cattle operation. With around 800 head of cattle the ranch is not overgrazed and the different methods of farming used by Embiara and the other more intensive cattle ranches is all too evident in the lushness of the vegetation and abundance (or lack of) wildlife. Very early into the safari we had a great view of a male brown-brocket deer, this is one of two species of small forest dwelling species which have small frames and short, unpronged antlers which make weaving in and out of dense vegetation easier. We also spotted a couple of new macaw species, alongside the largest hyacinth, red-and-green and blue-and-yellow macaws there are two smaller species that occupy the Pantanal. The golden-collared and red-shouldered macaws are both rarer and harder to see than the larger species and it was especially unusual to see both species feeding together. The journey introduced the different habitats that make up the Pantanal, what you do not see from the large rivers in the north, these are the grasslands (or pampas) and the palm forests that are mostly fragmented on higher elevated ground as most of the Pantanal is flooded each year, in fact last year they had the largest floods in over 80 years and nearly all of the southern Pantanal was underwater, with the rivers rising at an average of 30cm a day for nearly 3 weeks! But one of the most dominant habitats in the Pantanal (in the dry season anyway) are the freshwater lakes and the salt water lakes (the Salinas). The salt water lakes are formed when the rain water and receding flood waters are trapped over very salty rocks, clays and sand. As the water is evaporated during the dry season the water draws up the mineral salts from the earth (there is lots of salt in the earth here as the whole of the Pantanal used to be an inland sea until around 65 million years ago). The resulting mineral extraction and evaporation leaves some of the lakes very saline. They are obvious because they are devoid of aquatic vegetation and the perimeters of the Salinas are free from ground vegetation as well. As we approached the farm unit of the ranch and the stables we came to a corral where the farmers (cowboys) were rounding up the cattle. Paul was selling his young bulls up to 9 months of age and the cowboys had to bring in each cow individually into the corral and section them depending on the age. It was a good experience to see them working and gain an appreciation for life on a cattle ranch and just a small insight into what goes on to produce the wonderful steak we had been eating. Once we arrived at the farm we enjoyed a walk around the area, here there are many species of birds nesting and we watched the huge jabiru storks perched precariously on their huge nest at the top of an old manduvi tree. Also sharing their nest was a colony of monk parakeets who came and went with a loud chattering squawking. We also saw the crested oropendulas weaving their large hanging nests, as well as filling the ecological niche filled by weaver birds in the Old World they are also the South American mynah birds as they mimic other bird calls to produce some of the most complex and beautiful songs. As we walked on we also had a great and very close encounter with a lone male coati. Whilst mostly social animals it not uncommon to find large adult males on their own. This individual climbed a tree very close to us and posed for some great pictures, allowing us to see his large, flexible and very sensitive nose as well as his tail used expertly used for balancing along the branches. We finished this walk by passing a couple of flowering purple trumpet trees and the maternity field, here all of the farms' pregnant horses are kept and after they birth they are kept here until the foals are strong enough to be let out in the larger fields. Currently there were 4 foals, including one that at only a week old was larger and looked more muscled than a couple who were a month old.

We then returned to the ranch for lunch, there was thunder and a couple of flashes of lightning in the sky and we decided that a trip on the river in a metal boat would not be advisable so we changed the plan and headed back out on a jeep safari. During lunch there was a brief but intense rainfall and shortly after starting the drive we saw a group of 5 black howler monkeys drying themselves in the emerging sun in the top of the trees. We also spotted a couple of red-and-green macaws feeding before an unusual sight of a single yellow-faced amazon being attacked by a small flock of blue-fronted parrots. This was vicious and prolonged and left us wondering what the amazon had done to deserve such treatment. Then with the sun setting we headed towards a Salina which would provide a great view of the sunset and on the way we saw two long legged red-legged seriemas. This birds look like and perform the same role as Africa's secretary birds, feeding on snakes whilst stalking the grasslands on stilts. After the sunset we began the drive home and quickly spotlighted a Brazilian tapir swimming across one of the freshwater lakes. We watched as the female tapir swam steadily to the other side but in an attempt to lose our jeep she would dive down and change direction, coming up to breath where you wouldn't expect her. However the lake was small and completely flat meaning that wherever she came up we could see her easily. Finally she had reached the other side and moved rapidly into the security of the forest and away from view. The only other animals we spotlighted were the numerous nightjars, both scissor-tailed and band-tailed nightjars and also a couple of greater potoos on the airstrip close to the lodge. On returning to the lodge we relaxed with a beer or caparina and enjoyed another excellent meal.

Day 11 **Embiara Lodge**

Wildlife Watching

This morning after breakfast we were escorted through some of the nearby forests and grasslands on foot. We were guided by the excellent Adalton; Adalton is regarded at the best tracker and guide in the southern Pantanal and



Embiara are very lucky to have him. He has lived his entire life here and has seen everything that the Pantanal has to offer. We were also joined by Paul and Rodrigo so that we were sure of finding any wildlife that would be around. This fact as well as showing just how good Adalton was as spotting wildlife our first sighting was the perfectly camouflaged greater potoo. Having spotlighted this nocturnal bird last night this was a chance for Rhoda and Joe to get a good view of the bird as it pretended (quite convincingly) to be an extension the branch it was perched statuesque on. With feathers that match the local tree's barks to perfection and an ability to remain absolutely still allows the potoo to go unnoticed in the tree during the day. Whilst the bird sleeps away the daylight hours it remains concealed in direct view from predators such as hawks, snakes and small cats. One of the main reasons that we were taking this particular route this morning was that Adalton had spotted a puma here around 30 minutes ago, so we were all keeping a keen eye out to see if we could glimpse one of the Pantanal's most elusive species. Whilst we never did see the puma we did find a sleeping male red-footed tortoise, this large black species is so called for the red markings on its legs and feet. By the size and smoothness of the shell we could estimate that the tortoise was of a good age, how old exactly is anyone's guess. We waited a while to see if he would pop his head out from between his legs, but he remained hidden underneath his shell and behind his armoured legs. The next animal that Adalton found for us was the very small and very pretty ferruginous pygmy owl, this diurnal owl is around half the size of the burrowing owl that is a much more common sight around here as they stand on the entrance to their burrows or on fence posts of bushes to get a high vantage point. As we left this forested area Martin and Joe had very good, close up views of a male white-lipped peccary. This individual must have been separated from the rest of the group and being exposed in the grassland offered us both great photography opportunities (which is nice as the peccaries are so skittish they must be the hardest, common mammal, to photograph in the Pantanal). He could smell us and no doubt hear us but their eyesight is not very good, so he couldn't pick us out as we remained half hidden behind some vegetation, he would raise his hackles when we moved or made a noise and as soon as he realised roughly where we were he made a bee-line for the forest away from us. When we did catch up with everyone else they were watching a large group of 22 capybara walk around the edge of a lake as well as spotting a couple of common snipes (a new bird for the Embiara bird list), then all of a sudden the capybara barked in alarm and darted into the water, we all scanned the tree line behind them but couldn't find any reason for the alarm (they probably spooked each other). We then had a trio of red-and-green macaws fly over our heads and over the lake, so we went off to see if we could find them. As we headed to where we thought they would be going we had a good view of a pair of blue-and-yellow macaws as well as a very close sighting of a female brown-brocket deer. We then arrived at a fruiting fig tree and found 8 red-and-green macaws and the same 2 blue-and-yellow macaws feeding. This is an exceptional sight to see so many macaws, relaxed and feeding in a tree no more than 10m away from us. We watched them for 20 minutes or so before leaving and seeing what else we could find. However the weather had other ideas and the heavens opened up, with the rain came some lightning and we cut the walk short and headed back directly to the lodge and after some drying off lunch. During this midday break the clouds parted and Rhoda and Joe enjoyed a playful performance from the two nesting hyacinth macaws in the lodge complex. Then in the afternoon we loaded up the jeep and took to the trails again, we were not long out of the lodge when we saw a feeding group of blue-and-yellow macaws, we watched before they all left and gave us a very low and impressive fly-by. We were also delayed a little while on the main cattle highway that cuts through the ranches (making moving the hundreds and thousands of cattle easier) as a large group of peccaries (around 60 individuals) crossed the road in front of us. Running over one by one they made a funny looking convoy, ranging in size from 40cm long to 1m and some with hackles raised, some gnashing their teeth and some seemingly relaxed by the whole process. After we were allowed to continue we were all stunned when we spotted a heavily pregnant tapir standing motionless in the middle of a grassy field in broad daylight. We stopped and watched as she looked all around her and was not in any rush to move on. She may well have been having a break as she must be close to full term and the extra weight must have been exhausting her. So we sat there and had unbelievable views of this calm and relaxed tapir in bright sunshine in the open until we carried on her way and back towards the forest. The other notable sighting we had this afternoon was a large number of crab-eating foxes, we spotted a couple of adult pairs as well as quite a few offspring, probably looking to start their own territories and exploring the land together for protection. We then arrived at the huge (140km) long flooding field, this purposely designed field stretches across all the ranches in the area and takes away the majority of the flood water away from the other pastures and buildings. In fact this whole field is underneath 1.5m of water (in a normal year) and becomes a fish nursery for piranha, freshwater stingrays and dorado as well as hundreds of other fish species. The water is also crystal clear and Paul's son Stefan (who manages Embiara for most of the year) says that the snorkelling here is exceptional! We watched the sunset from here and watched as a male greater rhea chased away a couple of crab-eating foxes. The male rheas incubate the eggs and guard the chicks in a large communal nest and then crèche, so judging by his behaviour there will probably be a clutch of large white eggs somewhere in the field. We also had a group of 9 coatis foraging in the field in front of the vehicle and they all remained very calm as Martin approached them for some close up photographs. When the sun had finally set beyond the distant trees we turned on the spotlight and began the journey back to the lodge. Tonight there was nothing of note, just the usual nightjars hugging the road until the vehicle was almost on top of them, then they take off into the night. And potoos, identified by their eye-shine around 30cm above the top of fence posts. When we returned to the lodge we had another great meal and discussed what we would be doing tomorrow.



Day 12 **Embiara Lodge**

Wildlife Watching

This morning we enjoyed a boat trip along a section of the Pantanal's own Rio Negro. Separated by 100's of kilometres from the more famous Rio Negro in the Amazon, but both rivers gain their names from the high concentration of tannins in the water. These bitter chemicals are realised by vegetation (particularly in leaves) and turn the water a dark brown (almost black) colour. This morning we were in the capable hands of Joalson who would navigate the shallow waters whilst the ever alert Rodrigo and Martin would be searching for wildlife. The first difference we noticed from this river to the rivers we were used to travelling down in the north was that there were so many caiman basking on the shores of the river. This is mainly because there are less jaguars here so the caiman are not so heavily preyed upon. It was good to see so many of them (including some large ones) basking in the sun, here their beautiful yellow, green and brown markings are clearly visible. When you see their skin glistening in the sun it is easy to see why they were so popular for the illegal skin market. At its height in the 1970's and 1980's there were around 10 million caiman being harvested annually for export to Europe. Since 1990 they have been protected and their numbers are beginning to bounce back. As we slowly cruised the shallow river in almost silence with the electric motor, we spotted a male brown-brocket deer on the banks as well as some nesting black skimmers. These beautiful birds nest on the sand banks and have mottled eggs and perfectly camouflaged chicks that live in the open relying on the defensive nearby lapwings and their own plumage to avoid being predated. We also had a brief sighting of a neotropical otter, before having a quick break on a bend in the river. On the way back there was a problem with the petrol engine (used to get us back upstream) so we decided to travel further downstream to the neighbouring farm to Embiara, from there Paul would come and collect us. On the way there we spooked a capybara that alarm called before diving straight into the water in comical fashion. When we arrived at the farm we began the 300m walk to the main house, this farm was the first in the area and it is still occupied by the first pioneering family in the south of the Pantanal. It was a nice opportunity to meet some of the local farmers and see their traditional farm which was set up 150 years ago. But we had a couple of interesting encounters to deal with before we reached there, firstly we found fresh jaguar prints leading up the same pathway, they were fresh from this morning and lead to us looking in the nearby bushes for any sign of the big cat. But a genuine danger was just about to occur. We began to hear a thick droning noise, when Joalson and Rodrigo (who were leading the party) signalled for us to stand absolutely still and silent, all around us on the ground were hundreds and hundreds of killer bees. These hybrid bees are slowly but surely being bred out and exterminated but there are still several colonies and we had walked into one. The ground around us buzzed with the bees and they flew around and in between our feet and legs. We remained statue like for a couple of minutes until they moved off a few meters away and we began to move very slowly and carefully towards the farm house. Well that was an experience and thanks to us being silent and the strong wind masking our footsteps we all escaped without as much as a single sting! It Wasn't long before Paul collected us and we hooked the boat up to the trailer and headed back to the lodge for lunch. After lunch Joe and Martin headed to the stable for a horse back safari, Rhoda would stay behind at the lodge and rest this afternoon, taking advantage of the prolific birdlife around the lodge to get some pictures. Joe and Martin (with the superb guidance of Adalton and Rodrigo) enjoyed the late afternoon in the drainage field, as we slowly walked through the field we spotted a couple of diurnal yellow armadillos, one at a distance and the other close to the pathway before running down its burrow throwing sand up in defiance. We also saw some pampas deer and greater rheas around the huge field and many species of birds including southern lapwings, roadside hawks, cattle egrets, buff-necked ibis and the huge southern screamers. But we failed to see any giant anteaters that we were searching for here as they like to prowl the drainage field searching out the termite mounds that dot the grassland. For some reason there were very few giant anteater sightings this season, one reasonable explanation would be that due to the huge 80 year flood last year the water would have been so high that many ants and termites would have perished or were forced to establish their colonies on higher ground. Therefore they are yet to re-establish their distribution in the drainage field. But despite failing to see the last of the Pantanal Big Five (Jaguar, Giant Otter, Brazilian Tapir, Yellow Anaconda and Giant Anteater) we returned to the stables and watched the sun sink beneath the horizon before spotlighting on the way back to the lodge in time for dinner where we exchanged stories of the afternoon with Rhoda.



Day 13 **Embiara Lodge**

Wildlife Watching

This morning we started with a walk along the gallery forest that borders the Rio Negro. This is a great way to see the river and the forests that flood annually. Seeing how the various plants here are adapted to their semi-aquatic existence, some are able to almost switch off their roots, so that they only absorb water from their bark in order to not get too water logged. Overall walking through the forests was less productive in terms of wildlife sightings as wildlife is always harder to see inside forests; however it is a perfect way to experience the Pantanal from the animal's perspective. We took several short breaks along the banks of the river and even found fresh paca tracks from the night before, the paca is an intermediate of the agouti and capybara in size and has water spots and stripes over a ochre body. Being strictly nocturnal they are seldom ever seen and due to being very tasty they have been hunted throughout their range and so are very elusive where they still do live. It was also great to walk along the beaches and see the caiman from the land, gaining a real idea of the size of some of the larger 2m plus individuals. As we approached the lodge we stopped and had an hour or so at their riverside hide. We waited to see if the local otter family would come swimming by or if a jaguar would come and take a drink. However during this hour we were spoilt by the birdlife and lots of caiman catching fish. As the temperature began to rise and the middle of the day approached we completed our journey to the lodge for lunch. After lunch we headed out to the drainage field in search of giant anteaters again in the jeep. But shortly after leaving the lodge complex a nine-banded armadillo crossed the road and scurried off into the forest. This is the second armadillo species we have seen on this tour and the more unusual as they are usually nocturnal, so to see one in the day in the open is very unusual. The sighting was fleeting but a good omen as our luck was up so maybe today would be the day we spot an anteater. Along the day we had a huge group of white-lipped peccaries cross the road and some blue-and-yellow macaw feeding all before we reached the first gate. Once we arrived at the drainage field we must have covered every blade of grass, with no sign of anteaters. But we did spot a couple of nice sightings, firstly a beautiful pampas deer stag that allowed us to get close enough for some great pictures against the setting sun. We also found a crested solitary eagle and a large flock of maguari storks some 13 strong. They were all aggregated with a couple of a jabiru storks, dozens of cattle egrets and some cocoi herons, great egrets, southern lapwings, lesser kiskadees and the odd rufescent tiger heron. This multi-species group were picking off the fish and amphibians that are hanging on to survival in the last remaining pockets of water. This normally solitary bird has not been seen in a flock of this size in Embiara before and no body could think of a possible explanation. After watching the sunset we started the journey back to the lodge and spotlighted a couple of crab-eating foxes, dozens of caiman and some greater potoos before arriving in time for dinner. Tomorrow we would go from broke and explore a couple of nearby farms in an attempt to complete our Pantanal Big Five and see a giant anteater, so for now we enjoyed the dinner and got some rest.

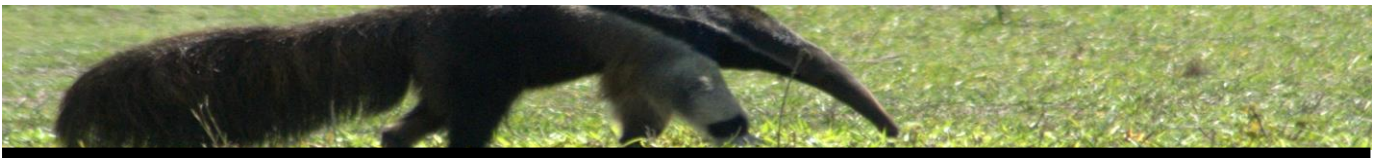
Day 14 **Embiara Lodge**

Wildlife Watching

Today we started earlier than usual and went for a drive before breakfast, the temperature was much cooler so we may run into a puma or jaguar on an early morning patrol of their territories. We drove to one of the nearby salina to watch the sunrise high into the sky. After leaving the salina we arrived at a freshwater lake and saw a large male caiman displaying proudly, vibrating the large scutes on his back to ripple the water. We also spotted a very curious crab-eating fox on the fringes of the lake, we sat and watched him as he foraged and ate a few palm nuts that were on the ground. Proving that it is not just crabs that tickle this foxes palette. Then as we returned to the lodge to have breakfast we were treated to great views of red-and-green macaws and a very loud group of black howler monkeys close to the lodge. This was the best view we had of howler monkeys as they were only around 20m away and the light was superb as the group of 1 adult male, 3 adult females and 1 juvenile climbed down from their canopy perch to a lower tree out of view. After breakfast we walked to the riverside hide to relax and spend the morning watching the wildlife around the Rio Negro. This was a very peaceful place to spend the day and we watched a mini feeding frenzy from the caiman as they feasted on a passing shoal of fish. The pied lapwings also provided endless entertainment as they loudly and vigorously chased intruders from their patch every few minutes. We also had a visit from a rare aplomado falcon, who came and perched in a tree above the hide, this seldom seen falcon was a great spot and one that rewarded us with great close up photographs. We retired back to the lodge for lunch and in the afternoon went out on a longer game drive which would take us across a couple of different properties and to some more intensively farmed ranches (where the forests are in a bad way compared to Embiara, but the open areas are good for termites so hopefully a giant anteater too. We first arrived at Fazenda San Pedro and were met by a large group of white-lipped peccaries. But as this farm has cleared much of its forest in favour of better grazing for its cattle the land is drier here and without any anteaters the chances of seeing any large mammals was small. So we



left for a larger ranch (complete with one of the local schools) which has more of the natural vegetation and so a better chance of more wildlife. We were beginning to think that we wouldn't see a giant anteater on this tour, which would be a shame as you usually see a couple nearly every time you visit the drainage field. But just as we were beginning to get a little disappointed we saw a small group of collared peccaries cross the road and head into thick and thorny bush next to the side of the road. This is a smaller peccary than the white-lipped and is much harder to see, so this sighting alone (not to mention many hyacinth macaws that we saw whilst driving around Fazenda Campo Novo) more than made up for the lack of anteaters. We arrived back in on Embiara's land via the drainage field and after another spectacular sunset. On the way back to the lodge after dark we spotlighted a male tapir walking alongside the vehicle on the main cattle driving road. This was a great sighting to end the day but we were in for a further tapir sighting when Rodrigao the tapir paid us another visit just after dinner. In fact Rhoda very nearly walked into Rodrigao as he crossed the path close to the cottages. We decided that as tomorrow is the last half day we have in Embiara we would start early (before breakfast like today) and make the most of the last few hours we have in this amazing private wildlife haven.



Day 15 **Embiara Lodge & Cuiaba**

Wildlife Watching & Travelling

This morning we were awoken with very loud thunderclaps and blinding lightening bolts from around 3am, unfortunately the storm had not cleared by the time we were due to come out. It was deemed too dangerous with sporadic lightening bolts still lighting up the sky and heavy rainfall. So we had breakfast as normal and waited to see if and when the storm would pass and we could go out. We also had to consider that our private flight out of Embiara and to Campo Grande could also be in doubt, so we also kept an ear out on the radio for updates on the air-taxi operations. But we were about to find out that the storm was a blessing in disguise as Martin spotted a pale animal running about 100m away in the field. At first it looked like a yellow armadillo until the darker markings on its back and flank were noticed and the shape of the lesser anteater (or tamandua) came clearly into view. So we all braved the rain and went out to see this incredible little creature. The lesser tamandua was moving towards a small copse whilst constantly searching for any ants or termites. Then after a very loud clap of thunder the tamandua sped off towards the trees and we decided to head back to the dining room and out of the rain. The rest of the morning was spent in the main lodge building as the rain didn't let up enough for us to enjoy a drive, however on the plus side our air-taxi was due to arrive at the airstrip at around 2pm, so we would comfortably make the return flight to Cuiaba. Whilst waiting and relaxing in the main lodge we noticed that the tamandua was paying us a visit. This particular female has been seen around the lodge before and loves to sleep in a tall tree in the middle of the complex and we were not surprised to see her waddle back and climb a small palm, ripping leaves and searching for any food only 1m away from us. She then continued climbing and transferred to a much taller tree by skilfully climbing up an overhanging branch and with the speed and agility of a primate she was 20m up in no time and into the canopy of the tree to spend the rest of the day relaxing.

Well it wasn't a giant anteater but at least we saw an anteater whilst here in the Pantanal. The rest of the morning was uneventful as we awaited the plane to arrive. When we did load the plane up and depart the lodge we would only be able to travel to Aquiduaana as the storm was still quite bad over Campo Grande. This equated to an hour transfer by vehicle and would only add another 30 minutes to the journey and therefore not cause a problem in catching our return flight. But just as all the best movies the best was saved for last, on the flight out our pilot flew very low (around 30m off the ground) and we saw an incredible 6 giant anteaters! All of them well farther south of Embiara and closer to Campo Grande and the higher ground. Thus making it easier to understand why we hadn't seen any. So in the end our final day in the Pantanal brought us 7 anteaters and 2 different species! What a great way to finish. After landing in Aquiduaana we were transferred by Jefferson to Campo Grande and after the short return flight north we arrived in Cuiaba and checked back into the hotel for our last night in Brazil.

Day 16 **Home**

Departure

This morning Rhoda and Joe were transferred to the airport in time to catch their afternoon flight back to Sao Paulo and onwards to the US. There was just enough time to discuss some of the best parts of the tour before saying bye and heading our separate ways.

Species List

Pantanal Exploration / September 2012

Mammals (* = heard or signs only)

	Common Name	Binominal Name
1	Black howler monkey	<i>Alouatta fusca</i>
2	Black-striped tufted capuchin	<i>Aotus libidinosus</i>
3	Large fruit-eating bat	<i>Aritbeus jamaicensis</i>
4	Marsh deer	<i>Blastocercus dichotomous</i>
5	Crab-eating fox	<i>Cerdocyon thous</i>
6	Big-eared woolly bat	<i>Chrotopterus auritus</i>
7	Lowland paca	<i>Cuniculus paca</i>
8	Azara's agouti	<i>Dasyprocta azarae</i>
9	Nine-banded armadillo	<i>Dasypus novemcinctus</i>
11	Yellow armadillo	<i>Euphractus sexcinctus</i>
12	Capybara	<i>Hydrochaeris hydrochaeris</i>
13	Ocelot	<i>Leopardus pardalis</i>
14	Oncilla	<i>Leopardus tigrinus</i>
15	Neotropical otter	<i>Lontra longicaudis</i>
16	Red-brocket deer	<i>Mazama americana</i>
17	Brown-brocket deer	<i>Mazama gouazoubria</i>
18	Giant anteater	<i>Myrmecophaga tridactyla</i>
19	South American coati	<i>Nasua nasua</i>
20	Lesser bulldog bat	<i>Noctilio albiventris</i>
21	Greater bulldog bat	<i>Noctilio leporinus</i>
22	Pampas deer	<i>Ozotoceros bezoarticus</i>
23	Jaguar	<i>Panthera onca</i>
24	Collared peccary	<i>Pecari tajacu</i>
25	Crab-eating raccoon	<i>Procyon cancrivorus</i>
26	Giant otter	<i>Pteronura brasiliensis</i>
27	Feral pig	<i>Sus scrofa</i>
28	Southern tamandua	<i>Tamandua tetradactyla</i>
29	Brazilian tapir	<i>Tapirus terrestris</i>
30	White-lipped peccary	<i>Tayassu pecari</i>

SEPTEMBER														
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31	Common round-eared bat	<i>Tonatia bidens</i>
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Birds (* = heard or signs only)

	Common Name	Binominal Name
1	Blue-throated piping guan	<i>Aburria cumanensis</i>
2	Grey-bellied hawk	<i>Accipiter poliogaster</i>
3	Spotted sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularius</i>
4	Bay-winged cowbird	<i>Agelaioides badius</i>
5	Unicoloured blackbird	<i>Agelasticus cyanopus</i>
6	Blue-fronted parrot	<i>Amazona aestiva</i>
7	Orange-winged parrot	<i>Amazona amazonica</i>
8	Yellow-crowned amazon	<i>Amazona ochrocephala</i>
9	Brazilian teal	<i>Amazonetta brasiliensis</i>
10	Scarlet-headed blackbird	<i>Amblyramphus holosericeus</i>
11	Southern screamer	<i>Anhima cornuta</i>
12	American Anhinga	<i>Anhinga anhinga</i>
13	Hyacinth macaw	<i>Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus</i>
14	Blue-and-yellow macaw	<i>Ara ararauna</i>
15	Red-and-green macaw	<i>Ara chloropterus</i>
16	Grey-necked wood-rail	<i>Aramides cajanea</i>
17	Limpkin	<i>Aramus guarauna</i>
18	Peach-fronted parakeet	<i>Aratinga aurea</i>
19	White-eyed parakeet	<i>Aratinga leucophthalma</i>
20	Dusky-headed parakeet	<i>Aratinga weddellii</i>
21	Great egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
22	Cocoi heron	<i>Ardea cocoi</i>
23	White-headed marsh-tyrant	<i>Arundinicola leucocephala</i>
24	Burrowing owl	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>
25	Yellow-chevroned parakeet	<i>Brotogeris chiriri</i>
26	Great-horned owl	<i>Bubo virginianus</i>
27	Cattle egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
28	Crowned solitary eagle	<i>Buteogallus coronatus</i>
29	Black-collared hawk	<i>Buteogallus nigricollis</i>

SEPTEMBER														
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	6	1	3	2	8	4	15	1	2	2			4	1

30	Great black hawk	<i>Buteogallus urubitinga</i>
31	Striated heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>
32	Yellow-rumped cacique	<i>Cacicus cela</i>
33	Red-rumped cacique	<i>Cacicus haemorrhous</i>
34	Muscovy duck	<i>Cairina moschata</i>
35	Green-barred woodpecker	<i>Caloptes melanochloros</i>
36	Cream-backed woodpecker	<i>Campephilus leucopogon</i>
37	Red-billed scythebill	<i>Campylorhamphus trochilirostris</i>
38	Thrush-like wren	<i>Campylorhynchus turdinus</i>
39	Southern crested-caracara	<i>Caracara plancus</i>
40	Red-legged seriema	<i>Cariama cristata</i>
41	Rufous casiornis	<i>Casiornis rufus</i>
42	Turkey vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>
43	Lesser yellow-headed culture	<i>Cathartes burrovianus</i>
44	Greater yellow-headed vulture	<i>Cathartes melambrotus</i>
45	Blond-crested woodpecker	<i>Celeus flavescens</i>
46	Pale-crested woodpecker	<i>Celeus lugubris</i>
47	Collared plover	<i>Charadrius collaris</i>
48	American pygmy kingfisher	<i>Chloroceryle aenea</i>
49	Amazon kingfisher	<i>Chloroceryle amazona</i>
50	Green kingfisher	<i>Chloroceryle americana</i>
51	Green-and-rufous kingfisher	<i>Chloroceryle inda</i>
52	Hook-billed kite	<i>Chondrohierax uncinatus</i>
53	Chestnut-capped blackbird	<i>Chrysomus ruficapillus</i>
54	Black-banded owl	<i>Ciccaba huhula</i>
55	Maguari stork	<i>Ciconia maguari</i>
56	Campo flicker	<i>Colaptes campestris</i>
57	Feral pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>
58	Picui ground dove	<i>Columbina picui</i>
59	Scaled dove	<i>Columbina squammata</i>
60	Ruddy ground-dove	<i>Columbina talpacoti</i>
61	Chestnut-vented conebill	<i>Conirostrum speciosum</i>
62	Black vulture	<i>Coragyps atratus</i>
63	Red-pleated finch	<i>Corphospingus cucullatus</i>
64	Bare-faced currawong	<i>Crax fasciolata</i>
65	Smooth-billed ani	<i>Crotophaga ani</i>
66	Greater ani	<i>Crotophaga major</i>
67	Undulated tinamou	<i>Crypturellus undulatus</i>

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68	Plush-crested jay	<i>Cyanocorax chrysops</i>
69	Purplish jay	<i>Cyanocorax cyanomedas</i>
70	Black caracara	<i>Daptrius ater</i>
71	Black-bellied whistling duck	<i>Dendrocygna autumnalis</i>
72	White-faced whistling duck	<i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>
73	Banded antbird	<i>Dichrozana cincta</i>
74	Red-shouldered macaw	<i>Diopsittaca nobilis</i>
75	Black-capped donacobia	<i>Donacobius atricapilla</i>
76	Lineated woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus lienatus</i>
77	Little blue heron	<i>Egretta caerulea</i>
78	Snowy egret	<i>Egretta thula</i>
79	Sunbittern	<i>Eurypyga helias</i>
80	Aplomado falcon	<i>Falco femoralis</i>
81	Bat falcon	<i>Falco ruficularis</i>
82	Black-backed water-tyrant	<i>Fluvicola albiventer</i>
83	Pale-legged hornero	<i>Furnarius leucopous</i>
84	Rufous hornero	<i>Furnarius rufus</i>
85	Rufous-tailed jacamar	<i>Gallbula ruficauda</i>
86	South American snipe	<i>Gallinago paraguayiae</i>
87	Pearl Kite	<i>Gampsonyx swainsonii</i>
88	Ruddy quail-dove	<i>Geotrygon montana</i>
89	Ferruginous pygmy owl	<i>Glaucidium brasilianum</i>
90	Chopi blackbird	<i>Gnorimopsar chopi</i>
91	Guira cuckoo	<i>Guira guira</i>
92	Sungrebe	<i>Heliornis fulica</i>
93	Laughing falcon	<i>Herpetotheres cachinnans</i>
94	Savanna hawk	<i>Heterospizias meridionalis</i>
95	Black-necked stilt	<i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>
96	Scissor-tailed nightjar	<i>Hydropsalis torquata</i>
97	Uniformed woodcreeper	<i>Hylexetastes perrotii</i>
98	Gilded sapphire	<i>Hylocharis chrysura</i>
99	Orange-backed troupial	<i>Icterus croconatus</i>
100	Jabiru	<i>Jabiru mycteria</i>
101	Wattled jacana	<i>Jacana jacana</i>
102	Narrow-billed woodcreeper	<i>Lepidocolaptes angustirostris</i>
103	Grey-fronted dove	<i>Leptotila rufaxilla</i>
104	White-tipped dove	<i>Leptotila verreauxi</i>
105	Cattle tyrant	<i>Machetornis rixosa</i>

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	7	1		13	9	8	8	9	4	1	11	2	1	

106	Ringed kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle torquata</i>
107	Yellow-fronted woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes flavifrons</i>
108	Green ibis	<i>Mesembrinibis cayennensis</i>
109	Collared forest falcon	<i>Micrastur semitorquatus</i>
110	Yellow-headed caracara	<i>Milvago chimachima</i>
111	Chalk-billed mockingbird	<i>Mimus saturninus</i>
112	Shiny cowbird	<i>Molothrus bonariensis</i>
113	Giant cowbird	<i>Molothrus oryzivorus</i>
114	Blue-crowned motmot	<i>Momotus momota</i>
115	Black-fronted nunbird	<i>Monasa nigrifrons</i>
116	Wood stork	<i>Mycteria americana</i>
117	Swainson's flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus swainsoni</i>
118	Gray elaenia	<i>Myiopagis gaimardii</i>
119	Monk parakeet	<i>Myiopsitta monachus</i>
120	Nanday parakeet	<i>Nandayus nenday</i>
121	Great potoo	<i>Nyctibius grandis</i>
122	Common potoo	<i>Nyctibius griseus</i>
123	Black-crowned night-heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
124	Common pauraque	<i>Nyctidormus albicollis</i>
125	Band-tailed nightjar	<i>Nyctiprogne leucopyga</i>
126	Chaco chachalaca	<i>Ortalis canicollis</i>
127	Blackish rail	<i>Pardirallus nigricans</i>
128	Yellow-billed cardinal	<i>Paroaria capitata</i>
129	House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
130	Pale-vented dove	<i>Patagioenas cayennensis</i>
131	Picazuro pigeon	<i>Patagioenas picaxuro</i>
132	Plumbeous pigeon	<i>Patagioenas plumbea</i>
133	Ruddy pigeon	<i>Patagioenas subvinacea</i>
134	Rusty-margined guan	<i>Penelope superciliaris</i>
135	Large-billed tern	<i>Phaetusa simplex</i>
136	Neotropical cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax brasilianus</i>
137	Lesser kiskadee	<i>Philohydor lictor</i>
138	Bare-faced ibis	<i>Phimosus infiscatus</i>
139	Squirrel cuckoo	<i>Piaya cayana</i>
140	Capped heron	<i>Pilherodius pileatus</i>
141	Scaly-headed parrot	<i>Pionus maximillani</i>
142	Great kiskadee	<i>Pitangus sulphuratus</i>
143	Roseate spoonbill	<i>Platalea ajaja</i>

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		7	3	4	1	2		1		16		8	2	
			~5				1							
				1	1	2							1	
	10	10	8	7	8	10				1	5	3	2	
		44	54	11	124	61			76	10	12			
	12	29	21	22	49	22	14	3	4	7	8	12		
	7		3	2	4	26		4	28	31	10	1	21	
		2		1		1					1		1	
	3		1			1	1							
	2												2	
	3	5	4	4	5	3			1					
	1	1	9		6		1	1	4	2	3	3	8	~10

144	Nacunda nighthawk	<i>Podager nacunda</i>
145	Purple gallinule	<i>Porphyrio martinicus</i>
146	Golden-collared macaw	<i>Primolius auricollis</i>
147	Solitary-black cacique	<i>Procacicus solitarius</i>
148	Grey-breasted martin	<i>Progne chalybea</i>
149	Brown-chested martin	<i>Progne tapera</i>
150	Crested oropendola	<i>Psarocolius decumanus</i>
151	Caatinga cacholote	<i>Pseudoseisura cristata</i>
152	Rufous cacholote	<i>Pseudoseisura unirufa</i>
153	Blue-and-white swallow	<i>Pygochelidon cyanoleuca</i>
154	Chestnut-eared aracari	<i>Pteroglossus castanotis</i>
155	Orange-cheeked parrot	<i>Pyrilia barrabandi</i>
156	Vermillion flycatcher	<i>Pyrocephalus rubinus</i>
157	Toco toucan	<i>Ramphastos toco</i>
158	Silver-beaked tanager	<i>Ramphocelus carbo</i>
159	Greater rhea	<i>Rhea americana</i>
160	Snail kite	<i>Rostrhamus sociabilis</i>
161	Roadside hawk	<i>Rupornis magnirostris</i>
162	Black skimmer	<i>Rynchops niger</i>
163	Greyish saltator	<i>Saltator coerulescens</i>
164	Chotoy spinetail	<i>Schoeniophylax phryganophilus</i>
165	Saffron finch	<i>Sicalis flaveola</i>
166	Olivaceous woodcreeper	<i>Sittasomus griseicapillus</i>
167	Southern rough-winged swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx ruficollis</i>
168	Yellow-billed tern	<i>Sternula supercilaris</i>
169	Yellow-chinned spinetail	<i>Synallaxis rutilans</i>
170	Whistling heron	<i>Syrigma sibilatrix</i>
171	Least grebe	<i>Tachybaptus dominicus</i>
172	White-winged swallow	<i>Tachycineta albiventer</i>
173	White-rumped swallow	<i>Tachycineta leucorrhoa</i>
174	Striped cuckoo	<i>Tapera naevia</i>
175	Great antshrike	<i>Taraba major</i>
176	Plumbeous ibis	<i>Theristicus caerulescens</i>
177	Buff-necked ibis	<i>Theristicus caudatus</i>
178	Palm tanager	<i>Thraupis palmarum</i>
179	Rufescent-tiger heron	<i>Tigrisoma lineatus</i>
180	Masked tityra	<i>Tityra semifasciata</i>
181	Solitary sandpiper	<i>Tringa solitaria</i>

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		~10	12	16	6	6								
	2	12	3	9		9	2				14			
	1	145	135	87	110	94	21	2				3	2	
		4	1			2	2	3	7	7	5	4	5	3
				1				4				2		
									1	1			1	
						2								
		1					3			1				
		2												
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	2	3	3	2	2	3	4	8	6	2	2	2	9	
	1		1	2		2	23			3	3		~30	
	14						4	14	1	4	2	20	16	
	1	1			1				1				1	
	2	1	2	1	3	2	2		3	5	3	3	6	1
		13	28	20	14	5		1	2		2	3	1	
	5	1			1	1	4				2			
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		17	30	22	41	20	7				10	2	4	
		6	17	10	11	10				1	1	3		
				2										
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	3	54	39	52	52	34	40				8	2		
		4	7	6	7	4								
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		1	2	1					1	3	2	2	8	

