

2023 | Author: Jens Bokelaar



Travel report Brazil 2022

Mammals

Travel report Brazil

2022

Mammals

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Introduction

First things first I have separate some of the more anecdotal bits from the more functional parts. This is done by putting the anecdotal parts in italic.

In 2022 I travelled to south eastern Brazil with the main targets being the lion tamarins. They always had a special place in my heart and as a child it was the mammal I wanted to see once in my life and as a child it seemed so impossible to see them. This interest came from all the conservation efforts that I was told about in zoos and as well as my children's encyclopedia. Now to the more important stuff.

I traveled on my own through Brazil and rented a car for the whole period. *My plan was to meet up with some people I emailed via mammalwatching.com but sadly my plans changed and there was too inconvenient to meet up. This is partially because the golden lion tamarin project changed their reopening date multiple times and because I had the luck to get two flat tires in the middle of nowhere.* Because I traveled on my own, drove everywhere on my own and woke up at sunset every morning I took only very little time to search for mammals at night. Still, I am happy with what I have seen in the 29 days (March & April) I was there. During my travels I mostly booked my hostels one day before arriving. For some places like Caraca I would recommend to reserve in advance, same for guides.

One very short observation: I spend a lot of time in the habitat of the red howler monkeys but I neither saw nor heard them the whole time. I do not know if their population did have a really bad time during the yellow fever outbreak or that they always were very uncommon.

My polarsteps:

[Polarsteps](#)

(Pictures and road map)

My observations:

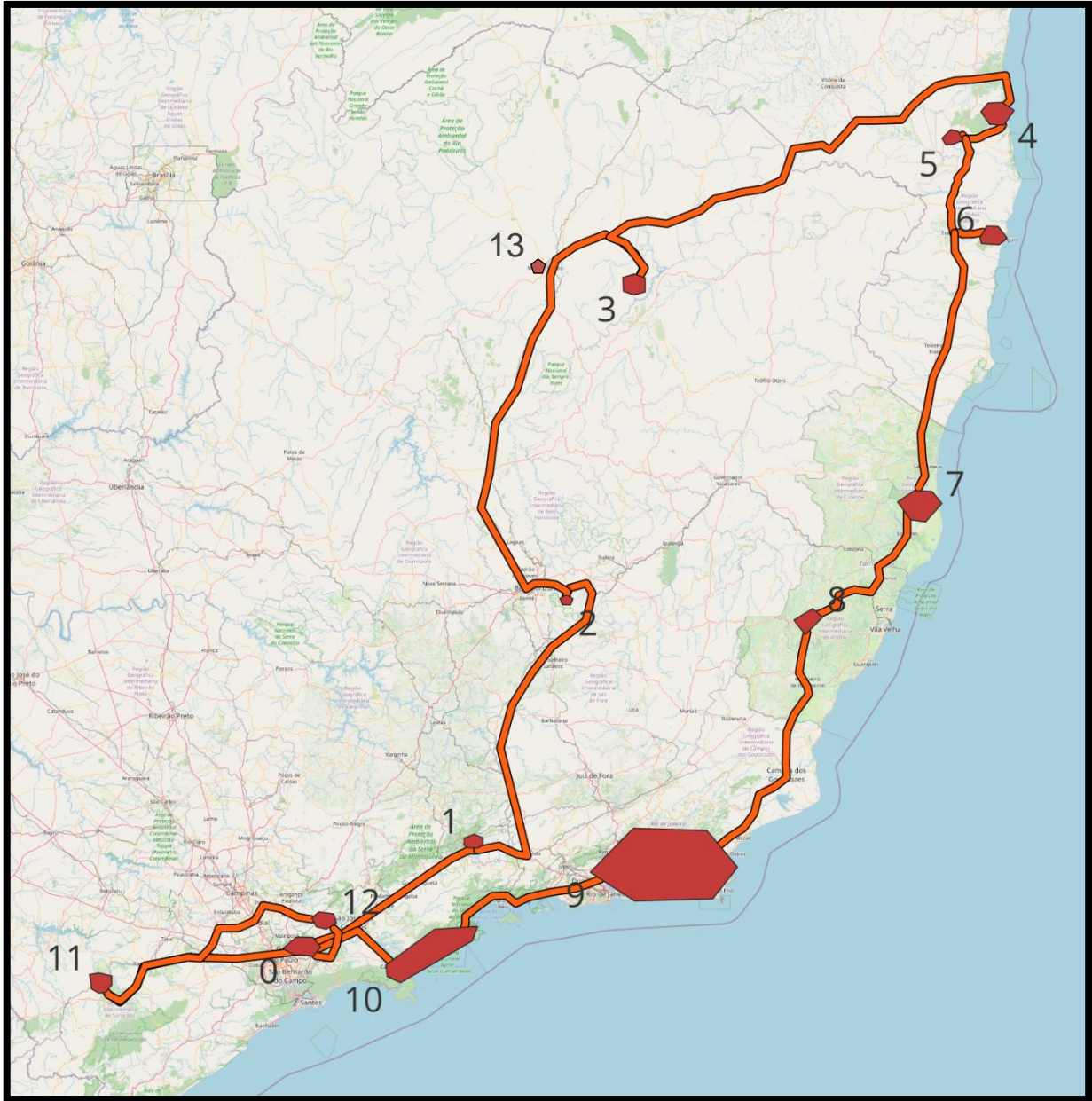
[Observation](#)

(Complete bird & mammal list)

[Inaturalist](#)

(I have some species on here I haven't uploaded to observation mostly plant species)

Feel free to ask any questions



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Travel experience

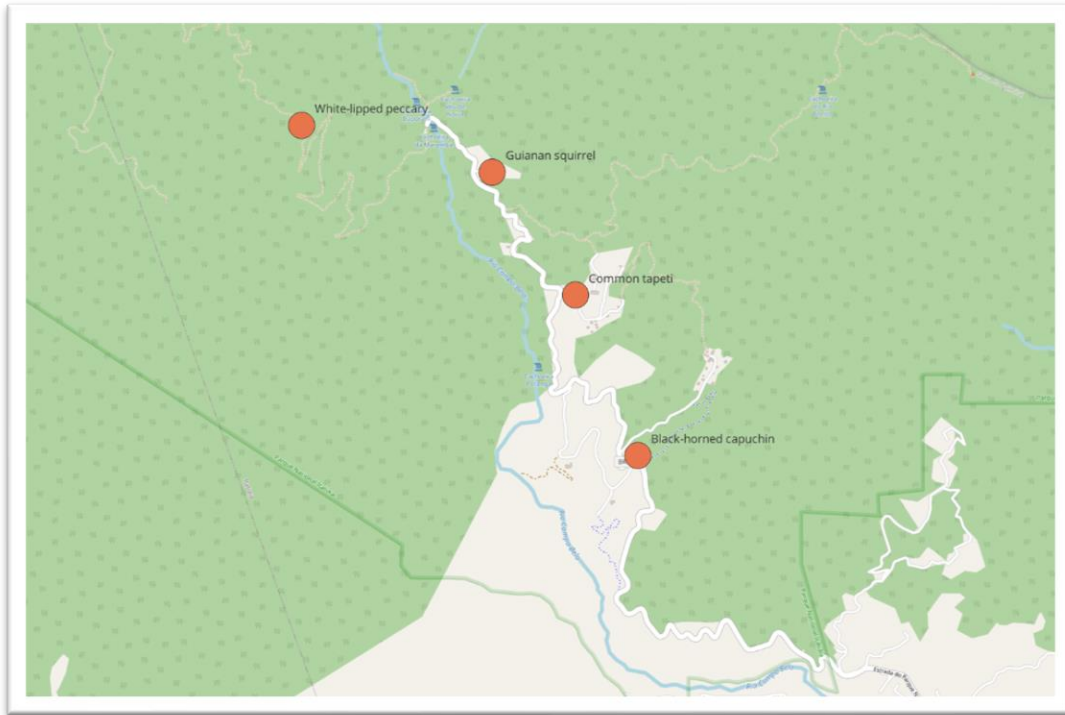
Ilattiaia



Species list

1. Common tapeti
2. Guianan squirrel
3. White-lipped peccary
4. Black-horned capuchin

Sylvilagus brasiliensis
Sciurus aestuans
Tayassu pecari
Sapajus nigrinus



Travellog

The first stop on the travel schedule was this beautiful reserve. It is the oldest national park of Brazil. I found some really cool species here some I haven't seen during the rest of my travels.

First night in the park I did do a 45 minute night walk from the main road to tres picos past the old hostel. I did not see any mammals until the last 5 minutes when I saw something through the thermal scope. This was in a garden in between the houses in the park. It turned out to be a **common tapeti**. It was calmly foraging on the grass and was good to see in the thermal and when I got closer I could see it in the flashlight for a few second before it scampered off.

Next day I went for a long walk up the mountain past hotel do Ype. I didn't see a lot until late morning when I heard some rustling quite a big distance off. Getting closer and closer it seemed that there were a lot of animals loudly browsing through the forest underground. When I went off the path down in the underbrush I saw a big shape walking past and soon after a few loud shrieks I knew it was a big group of **peccaries**. It was quite a big group and was lucky enough to see a few individuals waddle past in the underbrush about 20 meters away. I was really happy with that. From there I went to the Hotel do Ype to see the **guianan squirrels** that hang around the hotel.

During two night drives on the main road searching for some mammals I did sadly enough find not anything.

On the way out of the park I stopped at multiple spots to take some quick looks around and this paid off. There was some movement in the trees and a really big family of **black-horned capuchins** past very close by.

Practical

There is an entrance fee but it is not too much. Best thing is to find a place to stay in the park so you can stay at night and get up early. There is no supermarket inside the park and the restaurant in the hotel was not always open when I stayed in the park. I did not stay at hotel but found a nice place to stay via Airbnb.

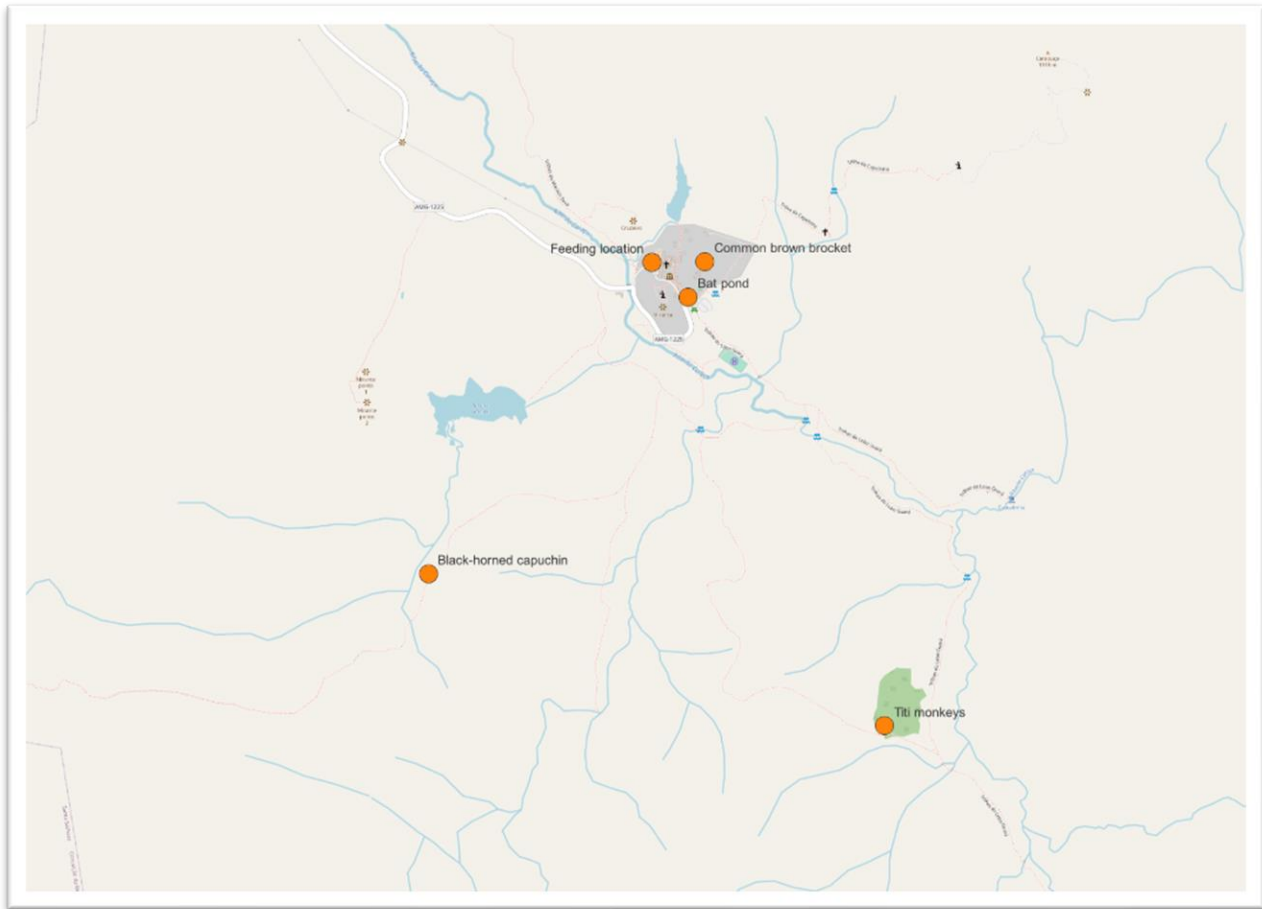


Caraças



Species list

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Crab-eating fox | <i>Cerdocyon thous</i> |
| 2. Lowland tapir | <i>Tapirus terrestris</i> |
| 3. Black-fronted titi | <i>Callicebus nigrifrons</i> |
| 4. Black-horned capuchin | <i>Sapajus nigritus</i> |
| 5. Maned wolf | <i>Chrysocyon brachyurus</i> |
| 6. Big-eared opossum | <i>Didelphis aurita</i> |
| 7. Common brown brocket | <i>Mazama gouazoubira</i> |



Travel log

Caraças is a well-known place and I won't write too much about it. I think you can read loads about it in different reports. Some pointers if you want to see the Maned wolf you definitely should stay the night.

On the way to the park I found a dead **Big-eared opossum** with babies. On the mountains surrounding the area there are some groups of **titi monkeys** that can be heard throughout the valley in the morning and there are also some **Black-horned capuchins** around. I saw the capuchins in the forest on the way to the river if you take the track before you pass the bridge.

At night the meat will be set outside the church and can attract **Molina's hog-nosed skunk**, **Crab-eating fox**, **Lowland tapir** and **Maned wolf**. I would highly recommend also walking around the grass areas around the church because at night there are **common brown brocket** deer around. I also saw another or the same maned wolf after the feeding around the church during my walk. There is also a small pond at the parking area and at nights there are loads off bats flying around at night.

About the Maned wolf it does not show up every night so you are not guaranteed to see it if you stay one night. I have seen more than the one tapir during the feeding but I don't know how common it is to see them here and both are amazing animals so I would say it is well worth it to stay multiple days in this quiet little valley.

Practical

If possible, try to get a reservation in advance. Especially during the holidays, it is very busy. But if you do not get a reservation online and you still want to give it a try just go there and ask at the reception. That is what I did and there was still a room available for me.



Lapa Grande State Park



Species list

1. Black-tufted-ear Marmoset *Callithrix penicillata*

Travellog

I stayed in Monte Carlos before reaching Botumirim because I was too tired to get to Botumirim in one go. In the morning I made use of this situation to go to the local nature reserve early in the morning before moving on. A few meters before the entrance off the park a family of Black tufted-ear marmoset crossed a tree above the road but this was all the mammals I got to see that day.

Botumurim

Travellog

Personally I did not see any mammals here but I asked 2 quite knowledgeable guides that say **rock cavy** or *Kerodon rupestris* can be found in this area. It is also an area with some good guides because of the blue-eyed ground dove so if you really want to they probably would be able to help and show you around.

Ilheus



How to get there

Travel log

After reading about Pousada do mar I definitely wanted to stay there but it was a bit disappointing. There is a lot of construction going on directly next to the hotel and when I asked about the monkeys, they said they rarely see them. They don't seem to feed them any more either. I also took one day to rest here and only walked around in the forest directly behind the hotel to see if I could find any animals and I really hoped to find the lion tamarins but no monkeys.

Otherwise, I think I got nothing new to report, try to get a guide for the best experience. Meeting point with the guide would probably be:

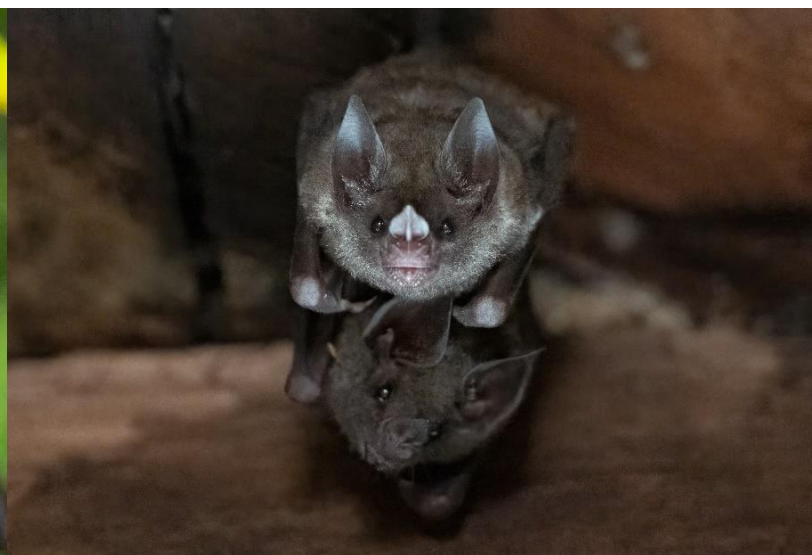
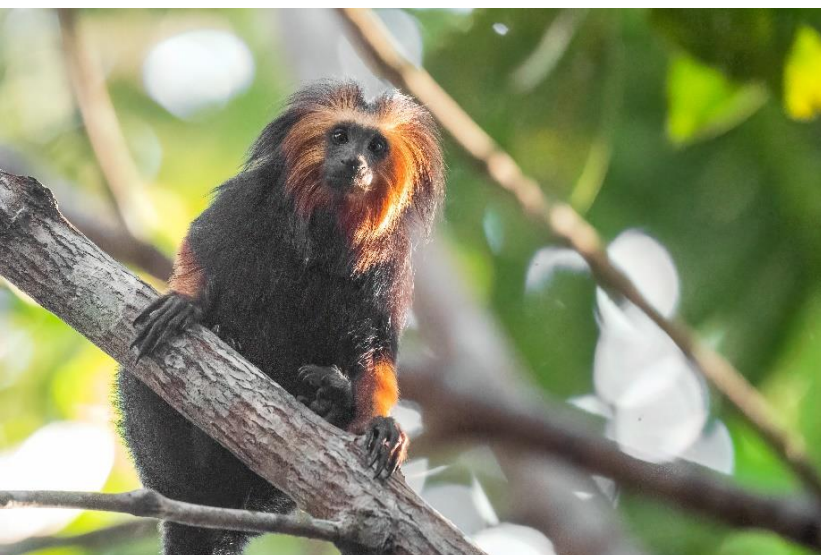
<https://goo.gl/maps/BwGQKr49u5xf4dF6>

The golden headed lion tamarin was the first lion tamarin species for me and I was really pumped to see it. I had seen it in a zoo in Munster, Germany once and I knew they are so beautiful. But we got off to a bad start. The location to meet up was a vague description of km point and a dirt road that would fork off in two direction. No google map location, I also did not have any reception. Luckily I remembered there was a description in the mammalwatching report of John. I finally deduced the location and arrived I think 1,5 hours late. Binho would be my guide for the day. He is amazing and he has a special love for the yellow-breasted capuchin. Arriving late sadly enough this meant we were to late to see the lion tamarins leave there sleeping spot. We saw all the monkey species in the end except the yellow-breasted capuchin but we heard them multiple times. The Lion tamarins we saw at the very end and that was a very exciting moment for me. We also saw the bats at old Una reserve house. We were lucky enough as well to

Species list

1. Maned Three-toed Sloth
2. Wied's Black-tufted-ear Marmoset
3. Yellow-breasted Capuchin
4. South-american Coati
5. Southern Bahian titi
6. Golden-headed Lion Tamarin
7. Seba's short-tailed Bat

Bradypus torquatus
Callithrix kuhlii
Sapajus xanthosternos
Nasua nasua
Callicebus melanochir (coastal black-handed)
Leontopithecus chrysomelas
Carollia perspicillata



Serra bonita



Species list

1. Tayra
2. South American Coati
3. Wied's black-tufted marmoset

Eira barbara
Nasua nasua
Callithrix kuhlii

What to do

Visit the reserve

Travel log

By pure luck I saw a tayra on my way up the road into the reserve. It was early in the morning and already really close to the reserve on the steep road. I just saw it very shortly but got a great view. Otherwise, it is a beautiful reserve and during the day I saw a Coati and a single family of marmosets as well.

Porto Seguro



Species list

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Crested Capuchin | <i>Sapajus robustus</i> | |
| 2. Collared peccary | <i>Pecari tajacu</i> | |
| 3. Common brown brocket | <i>Mazama gouazoubira</i> | |
| 4. Spotted paca | <i>Cuniculus paca</i> | |
| 5. Southern Bahian titi | <i>Callicebus melanochir</i> | (coastal black-handed) |
| 6. Guianan squirrel | <i>Sciurus aestuans</i> | |
| 7. Geoffroy's Tufted-ear Marmoset | <i>Callithrix geoffroyi</i> | |

What to do

- Visiting Reserva Estação Veracel
- Visiting Reserva Pau Brasil

Travel log

First I went one day to Pau Brasil because I thought Veracel would be closed on Sundays. You are not allowed to enter the park by car. It is possible to wait and get a 4x4 to drive you to one of the trail heads but I opted to walk into the park on the main road. Early in the morning I heard **titi monkeys (melanochir)** calling from quite a distance. No chance of seeing them. I also saw a big group of **Crested capuchin** around km 5. They were quite shy and really hard to track and the moment I went into the bush to try and get better views they gave alarm calls and took off. It was impossible to follow them through the underbrush. During the day I also twice got views off some collared peccary but I only saw them through the underbrush.

On the way back to my hotel room I passed via Veracel where I checked if there was some possibility to drive close to the park at night and found out that you can always enter the park because there is a public road crossing through Veracel. So, I went back at night and did some driving through the reserve. The payout for my effort was a spotted paca that wanted to cross the road right in front of the car and some common brown brocket deer that crossed the road.

The next morning, I went to Veracel and was again greeted by the sound of multiple groups of titi monkeys. I heard them in one of the clearings in the middle of the park. But no success off seeing them. I also saw a Guiana squirrel while walking.

After cleaning out my room and eating some lunch I went to the village of Porto Seguro to see if I could find Geoffrey's marmoset. This was because I saw on observado.org that there were some sightings in the area and I thought it might be my last chance of seeing this species. After searching for a long time, I found out they had a habituated family group in the garden area off the museo historico cultural de Porto Seguro. These are very used to people and are very relaxed.

Sooretama



Species list

1. Red-rumped Agouti
2. Collared Peccary
3. Geoffroy's Tufted-ear Marmoset
4. Crested capuchin
5. Masked titi

Dasyprocta leporina
Pecari tajacu
Callithrix geoffroyi
Sapajus robustus
Callicebus personatus

Travel log

I went to Vale for two days, the first day I went to the road north of the official entrance. Here you can drive a few km on an unpaved road until the forest starts.

<https://goo.gl/maps/VoxwqYNShigon8j19>

From here I walked onward until you leave the forest again and you are at a guard post where you are not allowed to go any further. The stretch of forest to the right and left of this road look very good. During my walk over this road I saw **collared peccaries** crossing the road and directly behind the peccary two **agoutis** were walking on the road around some puddles. I also saw some footprints off **tapirs** on the road here so they are present in the area as well.

From there I went to the official entrance. Here you are allowed to walk around a very small area in the park but it is still fun to go here as there are **crested capuchins** hanging around that are not shy at all. I saw them hanging around the little lake at around 3 o'clock. The next day I would also see a chilled-out group of **Geoffroy's marmoset**. At the entrance I fixed a guide for early the next morning so I could enter the park early in the morning. Since you are only allowed to enter at sun and go deeper into the park rise with a guide. For more info you might be able to contact: +5527999819115 the cost was 170 real

Early the next morning we went into the reserve but we did not see a lot of mammals. We heard some **masked titi monkeys** and got out of the car to search for them. This time we were lucky and were able to observe them for around 10 minutes before they moved on. During the day we also saw some more **agoutis** but activity of birds and mammals quickly stopped. After 10 o'clock we did almost hear or see nothing in the forest anymore



Mata dos Caetés



Species list

1. Buffy-headed Marmoset
2. Lesser grison

Callithrix flaviceps
Galictis cuja

What to do

- Go to Mata dos Caetés

Travel log

While mostly famous for the cherry throated tanager the area is also in the range off the really beautiful and unique looking **Buffy-headed marmoset**. For the visit to the reserve, you need to reserve in advance via contact details: Gustavo Magnago gmagnago@institutomarcosdaniel.org. He also knows another place where you can try and search to find the marmoset if you do not want to pay the expensive entrance fee to go to the reserve of the cherry throated tanager. But I don't know the exact location and how easy it is to see them at this other location since I was lucky enough to see the marmosets in the reserve during the first day. The guides there told me they do not see them every day so you need to be lucky to see them. The guides in the reserve are amazing and very knowledgeable, not only about the birds in the reserve but they also picked up on the calls of the marmoset and showed me some cool amphibians. At the end of the day when we went to leave the park just after the fence there was a **lesser grison** walking on the road in front of the car. The guides told me it hangs around in the reserve as well but it is very unpredictable so you cannot easily find it. Still nice to know they hang around the area

East of Rio de Janeiro



Species list

1. Common marmoset
2. Maned three-toed Sloth
3. Golden Lion Tamarin
4. Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth
5. Southern Muriqui
6. Capybara

Callithrix jacchus
Bradypus torquatus
Leontopithecus rosalia
Bradypus variegatus
Brachyteles arachnoides
Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris

What to do

- Visiting REGUA
- Visiting UNAMA

Travel log UNAMAR



During my trip I had some bad luck but in the end it turned in to some amazing good luck. I really wanted to see the golden lion tamarins it was the species that I already wanted to see since childhood. But sadly enough the golden lion tamarin research project closed down. During my travels the reserve planned to reopen 3 seperate times but in the end it was closed my entire stay. Fiona Reid advised me to try at Bom Retiro as the owner was said to have seen them in the reserve sometimes. But being there for a few days, it did not seem like a good spot for them and I did not see during my stay. I saw some marmosets here but the introduced species not the native one. On my way from the reserve to Nova Friburgo I drove up a small road and after some driving got the bad luck of having 2 flat tires at exactly the same time. So, I needed to walk down to Bon Retiro in a rainstorm in the night for 1.5 hours. At the end of the next day, I was

in Rio de Janeiro late in the evening to get a new car. But after the whole ordeal I was really excited about the next day because by some miracle the taxi driver how drove me back to Rio knew a place where it was possible to see the golden lion tamarin. This place is a small reserve north of Unamar.

North of Unamar you have Parque natural municipal mico leao dorado. It is a nature reserve directly against the urban area of Unamar but this small forest patch holds quite a few families of lion tamarins. I arrived quite late in the day I think around 12 o'clock and at first we waited at the park entrance. Here there are some groups that are used to humans and sometimes get bananas from the local people. Normally they come here early in the day and after waiting quite some time we decided to enter the park and search for the lion tamarins. During our wait at the entrance, we saw a **maned sloth** crossing the road and could see it very well. Once we drove into one of the side roads (the main road through the park is quite heavily used by the locals) we found a family group of the **golden lion tamarin** chilling in a tree quite close to the road. We stayed for an hour and I had an amazing time watching these animals. It was such a relieve to finally see these animals in the wild after thinking my chance of seeing them had passed.

P.s. Rob Jansen already reported on the location and there is a topic on some new updates for the lion tamarin project in that area:

<https://www.mammalwatching.com/2022/09/23/spotting-golden-lion-tamarins-for-free-near-one-of-brazils-most-popular-beach-resorts/>

When I was there I did not even know nor did the guard at the reserve entrance tell us about a project for the lion tamarins here so this is a very nice evolution.

Travellog REGUA



My plan was to go to REGUA and spend one full day in the reserve. The weather was sadly enough really bad so there was not a lot of mammal activity I only saw a group of **marmosets**. But during the lunch I met a lot of the staff and some other guests in the reserve and they told me that right now on the higher parts of the reserve there were some muriquis that were eating the ripe fruits in that area. So, I changed my plans because who wouldn't for the chance of seeing one of the biggest primates in the neotropics. During my stay in the reserve there was also a camera crew coming there to film some of the animals. One of their targets were the reintroduced **Tapirs** that were in the reserve. They sometimes come to a location where they feed them now and then so if you have little time and want to see them close to Rio this might be your best shot. After lunch a **brown-throated three-toed sloth** was found right next to the

buildings in some banana trees. After the rain got a little less, we walked around again and I saw a **capybara** for a few seconds. In the past they were very easily seen on the island in the lake but since the surrounding forest got older, they hid in the forest more often and got more difficult to see but they still stroll around the lake area. At night I walked around for an hour, there were loads of bats around here but I did not see any mammals. The next morning, we started up the green trail early in the morning in search of the **southern muriqui** and after a difficult but beautiful climb we found a mother with her young hanging around the trail giving alarm calls. We could follow them around for a very long time and although they looked quite angry at us, they did not flee and stayed around the trail area so we could keep following them. When we arrived back at the reserve, we heard that sadly enough the camera crew did not see the **tapirs** that day. A last thing I want to mention is that there are also **pumas** in the reserve. Just like with all cats odds are slim of seeing them but there are people that found pumas chilling around the trails during their walks. All in all this place is amazing and definitely worth a visit.

Fazenda Garibaldi



Species list

1. Black Lion Tamarin *Leontopithecus chrysopygus*
2. Guianan Squirrel *Sciurus aestuans*

What to do

- Excursion to search Black lion tamarin
- Nightdrives

Travel log

Nightdrives

I sadly arrived late during the evening and although we saw lots of cool animals, we did not see any mammals during our night drive. But if you are there on time, I would highly recommend a night drive. The guide is very nice and knowledgeable. The list of mammals you could possibly see includes species like porcupine, maned wolf and giant anteaters.

Black lion tamarin excursion

As has been mentioned before in other reports you can see the **black lion tamarins** in this reserve. It is an amazing place to go see them. The guides are very nice and know loads about the animals. They also do quite a lot of research on their local groups in there Fazenda and they would love to build a special bridge for the tamarins in the future because right now they can only cross the river on the bridge where all the cars pass the river.



Nazaré Paulista

Species list

1. Black-fronted titi-monkey *Callicebus nigrifrons*

What to do

- Walking around the general area

Travel log

I came here to find the last *Callithrix* species I wanted to see on this trip and there were multiple reports of them being in the area around Nazare Paulista. Sadly enough I had no luck. I walked up the same road John mentioned. I even found a place to stay close by but I had no luck finding the **buffy headed marmoset**. I did hear loads of titi monkeys and I did see one very shortly. Nothing else to report here except that there possibly are better locations to find them.

Sao Paulo Airport



Species list

1. Capybara *Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*

What to do

- Quick stop over for Capybara

Travel log

Just in front of the car rental companies are some bigger lakes. Here there are some capybaras hanging around as mentioned in other reports. This was the only place during my trip where I could see them without any obstructions

Other trip reports in the same region:

<https://www.mammalwatching.com/2019/02/21/new-trip-report-fazenda-bacury-sao-paola-brazil/>

<https://www.mammalwatching.com/wp-content/uploads/JB-Brazil-2019.pdf>

<https://www.mammalwatching.com/wp-content/uploads/BB-Brazil-July-August-2019.pdf>

<https://www.mammalwatching.com/wp-content/uploads/AM-Brazil-2021.pdf>

<https://www.mammalwatching.com/2022/01/08/new-trip-report-eastern-brazil/>

<https://www.mammalwatching.com/wp-content/uploads/RJ-Brazil-March-2022-min.pdf>

<https://shoestringsafari.com/the-golden-monkeys-of-buzios/>

<https://www.mammalwatching.com/2022/09/23/spotting-golden-lion-tamarins-for-free-near-one-of-brazils-most-popular-beach-resorts/>

<https://www.mammalwatching.com/2019/02/21/new-trip-report-fazenda-bacury-sao-paola-brazil/>

<http://mammalwatching.com/Neotropical/Otherreports/SM%20Atlantic%20Rainforest%20Brazil%202013.pdf>

<https://www.mammalwatching.com/2013/08/30/brazil-2013/>

<https://www.mammalwatching.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/SM-Brazil-2016.pdf>

<https://www.mammalwatching.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/RW-Brazil-2017.pdf>

<https://www.mammalwatching.com/2018/03/19/tale-two-tamarins-marmoset/>

<https://www.mammalwatching.com/wp-content/uploads/Brazil-2018.pdf>