

BRAZIL'S PANTANAL & ALTA FLORESTA

TOUR REPORT 2026

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This tour of central-western Brazil must surely offer one of the most varied and rewarding wildlife experiences in South America, combining the extraordinary avifaunas of the southern Amazonian forests, the open Cerrado and the immense seasonally flooded wetlands of the Pantanal. It takes in some of the finest sites within each of these regions and, in doing so, encounters a remarkable diversity of birds and mammals. The forests around Alta Floresta, including Rio Azul and Cristalino, hold an exceptional assemblage of Amazonian species and numerous regional specialities, while Chapada dos Guimarães provides an abrupt and fascinating contrast with its distinctive Cerrado avifauna. The Pantanal, meanwhile, is simply one of the great wildlife spectacles of the continent, with birds occurring in extraordinary abundance and an accompanying mammal fauna that is difficult to rival.

The rainforests of the Alta Floresta–Cristalino region are of particular biogeographical significance because they lie within the southern Amazonian Madeira–Tapajós interfluvial system and close to an important zone of faunal turnover. Here, the ranges of several closely related taxa meet or replace one another geographically, including Black-necked and Chestnut-eared Aracaris, Xingu and Common Scale-backed Antbirds, and Elegant and Spix's Woodcreepers. At the same time, the region supports a distinctive endemic component, including taxa such as Black-girdled Barbet and Bare-eyed Antbird, which are largely or wholly confined to the Madeira–Tapajós interfluvium and adjoining southern Amazonian forests. This combination of endemism and geographical replacement reflects the long-term influence of major Amazonian rivers as barriers to dispersal, together with historical changes in forest distribution and connectivity. The region therefore represents not simply a species-rich rainforest assemblage, but an important biogeographical transition zone in which patterns of isolation, differentiation and secondary contact can be observed within a comparatively restricted area.

As leaders typically opine, each successive iteration of any tour is better than the last, and this was clearly amongst the most successful and enjoyable to date, although that judgement might more properly be left to the participants. We worked through the avifaunal diversity of all three regions with considerable success, finding most of the principal targets together with an impressive selection of regional and difficult species. Bald Parrots at Rio Azul, Alta Floresta Antpitta and Bare-eyed Antbird at Cristalino, a fine selection of Cerrado specialities around Chapada and the extraordinary abundance of large birds in the Pantanal were amongst numerous highlights.

The mammals were scarcely less impressive. Giant Anteater, Jaguarundi, Ocelot, Lowland Tapir, White-lipped Peccaries and Giant River Otters would individually have been memorable, while prolonged encounters with at least five Jaguars in the Pantanal provided one of the great wildlife spectacles of the tour. A post-tour excursion to see a young Harpy Eagle supplied an appropriately extravagant conclusion.

In all, we recorded 491 species of birds and 40 species of mammals, together with an entertaining supporting cast of reptiles. Inevitably there were things we failed to see, as there always are, but the combination of southern Amazonian specialities, Cerrado endemics, Pantanal abundance and an almost unreasonable assortment of large mammals made this an exceptionally varied and memorable tour.

Day 1, and heading towards the southern Amazonian rainforests north of Alta Floresta, we were immediately reminded of the ongoing devastation being visited on the planet by the burgeoning populations and voracious appetites of one *Homo sapiens*, perhaps better *destructans*. Vast areas of Cerrado were burning, with smoke hanging over thousands of square kilometres. As in so many parts of the world, temperatures were unusually high and rainfall unusually low. The 22-lane highways of São Paulo were at a standstill, choked with

traffic, while the state highways of Mato Grosso were packed with seemingly endless convoys of trucks carrying timber, minerals and agricultural produce to market: leaf-cutter ants on an industrial scale, consuming everything in sight. As everywhere, everyone appeared to be carrying on as though none of this could possibly impinge upon their daily routines, blissfully unaware of the remarkably narrow tolerance of environmental conditions that we greedy, acquisitive monkeys actually require.

Anyway, enough of all that. On arrival at Alta Floresta we met up with our host from Rio Azul, Chris Mesquita, who could not have done more for us and made every minute of our stay extremely pleasant. We headed off through the cattle pastures, seeing innumerable Guira Cuckoos, Red-breasted Blackbirds, Picazuro Pigeons, Southern Lapwings and Cattle Egrets where, not so very long ago, there might have been Screaming Pihas and Howler Monkeys.

The now very comfortable Rio Azul Jungle Lodge, in the Serra do Cachimbo, is surrounded by protected areas forming part of Brazil's Southern Amazon Protected Corridor. To the north lie vast tracts of largely intact rainforest with remarkably little or no human occupation. Why is this significant? The region was not occupied by what are termed 'indigenous' people (that wave of *Homo sapiens* that were the first to occupy a given region). It is commonly thought, although not by biologists, that indigenous tribes in the Amazon live in harmony with nature. Primarily because they do not clear forest or cut down many trees, leaving an apparently intact forest. Unfortunately, appearances are deceptive in this case because, in order to survive, it is other resources that are exploited, leaving such areas stripped of much of their native fauna. A forest can remain standing and yet be ecologically transformed if its larger vertebrates have been hunted out. If primates and larger birds are removed seed dispersal is impacted and forest composition itself will gradually be transformed. The apparently simple distinction between "forest" and "cleared land" can therefore conceal a much more complicated ecological reality. No matter when earlier waves of human arrival took place, we did not evolve in South America and, as is commonly observed, introduced and invasive species typically impact native wildlife catastrophically. This has been the case in many areas occupied by indigenous tribes where anything larger than a thrush has been hunted out.

On a more aesthetic note, the rivers in this region are mainly blackwater, a natural condition arising in regions dominated by shallow sandy soils where intense leaching produces beautifully clear, tea-coloured water produced by tannins from decomposed organic compounds. Rapid leaching of nutrients on poorly structured sandy soils often results in the growth of more open or short-stature forest assemblages which are now commonly recognised to harbour endemic avifaunas. The forests, rivers and pool in these regions are quite stunning and, typically, lacking in biting insects. An idyllic rainforest location.

Settling into our luxurious accommodation and an excellent dinner, we began planning the following day's excursions with Zak, our local guide. He knew the birds well and, more importantly, knew where we might best look for Bald Parrot. Our deliberations were immediately interrupted, however, when we were called outside to see a troop of Feline Night Monkeys passing through the lodge clearing. Not a bad start. Back to planning. One of the principal reasons for visiting Rio Azul is the chance to see the highly localised Bald Parrot, which can be found here with relative ease, and so our first full day was to be devoted largely to the extensive short-stature sand forests it particularly favours.

Dawn, and we were off. First, around the clearing, innumerable Crimson Topazes were competing for control of the feeders. What a stunning creature, and surely one of the most spectacular hummingbirds on the continent. This remained a particular highlight for Nick. Fewer in number, but scarcely less welcome, were White-necked Jacobins, Grey-breasted Sabrewings, Fork-tailed Woodnymphs, Rufous-breasted, Long-tailed and White-bearded Hermits, Black-throated Mango and the diminutive Amethyst Woodstar. A cracking start, seriously disrupting what would otherwise have been a splendid breakfast.

Next we headed to the tower which, given the stature of the forest, is really more of a platform. We revisited it repeatedly during our stay because it offers superb views across the canopy. From here came continuous processions of riotously colourful, squabbling and screeching macaws, parrots and parakeets moving between roosting and feeding trees: Blue-and-yellow, Scarlet, Red-and-green, Red-bellied and Chestnut-fronted Macaws; Kawai's and Southern Mealy Amazons; Santarem, White-eyed and Golden-winged Parakeets; Dusky-billed Parrotlet; White-bellied and Blue-headed Parrots. It was a near-continuous display of tropical exuberance.

Paul merely needed to know what we were looking for and was then invariably on it, quietly helping out, as he was throughout the tour. From the tower we also enjoyed Lettered, Red-necked and Chestnut-eared Aracaris, White-throated and Channel-billed Toucans, the localised Brown-banded Puffbird, a pair of Eastern Striolated Puffbirds and excellent views of Ringed and Yellow-throated Woodpeckers. The swirling mass of tanagers, honeycreepers and dacnis added still more colour and a near-continuous stream of species new for the trip, all much appreciated by the indefatigable Sam.

Eventually we had to drag ourselves away from this profusion of life and head for the sand forest, and it was only 07.30. Walking the entrance track, Martin spotted a Razor-billed Curassow ambling about, followed almost immediately by a Jaguarundi crossing the trail. A terrific mammal for the tour. Forest understorey flocks would have to wait while we continued into the more open scrubby woodland on the white sands.

Then came the tell-tale creaking call of Bald Parrot. In no time at all we were watching an adult perched prominently in a bare tree. Job done. Zak smiled. It was 08.15. We then entertained ourselves with some of the supposedly more prosaic components of this highly specialised habitat: Grey-chested Greenlet, Pale-bellied Mourner, Southern White-fringed Antwren, Ochre-lored Flatbill, Snethlage's Tody-Tyrant and numerous Brown-banded Puffbirds. Black Manakins were calling but resolutely declined to show themselves, while Plush-crowned Jay, Spotted Puffbird, Red-throated Piping-Guan, Rufous-tailed Jacamar and Blue-crowned and Green-backed Trogons proved rather more obliging.

The forest interior beckoned with irresistible sylvan importunity. Rufous-tailed Flatbill, Brownish-winged Schiffornis and White-bellied Tody-Tyrant kept us agreeably preoccupied, while Fiery-capped and Red-headed Manakins supplied a rather more coruscating form of diversion for Martin and Andy. Understorey flocks proved gratifyingly multifarious, producing Fasciated Antshrike, Natterer's Slaty-Antshrike, Spix's Warbling-Antbird, Yellow-browed Antbird and Black-faced Antbird in pleasing succession. Saturnine and Cinereous Antshrikes appeared with almost quotidian regularity. On one particularly memorable occasion we were pleasantly detained by ornithological circumstance when a pair of Ruddy Spinetails and a Rose-breasted Chat appeared in rapid succession, an unexpectedly felicitous concatenation of sightings.

A short post-prandial perambulation from the lodge then produced a particularly excellent session. Blue-necked Jacamar, Pavinine Quetzal, Paradise Jacamar and the incomparable Dwarf Tyrant-Manakin were all welcomed to an increasingly plethoric list. Further exploration of the same area produced Brown Capuchins, the conspicuously dolichomorphic White-whiskered Spider Monkey and, in a pleasingly aleatory encounter, a large and vociferous troop of the seldom-encountered Red-nosed Bearded Saki. It was a satisfyingly concentrated and propitious interlude, yielding several much sought-after species in remarkably quick succession and providing an unusually compendious demonstration of the forest's faunal richness. It was a session repeatedly recalled throughout the tour.

Then came tea and biscuits on the airstrip, which was positively surreal. Fortunately air-traffic control did not seem excessively busy. We sat at a long table, drinking tea and eating cake while waiting for a variety of psittacids to return to their favoured roost trees for the night. Chris announced that pairs of Hyacinth Macaws would return to the tree immediately in front of our table at 18.45. They did. The raucous squawking from the assembled multitude was deafening. She then informed us that they would all stop at 19.06. This seemed implausibly precise, bordering on the ridiculous. At 19.06 they stopped. It was completely off the scale and, for sheer novelty value, surely the most bizarre session of the tour. I suppose that, for non-birders, it is probably no stranger than spending a Sunday afternoon at a sewage farm or rubbish dump in search of vagrants.

The only complaint I would make of Rio Azul is that the food is too good. Otherwise, the place is close to perfect for birders: meals when you want them and no quibbles; a fridge full of cold drinks (beer) to raid as required; some excellent trails and, crucially, the freedom to walk them when you want. Last, but certainly not least, the staff could not have been more helpful. It is difficult to ask for much more.

Next up was Cristalino Rainforest Lodge. What a place this has become: discreet nighttime lighting throughout the lodge clearing, soft and slightly sleazy background music, wines at US\$500 a bottle, à la carte menus for breakfast, lunch and dinner, and access to the trail network theoretically only with a guide. A sort of rainforest-based holiday camp for those not necessarily intent on getting too close to nature, tightly managed by administrators. It is undeniably impressive, but perhaps a little over the top for birders. We therefore sat well away from the music, declined the US\$500 wine, opted enthusiastically for the buffet, and went birding. Rarely did we see many of the 150 or so guests away from the dining area and actually out on the trails, which suited us perfectly. We divided our time between the towers, the carefully maintained forest pools, the trail system and the river. With only two full days, we did not have nearly enough time, of course. That might have to change. Fortunately our local man, Sidnei Dantas, had a plan. It did not involve nearly enough trail-bashing. I therefore amended said plan.

The towers at Cristalino are famously good for mixed flocks, and they did not disappoint. We enjoyed Tooth-billed Wrens, several Spangled and Pompadour Cotingas, a pair of Bare-necked Fruitcrows, White-necked Puffbird, Red-necked and Curl-crested Aracaris, the usual procession of Psittacids (rather fewer than at Rio Azul), Black-bellied Cuckoo and the spectacular Black-girdled Barbet. As so often happened during the tour, Charles would eventually say something along the lines of: "I am sure it is nothing, but if you look at the fourth

branch down from the canopy, on the left-hand side of the largest tree on the horizon, there is a black-and-white bird. Can you see it?" Inevitably, it would turn out to be something we were actually looking for. Tityras, puffbirds, canopy flycatchers and a predictable cast of toucans and woodpeckers added to the entertainment.

Overhearing conversations between tour participants can be surprisingly instructive and, on occasion, almost educational. During our repeated ascents of Cristalino's two 50-metre canopy towers, Paul and Andy became surprisingly interested not merely with the birds above the forest but with the towers themselves. There followed a sustained and unexpectedly rigorous comparative analysis of their respective engineering virtues: the number of stair sections, the number of steps per section, the differing gradients, the relative generosity of the landings and, inevitably, the total number of steps involved. One tower apparently demands some 250 steps, the other a comparatively parsimonious 224, a distinction that assumes considerably greater intellectual and physiological importance on the upper levels of these structures. Both agreed on the admirable structural simplicity and elegance of the towers, although opinions differed as to which represented the more satisfactory compromise between vertical efficiency, aesthetic economy and the preservation of ageing knees. By the end of our stay, what had begun as casual conversation had developed into a group-wide comparative structural audit, undertaken without notebooks, measuring instruments or, so far as I could tell, any obvious invitation from Cristalino management.

Once temperatures reached 30°C or thereabouts, however, we descended to the forest floor, where things became noticeably more difficult. Forest-floor birding was decidedly infaust. Vocal activity was minimal, and a pervasive torpor seemed to afflict the avifauna for much of the morning. The cicadas, however, compensated with extraordinary stridulatory exuberance, building to deafening crescendos of rasping metallic rattles that effectively obliterated the acoustic landscape and rendered any bird sufficiently improvident to sing after about 07.30 almost entirely inaudible. Their increasingly cacophonous susurrations became so aurally oppressive that we were eventually obliged to undertake a series of circumambulatory peregrinations along the trail system in search of areas beyond the most painful reaches of their acoustic tyranny. Trail walks typically found Martin on a mission. On one occasion this produced the enigmatic Alta Floresta Antpitta from one of its favoured thickets, giving excellent views. We also found Rufous-capped Antthrush and mixed flocks containing the usual complement of sentinels, antwrens and furnarids. We tried for Cryptic Forest Falcon which, in typically unhelpful fashion, did eventually show itself, albeit only briefly.

Afternoon sessions at the forest pools proved considerably more productive and, at times, spectacular. I suspect this is not always the case, particularly in the wet season or after prolonged rain, but we happened to be there during an extended drought, with very little standing water remaining in the forest. Under such conditions the few available pools became irresistible. We began with excellent views of Dot-backed Antbird before the usual procession of thirsty forest denizens began to materialise. Snow-capped and White-crowned Manakins gave unbeatable views; Ochre-bellied Flycatcher, Red-crowned Ant-Tanager and White-winged Shrike-Tanager appeared to drink and bathe. Then the forest troops arrived: Spix's Warbling-Antbird, Chestnut-belted Gnateater, Rufous-rumped and Ochre-throated Foliage-gleaners, Chestnut-winged Hookbill and Olivaceous Woodcreeper, all giving prolonged and quite ridiculous views. Remarkably, we heard none of them calling during our stay. Xingu Scale-backed and Rufous-faced Antbirds also appeared and, likewise, were neither heard nor seen elsewhere. Bare-eyed Antbirds and Black-spotted Bare-eyes then put in a very welcome appearance. The pools gave us two superb afternoon sessions at times when, under normal circumstances, very little might otherwise have been seen. Andy, with his remarkable facility for recalling the minutiae of morphological difference, inevitably began questioning the validity of several taxonomic designations. Of particular interest was the *snethlageae* form of Chestnut-belted Gnateater, sometimes treated as specifically distinct. Quite right too. There is little point in looking closely at birds if one is not occasionally going to become dissatisfied with what everyone else has decided to call them. We also enjoyed a pair of Rose-breasted Chats and several other forest-interior species, but by then the pools had already demonstrated their worth rather comprehensively.

A nocturnal excursion produced several Pauraques and a Blackish Nightjar. A Crested Owl had been calling, so I set off in search of this spectacular species. After some time it called again and we saw it very briefly as it flew over our heads. Most of the troops were then satisfied and, being tired, retired for sleep. Not Charles. He and I continued, and eventually obtained spectacular views once I managed to draw the bird into a short, open-canopied tree beside my cabin. Charles was thrilled, I managed a few photographs, and that was that. Job done.

A dawn visit to an island in the Teles Pires River to see the Amazonian Umbrellabird lek was an enormous success and a top highlight for much of the group. It is unquestionably one of the great rainforest spectacles and, in terms of sheer strangeness and theatricality, entirely comparable with the displays of Birds-of-Paradise in New Guinea. Five males were present, great bizarre almost prehistoric-

looking creatures moving through the canopy and delivering their extraordinary resonant booming calls. The river itself added plenty more. Black-collared Swallows, Pied Lapwings and Yellow-billed Terns occupied the more open margins, while the rather more subfusc denizens of the riparian scrub included Amazonian Inezia and Glossy Antshrike. Heather, typically looking the other way and therefore invariably finding something new, spotted our only American Pygmy Kingfisher. Kingfishers were much in evidence and, by the end, we had seen all five species. A Sunbittern was also seen regularly along the riverbanks, allowing prolonged views of what remains one of the most singular and wonderfully improbable birds of the Neotropics.

We also managed to see a selection of the primates occurring in the Alta Floresta-Cristalino region. Brown Capuchins, White-whiskered Spider Monkeys and Snethlage's Marmosets were all encountered close to the lodge. Most other mammals remained considerably more inconspicuous, although Neotropical River Otter, Lowland Tapir and numerous Greater and Lesser Bulldog Bats enlivened proceedings, while Proboscis Bats could be found roosting characteristically in closely spaced rows on trunks and branches over the water.

That was that, and time to make tracks. This time, however, not to another rainforest lodge, but to Chapada dos Guimarães: a dramatic sandstone plateau and canyon landscape near Cuiabá, where waterfalls plunge over high cliffs into wooded valleys and gallery forests embedded within an extensive matrix of Cerrado. The scenery is spectacular, but the biological interest is every bit as compelling. The Cerrado is often described rather lazily as "open savanna", but in reality it is an extraordinarily heterogeneous biome comprising grasslands, shrublands, wooded savannas, dry forest, gallery forest, palm swamps and riparian systems, often arranged over remarkably short distances in response to soils, drainage, fire and topography. It is generally regarded as the most species-rich tropical savanna in the world, supporting some 6,000 native plant species and an exceptionally diverse and highly endemic fauna. Chapada dos Guimarães National Park alone protects ten distinct Cerrado vegetation types within an area of roughly 32,770 ha. This variety of vegetation structure is ecologically important. Many Cerrado birds are not simply inhabitants of "savanna" in some broad and accommodating sense, but occupy quite narrowly defined physiognomic formations within it. Intact mosaics of open grassland, scrubby campo, wooded Cerrado and gallery forest are therefore particularly significant, and the abrupt transitions between them can produce an almost equally abrupt turnover in birds.

Unfortunately, all this ecological extravagance sits within an increasingly precarious conservation context. The Cerrado covers roughly 2 million km², close to a quarter of Brazil, yet only a comparatively small proportion lies under strict protection. Vast areas have been converted to mechanised agriculture, particularly soy and maize, or to cattle pasture, while fragmentation, altered fire regimes, road development and modification of headwater systems continue to erode ecological connectivity. The Cerrado is also hydrologically crucial. Many of the headwaters feeding South America's great drainage systems arise within it, meaning that destruction of native vegetation has consequences extending far beyond the biome itself. This is especially conspicuous where native vegetation has been replaced by monotonous plantations of Eucalyptus, as can be seen around Águas Frias: an ecological simplification on a fairly heroic scale.

Chapada dos Guimarães is therefore especially important because it preserves a relatively intact sample of a biome that has disappeared or been heavily modified across much of its former extent. It also provides a wonderfully abrupt contrast with the Amazonian forests we had just left behind. Dense rainforest gives way to open savanna, crooked fire-adapted woodland, rocky campo, gallery forest, cliffs and immense panoramic escarpments, bringing with them an almost entirely different avifauna. The transition is both visually dramatic and biogeographically instructive. Chapada is much more than a scenic interlude.

We met Bianca, our local guide, at Cuiabá airport and set off for Chapada. Owing to a road-improvement scheme, we were forced to take a somewhat circuitous route to our destination, thereby removing any opportunity for the fabled "initial exploration" so regularly promised in detailed itineraries. Anyway, we arrived at dusk, just in time for a shower, a beer and yet another enormous meal. The plan was to divide our time between the open scrubby Cerrado and the taller dry woodlands Bianca knew well. Conveniently, she lived not far from some of the best habitat and made the whole business remarkably straightforward. Our first excursions into the open Cerrado produced an excellent selection of its characteristic avifauna. Oddly, the first bird was a Rusty-margined Guan. This was followed in quick succession by Curl-crested Jay, the cryptic Chapada Flycatcher, Black-throated Saltator and both White-rumped and White-banded Tanagers. Barred Antshrike and the near-endemic Rufous-winged Antshrike were especially welcome, while Blue-winged Macaw, Pale-breasted Spinetail, White-vented Violetear and both Spot-backed and White-eared Puffbirds added further interest. Despite our best efforts, Collared Crescentchest remained resolutely unavailable, but we did see the usually considerably more troublesome Rufous-sided Pygmy-Tyrant.

Once temperatures reached the critical 28°C mark, we retreated to a shadier and wonderfully birdy wooded valley. Here things accelerated again. Flavescent and Golden-crowned Warblers, Thrush-like Wren, Sooty-fronted Spinetail, Cinnamon-throated and Planalto Hermits, Western Fire-eye and Moustached Wren all appeared in pleasing succession. We then played around with a Pheasant Cuckoo, which eventually put on a sterling performance. Swallow-tailed Kites, a Laughing Falcon and several Roadside Hawks drifted through before we heard a Pavonine Cuckoo. This proved considerably less cooperative and allowed only flight views, but seeing both of the more troublesome cuckoos in such short order was, for Nick, close to ornithological nirvana. The same area also produced Amazonian Motmot, Blue-crowned Trogon, Lettered Aracari, Yellow-bellied, Plain-crested and Lesser Elaenias, Suiriri Flycatcher, Sepia-capped Flycatcher, Southern Scrub-Flycatcher, Cliff Flycatcher, Tropical Parula, Red Pileated Finch and Buff-throated Saltator. The cuckoos, however, remained the principal source of excitement.

A short visit to Vêu da Noiva gave us Planalto Slaty-Antshrike, Southern Beardless-Tyrannulet and various other comparatively non-descript denizens of the thornier Cerrado. Then, rather unexpectedly, Bianca found a Sibilant Sirystes, normally associated with more humid forest. There were no swifts in evidence, but numerous Red-and-green Macaws and a magnificent Toco Toucan compensated handsomely, much to Suzanne's delight.

The final, and most anticipated, component of the tour took us into the Pantanal, that vast seasonally flooded alluvial plain lying within the Upper Paraguay River Basin. Covering roughly 150,000 km² across Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay, it is routinely described as the world's largest tropical wetland. In reality, it is much more interesting than that rather bland superlative suggests: an immense mosaic of rivers, floodplain lakes, marshes, seasonally inundated grasslands, gallery forests, palm woodland and slightly elevated forest islands, all shifting in extent and connectivity with the annual flood pulse. Its fauna is drawn largely from the surrounding Cerrado, Amazon, Chaco and Atlantic Forest regions, but the seasonal hydrology assembles these elements into wildlife communities of quite extraordinary abundance and visibility. The Pantanal is therefore less remarkable for endemism than for the sheer scale on which birds and mammals can occur.

Physically, the wetland occupies an exceptionally low-gradient sedimentary basin surrounded by higher plateaux. Rivers descending from these uplands lose velocity abruptly on entering the plain, spreading across floodplains, filling lakes and abandoned channels and depositing sediment. Because the relief is so slight, differences in elevation of only a few tens of centimetres can determine whether an area remains dry, floods briefly or is inundated for months. This annual flood pulse is the defining ecological process. At high water, rivers, lagoons, marshes and floodplain depressions become interconnected, allowing fish and other aquatic organisms to disperse widely across the landscape. As the waters recede, these habitats fragment once again and aquatic life becomes concentrated into shrinking channels, pools and lagoons. The consequences for wildlife are spectacular: herons, storks, spoonbills, caiman, Giant Otters, capybaras and Jaguars are all drawn to these concentrations of prey. The wetland itself is only the low-lying component of the much larger Upper Paraguay River Basin, which covers approximately 600,000–620,000 km². Much of the water entering the Pantanal originates in the Cerrado uplands to the north and east, with major tributaries including the Cuiabá, São Lourenço, Piquiri, Taquari, Negro, Miranda and Aquidauana. These eventually feed the Paraguay River, the principal drainage axis of the system. The Paraguay then flows south to join the Paraná, and the combined system ultimately reaches the Atlantic through the Río de la Plata. The Pantanal therefore belongs to the Río de la Plata drainage, not the Amazon Basin.

Hydrologically, the whole system functions as an immense natural storage mechanism. Floodwaters spread laterally, are retained across the plain and are released only gradually, attenuating flood peaks and sustaining downstream flows. Its ecological integrity consequently depends not simply upon protecting the wetland itself, but upon maintaining the much wider drainage system that supplies it. Deforestation, erosion, dams, water abstraction, drought and severe fire in the surrounding catchments can all alter the timing, quantity and quality of water reaching the floodplain. The Pantanal is therefore best understood not simply as a wetland, but as a vast, seasonally pulsing river-floodplain system whose extraordinary biological productivity depends upon the continued functioning of the entire Upper Paraguay Basin.

We arrived at Piuval in the northern Pantanal during the mid-afternoon and immediately managed some birding around the lodge. Red-legged Seriemas and Greater Rheas were strolling about nearby fields as if entirely at home, while huge numbers of Monk Parakeets, Greyish Baywings, Shiny and Giant Cowbirds fed across the grasslands with smaller numbers of Grey-crested Cachalotes, Green-barred Woodpeckers and Campo Flickers. Buff-necked and Plumbeous Ibises picked about in the wetter sections of the property, while Bare-faced Ibises moved overhead in their distinctive V-formations towards favoured muddy feeding areas. Huge Jabirus occupied their equally huge nests, often with colonial Monk Parakeet nests attached rather opportunistically to the undersides. Southern Screamers

were commonplace, while herons, egrets and ibises seemed to be everywhere around the marsh visible from reception. Over the savanna, Lesser Yellow-headed Vultures drifted almost continuously, accompanied by White-tailed, Savanna and Black-collared Hawks. A night drive produced excellent views of a Lowland Tapir and several Crab-eating Foxes before we finally retired to our digs for a much-needed rest.

The following morning we had an appointment with one of the better-known inhabitants of these termite-rich grasslands. Heading out in the stygian gloom, we were quickly rewarded with superb views of an adult Giant Anteater ambling about in the open and eventually stopping to drink at one of the few remaining pools. Heather was thrilled, and I think most of the group were rather taken aback by just how good the views were. A tour highlight without question. We then drove a series of wooded roads, seeing more Crab-eating Foxes and several Hyacinth Macaws around a nesting tree before it was time to return for breakfast. The scattered patches of palm-rich gallery forest here form an important stronghold for this, the world's largest parrot. Watching these enormous birds flapping lazily across the savanna, their rich purplish-blue plumage glowing in the early morning sun, supplied yet another of those apparently inexhaustible Pantanal highlights. The species remains emblematic of the region and, after the severe historical impacts of trapping for the cagebird trade and habitat loss, its continued recovery here is one of the more encouraging conservation stories in South America.

This extraordinary landscape also supports Chestnut-bellied Guan, Bare-faced Curassow, White-throated Piping-Guan and the raucous Chaco Chachalaca, all of which proved gratifyingly common. On one occasion we counted 25 Bare-faced Curassows together. Even by Pantanal standards, that was quite a sight.

Exploring the mosaic of marsh, drier scrub, grassland and taller woodland around Piuval continued to produce birds almost without pause. Undulated Tinamou, Anhinga, Sunbittern, Wattled Jacana and a fine selection of herons and shorebirds occupied the wetter areas, while Nacunda Nighthawks were found at a favoured daytime roost. In the drier country we encountered Golden-collared Macaw, Red-billed Scythebill, Great Rufous Woodcreeper, Greater Thornbird, Mato Grosso Antbird, the near endemic Firm-breasted Wren, and a pleasing assortment of spinetails, flycatchers and tanagers. By now the species were arriving rather faster than they could reasonably be absorbed.

Eventually it was time to leave Piuval and head south along the Transpantaneira towards Porto Jofre, passing through progressively wetter and more open landscapes. The change in avifauna was immediate. Solitary Black and Yellow-rumped Caciques, Variable Orioles, Orange-backed Troupials and Scarlet-headed Blackbirds became increasingly conspicuous, while Limpkins and Snail Kites multiplied spectacularly once we reached the great marshes farther south. Jabirus remained omnipresent, Maguari Storks began to appear, and Black-bellied and White-faced Whistling-Ducks crowded the wetter areas with smaller numbers of Brazilian Teal. There was an increasingly unmistakable sense that we were entering the aquatic heart of the Pantanal. Dusk was approaching and we needed to get a move on. As we crossed one of the vast open marshes, however, a Great Horned Owl was spotted sitting conspicuously beside the road. Progress could wait. We stopped and enjoyed prolonged views of this formidable predator before eventually completing the journey to the end of the highway, the great Cuiabá River, and our accommodation at Porto Jofre.

Planning at Porto Jofre was gratifyingly straightforward. Take a boat and search for that enigmatic, once near-mythical denizen of the Neotropics: the incomparable Jaguar. Although this magnificent cat remains widely distributed across tropical America, it is rarely seen over most of its range. The Pantanal is different. Jaguars occur here at exceptionally high densities and show a marked affinity for river margins, where prey is abundant and the open banks make them unusually visible. It is now quite simply the finest place in the world to see the species. We duly headed out by boat, expertly guided by Wilson, our boatman, who had spent years learning the river and its cats. Searching the banks and sandbars, the call soon went up. Wilson manoeuvred us into position and there, almost absurdly obliging, was an adult female with two large cubs. The cameras went into overdrive, placing unreasonable demands on the processing power of already near-full SD cards. We watched the animals at leisure as they moved along the riverbank, the female periodically hunting for caiman while the cubs followed behind. At times they seemed almost indifferent to our presence. It was difficult to reconcile the spectacle in front of us with the usual experience of Jaguar elsewhere: fleeting tracks, distant calls, perhaps a shape disappearing into forest. Here they were simply there, in broad daylight, doing what Jaguars do. Eventually we pulled ourselves away and headed off in search of other prizes, soon finding a family group of Giant River Otters which, in almost any other circumstances, would have constituted the principal highlight of the morning. Then, as temperatures began to rise and we turned back towards base, proceedings were delayed by the appearance of a large male Jaguar asleep on a sandbar, looking thoroughly satisfied with whatever he had been doing during the night.

Over the following excursions we saw the same female and cubs again, together with another younger male hunting along the river. More Giant River Otters appeared, and a Red Brocket Deer added itself almost apologetically to the mammal list. By this stage the Pantanal had become almost indecently generous. We explored a little around Porto Jofre and, inevitably, found a few more new birds for the tour: Fuscous Flycatcher, White-eyed Attila and a spectacular male Helmeted Manakin among them. Chestnut-bellied Guans, Chaco Chachalacas, White-throated Piping-Guans and Bare-faced Curassows remained pleasantly conspicuous, while a varied procession of woodpeckers kept things moving along. Another mega day.

Leaving pre-dawn, we returned to the marshes where hundreds of Limpkins and Snail Kites were already active among the storks, ibises and herons. We also found White-browed Blackbird, Subtropical Doradito and a couple of 'Pantanal' Snipe, but otherwise things were comparatively quiet. A small woodlot added Orange-headed Tanager, Creamy-bellied Thrush and Rufous-tailed Jacamar before we finally headed on. By lunchtime we had reached the Pantanal Hotel on the Pixaim River. Suzanne, stoic as ever, absorbed the punishment of heat, insects and yet more birds with apparently undiminished enthusiasm. It was nearly 40°C. A short walk through the bug-infested grasslands produced a couple of Long-tailed Ground-Doves and a pair of Rufous-fronted Thornbirds, while around the lodge Yellow-billed and Red-crested Cardinals, Silver-beaked Tanagers, Nanday and Blue-crowned Parakeets, Grey-crested Cachalotes and Greyish Baywings and Purplish Jays were everywhere. By this stage we had become almost blasé about the superabundance of birdlife.

A quick river trip produced innumerable Band-tailed Nighthawks but relatively little else of note. Then came the inevitable question: anyone for a night safari, there is a small chance of an Ocelot? Initial enthusiasm was muted. Not Charles. He was absolutely up for it, and off we went. Almost immediately we found an Ocelot. As if that were not enough, a Lowland Tapir then appeared beside the track and gave astonishing views. Working the open savannas produced a couple of Marsh Deer and another Crab-eating Fox, while Little Nightjars were numerous. Eventually I decided that one of the latter should be caught, if only to put the matter of identification beyond dispute. This caused a certain amount of surprise, but in the hand there was no longer much room for debate.

The lodge itself continued to be remarkably productive. Pale-legged Hornero, Chotoy, White-lored and Rusty-backed Antwrens, Yellow-chinned Spinetail, Greater Thornbird, Grey-crested Cachalote, Mato Grosso Antbird the notorious Firm-breasted Wren, and a varied cast of flycatchers, tanagers, caciques and orioles kept us agreeably occupied. The splendid Nanday Parakeets, with their ridiculous red socks, were particularly entertaining. Then, almost as an afterthought, Martin found a Buff-bellied Hermit around the lodge, which everyone managed to see well.

After some final birding we left the Pixaim area and headed for Cuiabá airport, where the tour was supposed to end. However, changes to the flight schedules had unexpectedly left us with an additional day in the region. Having heard that there was a Harpy Eagle nest with a large youngster nearby, we did what any entirely rational group of birders would do and arranged to visit it the following morning before our flights. Departure was at 04.00. On arrival, strong coffee was therefore mandatory. Nick and Sam were, predictably, raring to go and could scarcely tolerate the delay while everyone assembled. Sam's indefatigable enthusiasm for anything feathered or furred had kept the whole show motoring throughout the tour, squeezing something out of almost every available minute. American, of course: the very best of everything American. On arrival, the eaglet was sitting high in the canopy, shrieking intermittently for its long-absent mother to provide breakfast. We had spectacular views almost immediately. After everything else the tour had produced, a young Harpy Eagle seemed a suitably immoderate conclusion. Spectacular bird. Spectacular end to a spectacular trip. And that really was that.

Time to get going. We headed back towards Cuiabá for our flight to São Paulo, finally accepting that there were no more hours left to fill with birds, mammals, reptiles, heat, insects, boats, trails, towers, night drives or enormous meals.

A special tour, for which particular thanks go to Marluce for faultless logistics and to an excellent group, working together throughout to make everything work for the best. Special thanks to Bianca, whose local knowledge made Chapada and much of the Pantanal so much more than it might otherwise have been.

And perhaps, while we are distributing acknowledgements, a word for Emilie Snethlage (1868–1929), the German-born biologist and one of the great early scientific explorers of the Brazilian Amazon. Her work helped lay much of the ornithological groundwork upon which our modern understanding of Amazonian birds and their distributions was built, and her name still follows the travelling birder through these forests. Among the taxa commemorating her are Snethlage's Marmoset *Mico emiliae*, Snethlage's Tody-Tyrant *Hemitriccus minor*, Snethlage's Antpitta *Hylopezus paraensis* and the *snethlageae* form of Chestnut-belted Gnatcatcher *Conopophaga aurita*. Not a bad legacy.

BIRDS OF THE TOUR

- 1st Hyacinth Macaw
- 2nd Flame-crested Manakin
- 3rd Bald Parrot
- 4rd Crimson Topaz
- 5th Bare-eyed Antbird
- 6th Snow-capped Manakin
- 7th Pheasant Cuckoo
- 8th Amazonian Umbrellabird
- 9th Black-girdled Barbet
- 10th Alta Floresta Antpitta

MAMMALS OF THE TOUR

- 1st Jaguar
- 2nd Red-nosed Bearded Saki
- 3rd Giant Anteater
- 4rd Lowland Tapir
- 5th Ocelot & Azara's Night Monkey

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

Species marked with the diamond symbol (◊) are either endemic to the country or local region or considered 'special' birds for some other reason (e.g., it is only seen on one or two Birdquest tours; it is difficult to see across all or most of its range; the local form is endemic or restricted-range and may in future be treated as a full species).

The species names and taxonomy used in the bird list follows **AviList v2025b** (AviList Core Team 2025. *AviList: The Global Avian Checklist, v2025*); this was the current version when the checklist for the tour report was created.

Where the subspecies seen is/are known, these are often given in parentheses at the end of the species comment.

The species names and taxonomy used in the mammal list follow the mammal list on the iGoTerra website (www.igoterra.com). This list largely follows IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) taxonomy with just a few modifications. It is listed in family order, alphabetically by genera within families. Some alternative names are given in parentheses.

BIRDS

Greater Rhea *Rhea americana* Noted in good numbers at Piuval (North Pantanal). Smaller numbers Chapada.

Grey Tinamou *Tinamus tao* Heard-only. Rio Azul.

Great Tinamou *Tinamus major* Heard-only. Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Cinereous Tinamou *Crypturellus cinereus* Heard-only. Rio Azul

Little Tinamou *Crypturellus soui* Heard-only. Porto Jofre.

Undulated Tinamou *Crypturellus undulatus* Seen Piuval, Pixiam. Heard elsewhere, including Rio Azul.

Brazilian Tinamou ◊ *Crypturellus strigulosus* Heard-only. A few called at dawn and dusk at Rio Azul. A long single pure note.

Variegated Tinamou *Crypturellus variegatus* Heard-only. Cristalino.

Small-billed Tinamou *Crypturellus parvirostris* Heard-only. A few eruptive calls heard near Chapada.

Tataupa Tinamou *Crypturellus tataupa* Heard-only. A few noted Chapada.

Horned Screamer *Anhima cornuta* A pair near Porto Joffre.

Southern Screamer *Chauna torquata* A common species in the Pantanal

White-faced Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna viduata* Recorded near Alta Floresta and in the Pantanal.

Black-bellied Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna autumnalis* Small numbers in the Pantanal.

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata* Noted in small numbers.

Brazilian Teal (B Duck) *Amazonetta brasiliensis* A few pairs noted at Piuval lodge.

Blue-throated (White-throated) Piping Guan ◊ *Pipile grayi* A pair at Piuval lodge, common around Porto Jofre.

Red-throated Piping Guan *Pipile cufubi* Recorded Rio Azul and Cristalino where not uncommon.

Rusty-margined Guan ◊ *Penelope superciliaris* A single noted near Chapada. A good sighting of what is a retiring and uncommon

species.

Chestnut-bellied Guan ♦ *Penelope ochrogaster* The common Guan in the Pantanal.

Bare-faced Curassow ♦ *Crax fasciolata* Abundant at Piuval, where 25 seen together on one occasion.

Razor-billed Curassow ♦ *Mitu tuberosum* Recorded Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Chaco Chachalaca ♦ *Ortalis canicollis* A common species.

Guira Cuckoo *Guira guira* Recorded en route to Rio Azul. Common in the Pantanal.

Greater Ani *Crotophaga major* A single bird in the Pantanal.

Smooth-billed Ani *Crotophaga ani* Recorded around Alta Floresta and in the Pantanal.

Striped Cuckoo *Tapera naevia* A single bird seen at Piuval and Pixiam.

Pheasant Cuckoo *Dromococcyx phasianellus* Great views at Chapada.

Pavonine Cuckoo *Dromococcyx pavoninus* Flight views only. Always difficult to find.

Little Cuckoo *Coccyua minuta* Seen near Porto Jofre.

Common Squirrel Cuckoo *Piaya cayana* Recorded Rio Azul, Cristalino, and Hotel Pantanal trail system.

Black-bellied Cuckoo *Piaya melanogaster* Recorded Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Blue Ground Dove *Claravis pretiosa* Small numbers Alta Floresta.

Long-tailed Ground Dove ♦ *Uropelia campestris* A couple seen Pixiam.

Ruddy Ground Dove *Columbina talpacoti* Recorded Rio Azul in huge numbers and also at Cristalino.

Scaled Dove *Columbina squammata* Recorded Rio Azul and Piuval lodge.

Picui Ground Dove *Columbina picui* Small groups at Piuval lodge.

Ruddy Quail-Dove *Geotrygon montana* Seen nicely at Bird bath 1 and elsewhere along trails at Crisitalino.

White-tipped Dove *Leptotila verreauxi* First seen Cristalino. Abundant in the Pantanal.

Grey-fronted Dove *Leptotila rufaxilla* Recorded Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Eared Dove *Zenaida auriculata* Recordad Alta Floresta.

Pale-vented Pigeon *Patagioenas cayennensis* A few noted Chapada and Pantanal.

Scaled Pigeon *Patagioenas speciosa* Commonly recorded Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Picazuro Pigeon *Patagioenas picazuro* Abundant now in open areas near Alta Floresta. Common Pantanal.

Plumbeous Pigeon *Patagioenas plumbea* Heard-only. Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Ruddy Pigeon *Patagioenas subvinacea* Recorded Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Rock Dove *Columba livia* [introduced] Unfortunately, yes.

Limpkin *Aramus guarauna* Abundant in the Pantanal.

Grey-cowled Wood Rail *Aramides cajaneus* Patrolling the river banks at Cristalino.

Grey-breasted Crake *Laterallus exilis* Heard-only. Heard distantly at Porto Jofre.

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus [mexicanus] melanurus* Seen from the bus near Piuval.

American Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica* A single bird at Piuval.

Pied Plover (P Lapwing) *Hoploxypterus cayanus* First seen Cristalino.

Southern Lapwing *Vanellus chilensis* Recorded open areas throughout.

Collared Plover *Anarhynchus collaris* A few noted.

Wattled Jacana *Jacana jacana* First seen at Cristalino and thereafter in all open wetlands.

Pantanal Snipe *Gallinago paraguaiae* 2 north of Porto Joffre.

Solitary Sandpiper *Tringa solitaria* Seen Cristalino.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* A couple seen.

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca* A single bird at Piuval.

Black Skimmer *Rynchops niger* Seen Cristalino along the Teles Pirre. A few in the Pantanal.

Yellow-billed Tern *Sternula superciliaris* Seen Cristalino along the rivers and thereafter in the Pantanal.

Large-billed Tern *Phaetusa simplex* A couple at Piuval. Others near Porto Jofre.

Sunbittern *Eurypyga helias* Recorded Cristalino, Piuval, Porto Jofre.

Wood Stork *Mycteria americana* Recorded Cristalino and Pantanal..

Jabiru *Jabiru mycteria* Common.

Maguari Stork *Ciconia maguari* A common bird near Porto Joffre.

Anhinga *Anhinga anhinga* Seen Cristalino. Common Pantanal.

Neotropic Cormorant *Nannopterum brasilianum* Recorded Cristalino.

Plumbeous Ibis ♦ *Theristicus caerulescens* A few noted.

Buff-necked Ibis *Theristicus caudatus* Another common species.

Green Ibis *Mesembrinibis cayennensis* Recorded Cristalino and the Pantanal.

Bare-faced Ibis (Whispering I) *Phimosus infuscatus* A common species in the Pantanal.

Roseate Spoonbill *Platalea ajaja* A few noted.

Rufescent Tiger Heron *Tigrisoma lineatum* Immature bird at Cristalino. Common Pantanal.

Boat-billed Heron *Cochlearius cochlearius* Small numbers Pantanal.

Capped Heron *Pilherodius pileatus* A few Rio Azul, Cristalino and Pantanal.

Whistling Heron *Syrigma sibilatrix* A few noted in the Pantanal.

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea* A few.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula* Recorded Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* Common in the Pantanal.

Striated Heron (Green-backed H) *Butorides striata* Recorded Cristalino.

Great Egret *Ardea alba* Abundant.

Western Cattle Egret *Ardea ibis* Recorded Rio Azul, Cristalino and Pantanal..

Cocoi Heron (White-necked H) *Ardea cocoi* Recorded Cristalino and Pantanal.

Short-tailed Nighthawk (Semi-collared N) *Lurocalis semitorquatus*

Band-tailed Nighthawk *Nyctiprogne leucopyga* A common species in the Pantanal.

Blackish Nightjar *Nyctipolus nigrescens* Recorded Rio Azul and Cristalino where roosts on Dining room roof.

Pauraque *Nyctidromus albicollis* Commonly recorded.

Little Nightjar *Setopagis parvula* Heard-only. Rio Azul at the airstrip, Piuval and Pixiam..

Spot-tailed Nightjar *Antiturus maculicaudus* A single bird seen very well at Piuval.

Ladder-tailed Nightjar *Hydropsalis climacocerca* A single bird at Cristlino

Nacunda Nighthawk *Chordeiles nacunda* Abundant near Porto Joffre.

Great Potoo *Nyctibius grandis* An adult seen at Piuval.

Common Potoo (Grey P) *Nyctibius griseus* A fine bird found at Piuval.

White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris* Small flock seen Rio Azul

Grey-rumped Swift *Chaetura cinereiventris* Small numbers Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Pale-rumped Swift *Chaetura egregia* Common Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Chapman's Swift *Chaetura chapmani* Small numbers Cristalino from the towers.

Fork-tailed Palm Swift *Tachornis squamata* Seen Rio Azul.

White-necked Jacobin *Florisuga mellivora* Common at Rio Azul,

Crimson Topaz ♦ *Topaza pella* Common at Rio Azul, where we enjoyed spectacular views of this stunning species.

Rufous-breasted Hermit *Glaucis hirsutus* Seen Rio Azul. Heard Cristalino.

Long-tailed Hermit *Phaethornis superciliosus* Seen Rio Azul.

White-bearded Hermit *Phaethornis hispidus* Small numbers Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Cinnamon-throated Hermit ♦ *Phaethornis nattereri* A single bird near Chapada.

Buff-bellied Hermit ♦ *Phaethornis subochraceus* Seen Pixiam on a couple of days.

Planalto Hermit ♦ *Phaethornis pretrei* A single at Chapada.

White-vented Violetear *Colibri serrirostris* Commonly recorded near Chapada.

Black-eared Fairy *Heliophryx auritus* Single recorded at Cristalino and and near Chapada.

Black-throated Mango *Anthracothonax nigricollis* Seen Rio Azul, where a female was found on a nest.

Amethyst Woodstar *Calliphlox amethystine* Seen Rio Azul around the clearing.

Glittering-bellied Emerald *Chlorostilbon lucidus* A few noted.

Grey-breasted Sabrewing *Campylopterus largipennis* Small numbers Rio Azul.

Fork-tailed Woodnymph *Thalurania furcata* Small numbers Rio Azul.

Swallow-tailed Hummingbird *Eupetomena macroura* A few near Chapada.

Glittering-throated Emerald *Chionomesa fimbriata* Seen Chapada and Pantanal.

Rufous-throated Sapphire *Hylocharis sapphirine* Single male recorded at Rio Azul.

Gilded Sapphire *Hylocharis chrysura* Seen Pixiam. Usually a more obvious denizen of the flooded scrublands.

American Barn Owl *Tyto furcata* A few noted at Piuval: a pair with well grown young and another adult.

Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia* Small numbers throughout.

Amazonian Pygmy Owl ♦ *Glaucidium hardyi* Seen well at Cristalino after some back and forth.

Ferruginous Pygmy Owl *Glaucidium brasilianum* A single found at the Onca Pintada lodge. Others heard.

Great Horned Owl *Bubo virginianus* Found at dusk near Porto Joffre.

Crested Owl *Lophotrix cristata* A spectacular bird worked into an open low canopy for great looks at Cristalino.

King Vulture *Sarcorampus papa* A few at Cristalino.

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus* Small numbers throughout, although common in Cuiaba and Sao Paul.

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura* Commonly noted.

Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture *Cathartes burrovianus* Abundant in the Pantanal.

Greater Yellow-headed Vulture *Cathartes melambrotus* A few at Cristalino.

Pearl Kite *Gampsonyx swainsonii* A single bird seen near Alta Floresta.

White-tailed Kite *Elanus leucurus* Seen Rio Azul.

Harpy Eagle *Harpia harpyja* One well developed, hungry impatient youngster seen near Bauxi, north of Cuiaba.

Swallow-tailed Kite *Elanoides forficatus* Seen at Chapada.

Sharp-shinned Hawk *Accipiter [striatus] ventralis* A single seen at Veu de Novia.

Double-toothed Kite *Harpagus bidentatus* A single bird seen from the Chip Harper tower.

Rufous-thighed Kite *Harpagus diodon* An adult and an immature bird at Rio Azul. An unexpected sighting.

Plumbeous Kite *Ictinia plumbea* Commonly noted.

Mississippi Kite ♦ *Ictinia mississippiensis* A flock of nine passing over at Rio Azul.

Crane Hawk *Geranospiza caerulescens* A single bird found at Piuval. Others near Porto Joffre. The form here is *brevipes*, which differs significantly from Amazonian forms and is probably a distinct species.

Black-collared Hawk *Busarellus nigricollis* Common in the Pantanal.

Snail Kite *Rostrhamus sociabilis* Abundant in the Pantanal.

Savanna Hawk *Buteogallus meridionalis* 1 Chapada, common in the Pantanal.

Great Black Hawk *Buteogallus urubitinga* 1 Cristalino. Also Pantanal.

Roadside Hawk *Rupornis magnirostris* A few noted. Cerrado and Pantanal form differs from that in the Amazon basin.

White-tailed Hawk *Geranoaetus albicaudatus* A few noted Rio Azul, Chapada and Pantanal.

Grey-lined Hawk *Buteo nitidus* A single bird at Chapada.

Short-tailed Hawk *Buteo brachyurus* An adult dark phase bird at Chapada. A leader only observation, while the Pheasant Cuckoo was on show.

Pavonine Quetzal *Pharomachrus pavoninus* A spectacular male at Rio Azul.

Green-backed Trogon *Trogon viridis* Common at Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Amazonian Trogon *Trogon ramonianus* A few at Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Blue-crowned Trogon *Trogon curucui* Common Rio Azul, Cristalino, Chapada, and Piuval.

Amazonian Black-throated Trogon *Trogon rufus* Heard-only. Rio Azul.

Collared Trogon *Trogon collaris* Not uncommon at Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Amazonian Motmot *Momotus Momota* Seen at Chapada.

Ringed Kingfisher *Megaceryle torquata* Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Amazon Kingfisher *Chloroceryle amazona* Common at Cristalino.

American Pygmy Kingfisher *Chloroceryle aenea* A single bird at Cristalino.

Green Kingfisher *Chloroceryle americana* Several seen Cristalino.

Green-and-rufous Kingfisher *Chloroceryle inda* A single bird at Rio Azul.

Blue-necked Jacamar ♦ *Galbula cyanicollis* Found at Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Rufous-tailed Jacamar *Galbula ruficauda* Rio Azul, Chapada and Pantanal.

Bronzy Jacamar *Galbula leucogastra* Common at Rio Azul.

Paradise Jacamar *Galbula dea* Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Spotted Puffbird *Bucco tamatia* Seen Rio Azul.

Eastern Striolated Puffbird ♦ *Nystalus [striolatus] torridus* A pair at Rio Azul.

White-eared Puffbird *Nystalus chacuru* Common Chapada.

Spot-backed Puffbird ♦ *Nystalus maculatus* Common Chapada and heard Piuval.

Swallow-winged Puffbird (Swallow-wing) *Chelidoptera tenebrosa* Abundant Rio Azul.

Black-fronted Nunbird *Monasa nigrifrons* Rio Azul and Cristalino.

White-fronted Nunbird *Monasa morphoeus* A few at Cristalino.

White-necked Puffbird *Notharchus hyperrhynchus* A pair at Christalino from the Ted Parker tower.

Brown-banded Puffbird ♦ *Notharchus ordii* Not uncommon at Rio Azul.

Black-girdled Barbet ♦ *Capito dayi* A couple of pairs at Cristalino.

Toco Toucan *Ramphastos toco* Seen Chapada and Piuval.

White-throated Toucan (Red-billed T) *Ramphastos tucanus* Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Channel-billed Toucan *Ramphastos vitellinus* Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Lettered Aracari *Pteroglossus inscriptus* Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Chestnut-eared Aracari *Pteroglossus castanotis* Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Curly-crested Aracari *Pteroglossus beauharnaisii* Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Red-necked Aracari ♦ *Pteroglossus bitorquatus* Rio Azul and Cristalino from the towers.

Gould's Toucanet ♦ *Selenidera gouldii* Rio Azul from the tower. Heard Cristalino.

Bar-breasted Piculet ♦ (Golden-fronted P) *Picumnus aurifrons* Around the clearing at Rio Azul. Heard Cristalino.

White-wedged Piculet ♦ *Picumnus albosquamatus* Seen Chapada.

Lineated Woodpecker *Dryocopus lineatus* First seen Rio Azul. Then Pantanal.

Ringed Woodpecker *Celeus torquatus* Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Variable Woodpecker (Scaly-breasted W) *Celeus [undatus] grammicus* First seen Rio Azul and common Cristalino.

Cream-colored Woodpecker *Celeus flavus* Rio Azul and elsewhere.

Pale-crested Woodpecker ♦ *Celeus lugubris* A few noted at Piuval and Pixiam.

Yellow-throated Woodpecker *Piculus flavigula* Rio Azul from the tower.

Golden-green Woodpecker *Piculus chrysochloros* Heard-only. Heard Porto Jofre.

Green-barred Woodpecker *Colaptes melanochloros* A common bird in the Pantanal.

Campo Flicker *Colaptes campestris* A couple of pairs at Chapada and more in the Pantanal.

Red-necked Woodpecker *Campephilus rubricollis* A few noted at Rio Azul.

Crimson-crested Woodpecker *Campephilus melanoleucos* A couple found in the Pantanal

White Woodpecker *Melanerpes candidus* A group of three at Piuval and another group along the Cuiaba river.

Yellow-tufted Woodpecker *Melanerpes cruentatus* A common species.

Checkered Woodpecker *Veniliornis mixtus* A very confiding pair at Chapada.

Little Woodpecker *Veniliornis passerinus* A few at Chapada, more in the Pantanal.

Red-stained Woodpecker *Veniliornis affinis* Seen Cristalino.

Red-legged Seriema *Cariama cristata* Heard-only. Chapada.

Laughing Falcon *Herpetotheres cachinans* Heard Cristalino. Seen Chapada.

Cryptic Forest Falcon ♦ *Micrastur mintoni* A flighty individual seen at Cristalino.

Crested Caracara (Southern C) *Caracara plancus* Common.

Red-throated Caracara *Ibycter americanus* A pair at Cristalino.

Yellow-headed Caracara *Daptrius chimachima* Increasing.

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius* Not uncommon around Alta Floresta.

Bat Falcon *Falco ruficularis* A pair at Piuval and another at Porto Jofre.

Dusky-billed Parrotlet *Forpus modestus* A small group seen at Rio Azul.

Monk Parakeet *Myiopsitta monachus* Abundant.

Yellow-chevrons Parakeet *Brotogeris chiriri* Small groups seen Chapada,

Golden-winged Parakeet *Brotogeris chrysoptera* Numerous small groups Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Bald Parrot ♦ *Pyrilia aurantiocephala* The top target for Rio Azul. We saw several small flocks.

Blue-headed Parrot *Pionus menstruus* Common.

Turquoise-fronted Amazon (Blue-f A, T-f Parrot) *Amazona aestiva* Common in the Pantanal.

(Southern) Mealy Amazon (S M Parrot) *Amazona farinose* A pair seen at Ro Azul.

Kawall's Amazon ♦ *Amazona kawalli* Several pairs noted Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Orange-winged Amazon (O-w Parrot) *Amazona amazonica* A few pairs Rio Azul.

Red-fan Parrot *Deroptyus accipitrinus* Seen at Cristalino.

White-bellied Parrot *Pionites leucogaster* Seen at Rio Azul and Cristalino

Santarem Parakeet ♦ *Pyrrhura amazonum* Seen at Rio Azul and Cristalino

Hyacinth Macaw ♦ *Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus* 10 seen at Rio Azul coming to roost. Also seen throughout Pantanal.

Nanday Parakeet ♦ (Black-hooded P) *Aratinga nenday* Uncommon. Regularly seen Pixiam.

Red-bellied Macaw *Orthopsittaca manilatus* Seen commonly Rio Azul. Fewer at Cristalino

Blue-winged Macaw ♦ *Primolius maracana* Uncommon. Pairs noted Rio Azul. Great views of a pair at Chapada.

Golden-collared Macaw ♦ (Yellow-collared M) *Primolius auricollis* A few pairs recorded at Piuval and Pixiam.

Blue-and-yellow Macaw *Ara ararauna* Common at Rio Azul. Fewer elsewhere.

Chestnut-fronted Macaw *Ara severus* Several pairs noted at Rio Azul and others at Cristalino.

Scarlet Macaw *Ara macao* A few at Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Red-and-green Macaw *Ara chloropterus* The common big Macaw.

Peach-fronted Parakeet *Eupsittula aurea* Seen at Chapada.

Red-shouldered Macaw *Diopsittaca nobilis* Seen at Chapada, where numerous.

White-eyed Parakeet *Psittacara leucophthalmus* Abundant Rio Azul, over 1000 seen each day.

Dwarf Tyrant-Manakin *Tyrannetes stolzmanni* Numerous Rio Azul.

Helmeted Manakin ♦ *Chiroxiphia galeata* A splendid male near Porto Jofre.

Black Manakin ♦ *Xenopipo atronitens* Heard-only. Heard only at Rio Azul.

Snow-capped Manakin ♦ *Lepidothrix nattereri* Seen at forest pools at Cristalino

Flame-crested Manakin ♦ *Heterocercus linteatus* Seen at Rio Azul and Cristalino. The male at Cristalino was superb.

Fiery-capped Manakin *Machaeropterus pyrocephalus* Seen at Rio Azul, where numerous.

White-crowned Manakin *Pseudopipra pipra* Common at Rio Azul and Cristalino

Red-headed Manakin *Ceratopipra rubrocapilla* Seen at Rio Azul and Cristalino

Amazonian Umbrellabird *Cephalopterus ornatus* Superb lek at Cristalino is always worth visiting. Up to 5 displaying males present on this occasion.

Bare-necked Fruitcrow *Gymnoderus foetidus* A few seen at Cristalino.

Pompadour Cotinga *Xipholena punicea* At least three seen at Cristalino.

Spangled Cotinga *Cotinga cayana* A not uncommon species from the towers st Cristalino.

Screaming Piha *Lipaugus vociferans* Heard-only. Heard only at Cristalino. No leks operating!

Cinereous Mourner *Laniocera hypopyrra* A couple seen.

Brown-winged Schiffornis *Schiffornis turdine* A few found at Rio Azul. A great sound highly evocative of rainforest soundscape.

Masked Tityra *Tityra semifasciata* We did find several pairs.

White-winged Becard *Pachyramphus polychopterus* Heard-only. Pixiam

Wing-barred Piprites *Piprites chloris* A species we did find at Rio Azul.

Golden-crowned Spadebill *Platyrinchus coronatus* Heard-only. Heard Rio Azul and Cristalino.

White-crested Spadebill *Platyrinchus platyrhynchos* Heard-only. Heard Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Sepia-capped Flycatcher *Leptopogon amaurocephalus* Seen at Cristalino.

Ochre-bellied Flycatcher *Mionectes oleagineus* Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Yellow-olive Flatbill *Tolmomyias sulphurescens* Recorded at Piuval and Porto Jore in dry woodlands.

Zimmer's Flatbill *Tolmomyias assimilis* Previously known as Yellow-margined Flycatcher. Also highly distinctive.

Grey-crowned Flatbill *Tolmomyias poliocephalus* In the sand forest at Rio Azul.

Ochre-lored Flatbill *Tolmomyias flaviventris* Commonly recorded.

Common Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum cinereum* Pantanal species on this tour.

Yellow-browed Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum chrysocrotaphum* Canopy species seen several loations.

Rusty-fronted Tody-Flycatcher ♦ *Poecilotriccus latirostris* Heard-only. Humid scrub in the Pantanal.

Snethlage's Tody-Tyrant ♦ *Hemitriccus minor* Rio Azul and Cristalino.

White-bellied Tody-Tyrant ♦ *Hemitriccus griseipectus* Rio Azul not uncommon.

Pearly-vented Tody-Tyrant *Hemitriccus margaritaceiventer* Common Piuval.

Zimmer's Tody-Tyrant ♦ *Hemitriccus minimus* A single bird finally seen at Rio Azul.

Short-tailed Pygmy Tyrant *Myiornis ecaudatus* Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Cliff Flycatcher *Hirundinea ferruginea* Chapada at Veu de Novia.

Rufous-sided Pygmy Tyrant ♦ *Euscarthmus rufimarginatus* Single bird found near Chapada.

Plain Inezia ♦ *Inezia inornata* Heard-only. Piuval.

Amazonian Inezia (A Tyrannulet) *Inezia subflava* Seen on the Teles Pirres river.

White-lored Tyrannulet *Ornithion inerme* Canopy species seen at Cristalino.

Southern Beardless Tyrannulet *Camptostoma obsoletum* Common.

Yellow-crowned Tyrannulet *Tyrannulus elatus* Common Rio Azul.

Forest Elaenia *Myiopagis gaimardii* Common in dry woodlands.

Plain-crested Elaenia *Elaenia cristata* Chapada.

Yellow-bellied Elaenia *Elaenia flavogaster* Chapada.

Lesser Elaenia *Elaenia chiriquensis* Chapada.

Suiriri Flycatcher ♦ *Suiriri suiriri* At Chapada we saw several pairs.

Subtropical Doradito ♦ *Pseudocolopteryx acutipennis* A single bird found near Porto Jofre.

Large-headed Flatbill *Ramphotrigon megacephalum* Heard-only. Cristalino.

Rufous-tailed Flatbill *Ramphotrigon ruficauda* Easily found Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Sibilant Sirystes *Sirystes sibilator* An odd record. We found a single bird at Veu de Novia.

Rufous Casiornis *Casiornis rufus* Not uncommon.

Greyish Mourner *Rhytipterna simplex* Recorded Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Pale-bellied Mourner ♦ *Rhytipterna immunda* Recorded Rio Azul in the White sand forest

Swainson's Flycatcher *Myiarchus swainsoni* Seen Rio Azul.

Short-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus ferox* Commonly recorded.

Brown-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus tyrannulus* Recorded dry forests throughout.

Piratic Flycatcher *Legatus leucophaeus* A few Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Bright-rumped Attila *Attila spadiceus* Heard commonly. One seen Cristalino.

White-eyed Attila *Attila bolivianus* Seen near Porto Jofre.

Cattle Tyrant *Machetornis rixosa* Abundant.

Lesser Kiskadee *Philohydor lictor* Recorded Pantanal.

Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus* Abundant

Rusty-margined Flycatcher *Myiozetetes cayanensis* Common throughout.

Dusky-chested Flycatcher *Myiozetetes luteiventris* A few at Cristalino.

Boat-billed Flycatcher *Megarynchus pitangua* Recorded Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Variegated Flycatcher *Empidonomus varius* Recorded from the towers at Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Crowned Slaty Flycatcher *Empidonomus aurantioatrocristatus* Recorded Cristalino.

Fork-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus savana* Common on the airstrip at Rio Azul. A few elsewhere.

White-throated Kingbird *Tyrannus albigularis* Recorded Chapada.

Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus* Commonly recorded.

Chapada Flycatcher ♦ *Guyramemua affine* Recorded Chapada, where its striking display was observed.

Long-tailed Tyrant *Colonia colonus* A pair seen at Cristalino.

White-headed Marsh Tyrant *Arundinicola leucocephala* Common Pantanal.

Black-backed Water Tyrant *Fluvicola albiventer* Numerous in the Pantanal.

Scarlet (Vermilion) Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus* Several seen at Piuval

Drab Water Tyrant *Ochthornis littoralis* Seen along the Teles Pires river.

White-rumped Monjita *Xolmis velatus* Recorded Piuval. A lovely tyrannid.

Grey Monjita *Nengetus cinereus* Also recorded Piuval and also a beautifully marked species.

Collared Crescentchest ♦ *Melanopareia torquata* Heard-only. Despite several lengthy attempts we did not see this species.

Chestnut-belted Gnateater ♦ *Conopophaga aurita snethlageae* At least two pairs of this delightful creature at Cristalino. This form, together with *pallida* probably represent a distinct species; Snethlage's Gnateater.

Spot-winged Antshrike *Pygoptila stellaris* Seen Cristalino.

Pygmy Antwren *Myrmotherula brachyura* Recorded Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Sclater's Antwren ♦ *Myrmotherula sclateri* Heard Rio Azul and seen Cristalino.

Amazonian Streaked Antwren *Myrmotherula multostriata* Recorded Rio Azul and Cristalino.

White-flanked Antwren *Myrmotherula axillaris* Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Long-winged Antwren *Myrmotherula longipennis* Heard-only. Heard but not seen Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Grey Antwren *Myrmotherula menetriesii* Observed in mixed flocks Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Southern White-fringed Antwren *Formicivora grisea* Recorded white sand forest Rio Azul.

Black-bellied Antwren ♦ *Formicivora melanogaster* A single female found Piuval.

Rusty-backed Antwren *Formicivora rufa* Recorded Chapada.

Plain-throated Antwren *Isleria hauxwelli* A few at Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Saturnine Antshrike ♦ *Thamnomanes saturninus* Recorded Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Cinereous Antshrike *Thamnomanes caesius* Observed Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Fasciated Antshrike *Cymbilaimus lineatus* Noted Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Great Antshrike *Taraba major* Pantanal.

Plain Antvireo *Dysithamnus mentalis* Dry woodlands Chapada

Large-billed Antwren ♦ *Herpsilochmus longirostris* Chapada.

Rusty-winged Antwren *Herpsilochmus frater* Recorded Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Glossy Antshrike ♦ *Sakesphorus luctuosus* A pair of this delightful Thanophilid at Cristalino.

Barred Antshrike *Thamnophilus doliatus* Common

Rufous-winged Antshrike ♦ *Thamnophilus torquatus* A few pairs near Chapada

Plain-winged Antshrike *Thamnophilus schistaceus* A flock leader. Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Natterer's Slaty Antshrike ♦ *Thamnophilus stictocephalus* Rio Azul. Another tail pumping Thamnophilid.

Planalto Slaty Antshrike ♦ *Thamnophilus pelzelni* Several noted near Chapada.

Xingu Scale-backed Antbird ♦ *Willisornis vidua nigrigula* Common at Cristalino.

Black-spotted Bare-eye *Phlegopsis nigromaculata* A couple of pairs at Cristalino.

Bare-eyed Antbird ♦ *Rhegmatorhina gymnops* Spectacular bird whose ghostly eye rings glow in the half light.

Grey Antbird *Cercomacra cinerascens* Heard-only. In the vine tangles.

Mato Grosso Antbird ♦ *Cercomacra melanaria* A smart Antbird of the Pantanal.

Spix's Warbling Antbird ♦ *Hypocnemis striata* A common understorey species at Rio Azl and Cristalino.

Yellow-browed Antbird *Hypocnemis hypoxantha* A few at Rio Azul.

Band-tailed Antbird *Hypocnemoides maculicauda* A few at Rio Azl and Cristalino.

Spot-backed Antbird *Hylophylax naevius* Seen and heard at Cristalino.

Dot-backed Antbird *Hylophylax punctulatus* Seen and heard at Cristalino.

Rufous-faced Antbird ♦ *Myrmelastes rufifacies* A single male at Cristalino.

Black-faced Antbird *Myrmoborus myiotherinus* A tricky Antbird. Seen briefly at Rio Azul.

Western Fire-eye *Pyriglena maura* Observed at Chapada in tall woodlands.

Alta Floresta Antpitta ♦ *Hylopezus whittakeri* A star performer at Cristalino.

Rufous-capped Antthrush *Formicarius colma* A cooperative individual seen at Cristalino.

Spot-throated Woodcreeper *Certhiasomus stictolaemus* Heard-only. Unfortunately heard only at Rio Azul.

Olivaceous Woodcreeper *Sittasomus griseicapillus* Widely observed.

Mournful Long-tailed woodcreeper *Deconychura pallida* Heard-only. Again heard only at Cristalino. Damn thing!

Long-billed Woodcreeper *Nasica longirostris* Heard-only. It was a feature of the Woodcreepers that they called infrequently and did not respond to playback.

Amazonian Barred Woodcreeper *Dendrocolaptes certhia* Heard-only. Again.

Great Rufous Woodcreeper ♦ *Xiphocolaptes major* We saw this huge Woodcreeper at Piuval.

Spix's Woodcreeper ♦ *Xiphorhynchus spixii* Seen Rio Azul.

Buff-throated Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus guttatus* Few seen, but many heard at sites throughout.

Straight-billed Woodcreeper *Dendroplex picus* Recorded at Piuval.

Red-billed Scythebill *Campylorhamphus trochilrostris* A spectacular individual seen at Piuval.

Narrow-billed Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes angustirostris* Chapada, where common.

Amazonian Xenops *Xenops genibaribis* A few at Rio Azul.

Rufous-rumped Foliage-gleaner *Neophilydor erythrocerum* Several pairs at Cristalino

Rufous-tailed Foliage-gleaner *Anabacerthia ruficaudata* Rio Azul.

Chestnut-winged Hookbill *Ancistrops strigilatus* A superb bird seen at Cristalino.

Ochre-throated (Buff-throated) Foliage-gleaner *Automolus ochrolaemus* Seen Cristalino.

Pale-legged Hornero *Furnarius leucopus* Common in the wetter areas of the Pantanal.

Rufous Hornero *Furnarius rufus* Abundant.

Rufous-fronted Thornbird (Common T) *Phacellodomus rufifrons*

Greater Thornbird *Phacellodomus ruber* Numerous in the Pantanal.

Grey-crested Cachalote ♦ (Rufous C) *Pseudoseisura unirufa* Common in the Pantanal.

Rusty-backed Spinetail *Cranioleuca vulpine* Common in the wetter sections of the Pantanal.

Chotoy Spinetail *Schoeniophylax phryganophilus* A stunning species we saw many times in the Pantanal.

Yellow-chinned Spinetail *Certhiaxis cinnamomeus* Abundant in the Pantanal.

White-lored Spinetail ♦ *Synallaxis albilora* Quite common in the Pantanal.

Cinereous-breasted Spinetail ♦ *Synallaxis hypospodia* A pair found in the Pantanal.

Pale-breasted Spinetail *Synallaxis albescens* Commonly recorded.

Sooty-fronted Spinetail *Synallaxis frontalis* Recorded at Chapada.

Ruddy Spinetail *Synallaxis rutilans* An obliging pair at Rio Azul was a good record.

Rufous-browed Peppershrike *Cyclarhis gujanensis* Recorded Chapada.

Grey-chested Greenlet ♦ *Hylophilus semicinereus* Not uncommon at Rio Azul.

Slaty-capped Shrike-Vireo *Vireolanius leucotis* Seen Cristalino.

Dusky-capped Greenlet *Pachysylvia hypoxantha* Heard-only. Probably seen at Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Purplish Jay ♦ *Cyanocorax cyanomelas* Common in the Pantanal.

Curl-crested Jay ♦ *Cyanocorax cristatellus* Commonly observed at Chapada.

Plush-crested Jay *Cyanocorax chrysops* Seen Rio Azul in the white sand forests.

Black-capped Donacobius *Donacobius atricapilla* Common in the Pantanal.

White-winged Swallow *Tachycineta albiventer* A common bird.

White-rumped Swallow *Tachycineta leucorrhoa* A few near Porto Jofre.

Grey-breasted Martin *Progne chalybea* Small numbers throughout.

Brown-chested Martin *Progne tapera* Small numbers in the Pantanal.

Southern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis* Common.

White-banded Swallow *Atticora fasciata* A stunning Swallow we saw at Cristalino.

Black-collared Swallow *Pygochelidon melanoleuca* Seen Cristalino on the rapids

Trilling Gnatwren *Ramphocaenus melanurus* Common Rio Azul

Masked Gnatcatcher *Poliophtila dumicola* Common Piuval.

Thrush-like Wren *Campylorhynchus turdinus* A common very noisy Wren

Southern House Wren *Troglodytes musculus* Recorded on one day near Chapada.

Tooth-billed Wren ♦ *Odontorchilus cinereus* Recorded at Cristalino. Great views of this regional speciality.

Moustached Wren *Pheugopedius genibarbis* Chapada, where not uncommon in taller woodlands.

Buff-breasted Wren *Cantorchilus leucotis* Seen at several sites.

Fawn-breasted Wren ♦ *Cantorchilus guarayanus* A few pairs in the Pantanal.

Chalk-browed Mockingbird *Mimus saturninus* Common

Pale-breasted Thrush *Turdus leucomelas* The common thrush.

Cream-bellied Thrush *Turdus amaurochalinus* Common near Porto Jofre.

Rufous-bellied Thrush *Turdus rufiventris* Numerous in the Pantanal.

House Sparrow (introduced) *Passer domesticus* Yes.

Yellowish Pipit *Anthus chii* A few found displaying in the Pantanal.

Purple-throated Euphonia *Euphonia chlorotica* Chapada, where mostly heard.

White-lored Euphonia (Golden-bellied E) *Euphonia chrysopasta* Rio Azul and Cristalino from the towers..

Orange-bellied Euphonia *Euphonia xanthogaster* We did see a few at Rio Azul.

Rufous-bellied Euphonia *Euphonia rufiventris* Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Grassland Sparrow *Ammodramus humeralis* Common Rio Azul and Pantanal.

Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis* Great views at Chapada. A stunning little bird.

Red-breasted Blackbird *Leistes militaris* Common en route to Rio Azul and Cristalino.

White-browed Blackbird *Leistes supercilialis* Abundant Pantanal near Porto Jofre. Many birds without white brows.

Crested Oropendola *Psarocolius decumanus* Commonly recorded, especially in the Pantanal.

Olive Oropendola (Para O, Amazonian O) *Psarocolius bifasciatus* A few at Cristalino.

Green Oropendola *Psarocolius viridis* A couple of birds at Cristalino. Seemingly out of range, but there are records.

Solitary Cacique *Cacicus solitarius* Common in the Pantanal.

Yellow-rumped Cacique *Cacicus cela* Small numbers throughout.

Epaulet Oriole *Icterus cayanensis* Cristalino.

Variable Oriole *Icterus pyrrhopterus* Seen Pixiam and Porto Jofre.

Orange-backed Troupial *Icterus croconotus* Small numbers Pantanal.

Shiny Cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis* Common.

Giant Cowbird *Molothrus oryzivorus* Common in the Pantanal.

Scarlet-headed Blackbird ♦ *Amblyramphus holosericeus* A few in the Pantanal.

Chopi Blackbird *Gnorimopsar chopi* Common in the Pantanal.

Unicolored Blackbird *Agelasticus cyanopus* Abundant in the Pantanal.

Greyish Baywing *Agelaioides badius* Common in the Pantanal.

Tropical Parula *Setophaga pitaiayumi* A few noted.

Flavescent Warbler *Myiothlypis flaveola* A few at Chapada.

Golden-crowned Warbler *Basileuterus culicivorus* A couple of pairs at Chapada.

Rose-breasted Chat ♦ *Granatellus pelzelni* This beauty was recorded at Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Amazonian Grosbeak (Rothschild's G) *Cyanoloxia rothschildii* Heard-only. We did not look for this.

Red-crowned Ant Tanager *Habia rubica* A few at Cristalino.

Red-billed Pied Tanager ♦ *Lamprospiza melanoleuca* A family group seen from the Ted Parker tower.

Swallow Tanager *Tersina viridis* Common.

Short-billed Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes nitidus* Seen at Rio Azul.

Purple Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes caeruleus* Common.

Black-faced Dacnis *Dacnis lineata* A few noted of this very pretty creature.

Yellow-bellied Dacnis *Dacnis flaviventer* A single male at Rio Azul.

Blue Dacnis *Dacnis cayana* Common.

Green Honeycreeper *Chlorophanes spiza* A couple observed.

Guira Tanager *Hemithraupis guira* Seen Chapada.

Orange-headed Tanager *Thlypopsis sordida* A couple near Porto Jofre.

Blue-black Grassquit *Volatinia jacarina* Common Rio Azul and Pantanal.

Grey-headed Tanager *Eucometis penicillata* A few seen Chapada and Piuval.

Flame-crested Tanager *Loriotus cristatus* A single male seen from the Ted Parker tower.

White-shouldered Tanager *Loriotus luctuosus* A pair at Cristalino.

Red Pileated Finch *Coryphospingus cucullatus* Common at Chapada.

White-winged Shrike-Tanager *Lanio versicolor* Seen Cristalino.

Silver-beaked Tanager *Ramphocelus carbo* Abundant.

Chestnut-vented Conebill *Conirostrum speciosum* Seen Chapada and Piuval.

Saffron Finch *Sicalis flaveola* Common.

Grassland Yellow Finch *Sicalis luteola* A few noted at Piuval.

Black-throated Saltator ♦ *Saltatricula atricollis* Seen Chapada, where numerous.

Buff-throated Saltator *Saltator maximus* A few noted.

Bluish-grey Saltator *Saltator coerulescens* Common in the Pantanal.

Green-winged Saltator *Saltator similis* A single bird seen at Chapada.

Slate-colored Grosbeak (S-c Saltator) *Saltator grossus* Heard-only. Heard at Cristalino.

Yellow-bellied Seedeater *Sporophila nigricollis* A few noted at Rio Azul.

Double-collared Seedeater *Sporophila caerulescens* A few at Chapada.

Plumbeous Seedeater *Sporophila plumbea* Common Chapada.

Rusty-collared Seedeater *Sporophila collaris* Common in the wetter parts of the Pantanal.

White-rumped Tanager ♦ *Cypsnagra hirundinacea* Common Chapada

Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola* Small numbers throughout.

Shrike-like Tanager ♦ (White-banded T) *Neothraupis fasciata*

Cinnamon Tanager *Schistochlamys ruficapillus* Several pairs in the Cerrado at Chapada.

Black-faced Tanager *Schistochlamys melanopis* Several groups in the Cerrado at Chapada.

Red-crested Cardinal *Paroaria coronata* Recorded in the Pantanal.

Red-capped Cardinal *Paroaria gularis* Recorded Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Yellow-billed Cardinal ♦ *Paroaria capitata* Seen in the Pantanal.

Turquoise Tanager *Tangara mexicana* Common at Rio Azul.

Opal-rumped Tanager *Tangara velia* We saw this stunning bird at Cristalino.

Bay-headed Tanager *Tangara gyrola* A few at Rio Azul.

Green-and-gold Tanager *Tangara schrankii* Common at Rio Azul.

Blue-grey Tanager *Thraupis episcopus* Commonly recorded Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Sayaca Tanager *Thraupis sayaca* Common Chapada and Pantanal.

Palm Tanager *Thraupis palmarum* Common.

Dotted Tanager ♦ *Ixothraupis varia* A pair at Cristalino.

Burnished-buff Tanager *Stilpnia cayana* Recorded Chapada.

Masked Tanager *Stilpnia nigrocincta* A few at Rio Azul.

Blue-necked Tanager *Stilpnia cyanicollis* Common at Rio Azul.

MAMMALS

Giant Anteater *Myrmecophaga tridactyla* A superb adult at Piuval.

Brown Capuchin (Guianan B C) *Sapajus apella* Seen Cristalino.

Azara's Capuchin *Sapajus cay* Recorded Piuval and Pixiam.

Bearded Capuchin (Black-striped C) *Sapajus libidinosus* Seen Chapada.

Snethlage's Marmoset ♦ (Emilia's M) *Mico emiliae* Three seen at Cristalino.

Black-tailed Marmoset *Mico melanurus* One seen at Piuval.

Azara's Night Monkey ♦ *Aotus azarae* A small troop found in the cold at Piuval.

Feline Night Monkey *Aotus infulatus* Passed through the Rio Azul lodge grounds.

Red-nosed Bearded Saki ♦ (White-n B S) *Chiropotes albinasus* A large troop observed at Rio Azul.

Red-bellied Titi (Dusky T) *Plecturocebus moloch* Heard-only. Rio Azul and Cristalino. Hard to actually see.

Black-and-gold Howler *Alouatta caraya* Seen Piuval in good numbers.

Spix's Red-handed Howler ♦ *Alouatta discolor* Heard-only. Heard distantly at Rio Azul. Again, hard to see.

White-whiskered Spider Monkey ♦ (W-whiskered) *Ateles marginatus* Seen Rio Azul and Cristalino.

Common Tapeti (Brazilian Cottontail Rabbit) *Sylvilagus brasiliensis* Seen at Piuval.

Azara's Agouti *Dasyprocta azarae* A few seen throughout.

Greater Capybara *Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris* Common.

Brazilian Guinea Pig *Cavia aperea* Seen near Porto Jofre

Guianan Squirrel *Sciurus aestuans* Seen at Cristalino.

Proboscis Bat *Rhynchonycteris naso* Common at Cristalino. Small bat seen roosting on exposed tree trunks and branches over water at Rio Azul and Cristalino, characteristically in closely spaced rows.

Lesser Bulldog Bat *Noctilio albiventris* Abundant in the Pantanal. Medium-sized reddish-brown bat commonly seen hawking insects low over rivers, lagoons and ponds. It is genuinely one of the commonest bats recorded in Pantanal surveys.

Greater Bulldog Bat *Noctilio leporinus* Alta Floresta/Cristalino and Pantanal. Large, powerful reddish-brown bat seen flying low over rivers and lakes at dusk, where it takes fish and other aquatic prey.

***Seba's Short-tailed Bat** *Carollia perspicillata* Common in forest and secondary growth at Alta Floresta/Cristalino and highly likely

among the small bats seen around lodge clearings.

Flat-faced Fruit-eating Bat *Artibeus planirostris Very common in the Pantanal, especially around fruiting trees and wooded areas. A likely identity for medium-large fruit bats around the trees at Piuval/Pixaim, but difficult to distinguish confidently from other *Artibeus* in flight. The commonest species in Pantanal datasets.

Great Fruit-eating Bat *Artibeus lituratus Common large fruit bat around fruiting trees, gardens and lodge grounds. A plausible identity for the large fruit bats seen at Porto Jofre.

Greater Spear-nosed Bat *Phyllostomus hastatus Very large, dark brown bat occurring in the region. Potentially the large dark bat seen flying through the Cristalino dining area.

Black Myotis *Myotis nigricans Common in the Pantanal; a very small dark aerial insectivore, often hawking around woodland edges, water and lights. "Pipistrelle-like", but small *Myotis* are difficult to identify conclusively in flight. It is the second-most frequently captured species in major Pantanal surveys.

Velvety Free-tailed Bat *Molossus molossus Common around buildings, roofs, clearings and open water in the Pantanal. A very plausible identification for the fast-flying dark bats around the lodge and ponds at Piuval. One of the commonest species in Pantanal surveys.

Jaguarundi *Herpailurus yagouaroundi* An adult observed at Rio Azul.

Ocelot *Leopardus pardalis* A superb adult seen at Pixiam.

Jaguar *Panthera onca* Unbelievable views of at least five in the Pantanal.

Crab-eating Fox *Cerdocyon thous* Numerous at Piuval. One at Pixiam.

Tayra *Eira barbara* A single animal seen at Chapada.

Neotropical River Otter *Lontra longicaudis* Two seen at Cristalino.

Giant River Otter *Pteronura brasiliensis* Two groups seen along the Cuiaba river.

Lowland Tapir (Brazilian T) *Tapirus terrestris* Seen Rio Azul, Cristalino, Piuval and Pixiam.

Collared Peccary (Javelina) *Pecari tajacu* Seen Piuval.

White-lipped Peccary *Tayassu pecari* A large group observed at Cristalino.

Marsh Deer *Blastocerus dichotomus* Seen near Porto Jofre and at Pixiam.

Common Red Brocket (R B Deer) *Mazama americana* A single observed along the Cuiaba river.

Common Brown Brocket (Grey B Deer) *Subulo gouazoubira* Seen at Chapada.

** the following bat identifications would require capture for firm confirmation.*

REPTILES

White Caiman *Caiman jacare* Common throughout.

Green Iguana *Iguana iguana* Seen in the Pantanal

Black and gold Tegu *Salvator merianae* Several Piuval. The large monitor-like lizard.

Giant Ameiva *Amaeiva ameiva* Common. The large lizards with brownish head and upper body and bright green grading to blue tails.

Yellow Anaconda *Eunectes notaeus* A couple seen near Porto Jofre. One 2.5 m individual along the Tranpantaneira.