



APEX
EXPEDITIONS



Brazil

September 3 - 16, 2015





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Expedition Overview

Mention Brazil and the first thing that springs to most people's minds is football, Samba and Carnival. Wildlife aficionados, however, immediately think of the Amazon and the Pantanal, South America's two foremost wildlife wildernesses. In fact, Brazil boasts the highest natural diversity of any country on Earth and yet few have even scratched the surface of its immense natural attractions. Our incredible expedition spanning the full breadth of this vast nation samples the richest sites in the iconic Amazon Basin and combines these with the incomparable wildlife treasures of the Pantanal. From the world's largest rainforest to its largest tropical wetland, Pink River Dolphins to Giant Anteaters and Bald Uakari Monkeys to Jaguars, this is a Neotropical wildlife extravaganza without equal.



© iStock/Mike Lane

Photos: (Cover) Jaguar, Giant Anteater, Bald Uakari.





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Itinerary

Thursday, September 3: Manaus

Arrive in Manaus this afternoon and transfer to our hotel. Gather this evening for a welcome dinner and briefing at the *Park Suites Manaus*.

Friday, September 4: Manaus / Tefé / Mamirauá Reserve

After breakfast, head to the airport for a short flight to Tefé, then board a boat for a scenic trip toward Mamirauá Reserve, stopping whenever wildlife is spotted—Amazon River Dolphins, both the rose-hued Boto and gray Tucuxi, are plentiful around Rios Tefé and Solimões. Arrive in the afternoon at Mamirauá, the world's largest protected *várzea*, or flooded forest. Only four percent of the Brazilian Amazon consists of freshwater swamp forest, and much of it is found within Mamirauá's 7,700 square miles. The region's flooding is caused by the annual melting of the Andean ice caps. This flooding brings a large amount of nutrient-rich sediment from the Andean slopes, thus furnishing an ideal habitat for a huge variety of both aquatic and terrestrial wildlife. Dinner and overnight at the fully-sustainable *Uakari Floating Lodge* within the reserve.

Saturday & Sunday, September 5 & 6: Mamirauá Reserve

Two days will barely feel sufficient to explore this wildlife-rich area. There are 35 species of mammals, 360 birds, and 79 reptiles in Mamirauá, a surprisingly high number of which are endemic—unique adaptations have proven necessary to survive the harsh flood conditions. Two of Mamirauá's greatest attractions are the crimson-visaged Bald Uakari and Black-faced Squirrel Monkeys, both of whose entire range lies within the reserve. Land mammals are relatively rare due to the flooding, but other arboreal mammals such as the Red Howler Monkey, Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth, the long-nosed Southern Coati, and Collared Anteater are quite common. Avifauna highlights include the leaf-eating Hoatzin or Stink Bird, Horned Screamer, Razor-billed Curassow, Slate-colored Hawk, toucans, woodpeckers, jacamars, and more.



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Photos: Hoatzin, Greater Rhea.



This time of year, hiking is often possible on the well-tended trails that stretch across the reserve. If water levels are too high, hop into a canoe and paddle among the channels that jut into the forest. Spectacled Caimans also tend to be at their highest concentrations in September. Together with our local guide we will spend time in spots with the best chance of viewing them. Other options include visiting a local village to get a sense of traditional Amazonian culture. We'll be sure to take in the sights and sounds of a night tour (on foot or by canoe), where we may see Tarantulas, Two-toed Sloths, Amazon Bamboo Rats, and Long-nosed Bats.

Monday, September 7: Mamirauá Reserve / Tefé / Manaus

Enjoy a leisurely boat trip back to Tefé and an afternoon flight to Manaus. Dinner and overnight at the *Park Suites Manaus*.

Tuesday, September 8: Manaus / Brasília / Cuiabá / Alta Floresta / Cristalino State Park

Depart early for flights that span the Amazon, from Manaus to Alta Floresta. Upon arrival, a drive and a boat ride will take you into the stunning 460,000-acre Cristalino State Park. Located in the highlands of the southern Amazon River Basin, Cristalino is strategically situated to preserve a huge swathe of rainforest, acting as an effective buffer between the timber extraction and cattle ranching to the south, and the virgin areas to the north. Your home base for the next two days is *Cristalino Jungle Lodge*, on a 30,000-acre private reserve connected to the park. It is known for being one of the richest places in the Amazon for observing birds, mammals, butterflies and orchids in a primary forest environment. Gather for sunset drinks with a view over the pristine Cristalino River flowing right in front of the lodge. Dinner and overnight at our lodge.

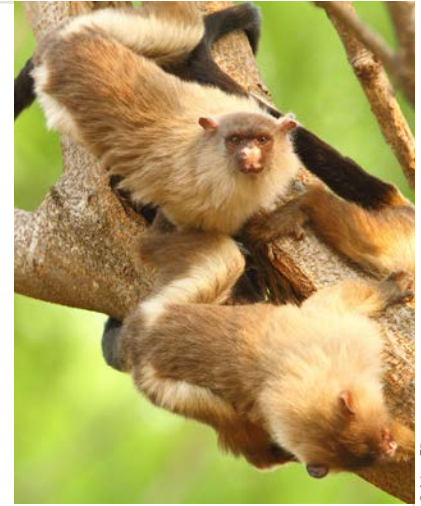
Wednesday & Thursday, September 9 & 10: Cristalino State Park

The lodge's reserve contains a great variety of medium- to low-altitude eco-zones, allowing for great diversity (even by Amazonian standards) of wildlife. From predators like the Jaguar, Harpy Eagle and Giant Otter to herbivores like the Capybara and Agouti, all of the organisms which took thousands of years to evolve and which make Amazonia unlike any other biome in the world are still alive and doing well here. Its location near the junction of two rivers—one a "White-water" and the other a "Black-water" river—gives the reserve a combination of two different soil types which furnish a staggering variety of trees, orchids and bromeliads. 600 bird species are known to live in the region, including many endemics. Among these are the Rufous-capped Nunlet, Chestnut-throated Spinetail, Manu Antbird, Peruvian Recurvebill and Ornate Antwren, as well as many species of parrots, puffbirds, and manakins. Mammals seen most frequently are the diminutive Pantanal Marmoset, White-whiskered Spider and White-nosed Saki Monkeys, Brazilian Tapir, and the Greater Fishing Bat. Cristalino is also one of the best areas in Brazil to observe Green Anaconda, largest of all constricting snakes.

Take in all the area has to offer by hiking on the reserve's many trails, boating down the Cristalino River, and climbing the 50-meter observation tower for a stellar vantage point over the whole area. Dinners and overnights at *Cristalino Jungle Lodge*.

Friday, September 11: Cristalino / Alta Floresta / Cuiabá / Campo Grande / Caiman Ecological Refuge

Return by boat and car to Alta Floresta for your afternoon flight south to Campo Grande. Dine in Campo Grande this evening, then proceed on a four-hour drive



© Adam Riley



© Jonathan Rossouw



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Photos: Pantanal Marmoset, Brazilian Tapir, Red-legged Seriema.



into the southern Pantanal, the world's largest floodplain. The 130,000-acre Caiman Ecological Refuge was once part of a large beef cattle ranch in the Pantanal, and has since been transformed into an enterprising land management model combining the traditional "Pantaneiro" cattle ranching system, conservation programs, and ecotourism. It includes a 14,000-acre protected reserve covering a great variety of habitats that harbor many of the diverse species of the Pantanal, which is home to the highest concentration of wildlife in the Americas. Overnight at *Caiman Lodge* within the reserve.

Saturday – Tuesday, September 12 – 15: Caiman Ecological Refuge

Once a year, the mighty Paraguay River floods its banks, inundating an area ten times that of Botswana's Okavango Delta. As the floodwaters recede in the dry season, this ever-changing mosaic of lagoons, shallow wetlands and higher islands of deciduous forest sets the stage for one of the world's greatest wildlife spectacles.

Herds of Capybaras, largest of all the world's rodents, graze along shores lined with Yacare Caimans, amidst throngs of storks, herons and ibises. At dawn, the surrounding woodland rings to a deafening cacophony of woodcreepers, Guira Cuckoos, antbirds and flycatchers, with Toco Toucan yelping from the treetops and noisy flocks of Turquoise-fronted Amazons winging overhead. Huge Hyacinth Macaws, the avian epitome of the Pantanal's wilderness, are delightfully numerous in copses of palms, while areas of higher ground are home to the spectacular Giant Anteater, Greater Rhea and the peculiar Red-legged Seriema.

Of all the denizens of this watery wilderness, none is more sought-after than the Jaguar. Using detailed local knowledge of the resident population, we'll track the cats by vehicle and on foot, in the hopes of seeing and photographing this largest of American felids. Ranging from northern Mexico to central Argentina, Jaguars are rarely encountered anywhere else, but occur in the Pantanal in their highest density on Earth. The combination of the refuge's open, savanna-like terrain and years of formal protection from hunting brings experiencing the Americas' most charismatic predator into the realm of possibility.

Wednesday, September 16: Campo Grande

Return to Campo Grande and depart on flights homeward.



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Photos: Guira Cuckoos, Jaguar, Capybara, Hyacinth Macaw.



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Your Expedition Leaders

Jonathan Rossouw

Jonathan Rossouw is one of the world's most experienced expedition leaders, having guided wildlife trips in over 150 countries on all seven continents. He combines a legendary energy and enthusiasm with a broad knowledge of all aspects of natural history, gained from three decades spent in the pursuit of the world's mammals, birds, reptiles and coral reef fishes. Indeed, having seen over 8,000 species of birds, 800 mammals and 2,000 coral reef fishes, he will likely experience more species of vertebrate animals than anyone in history!

A medical doctor by training, Jonathan was born and raised on South Africa's east coast and spent his family vacations in the games reserves of Zululand. It was here that the foundation was laid for a lifelong passion for wildlife and wild places and, in 1996, a "short break" to cycle across South America from Buenos Aires to Cusco led to two years spent guiding at eco-lodges in the Amazon and doing bird surveys in the Andes. He returned to Africa to start a birding travel company, before joining Peter Harrison and Shirley Metz, to assist in expanding their global portfolio of natural history destinations. An accomplished photographer, Jonathan's images have appeared in many books and magazines, and he has co-authored birding site guides to Uganda, Southern Africa and Madagascar.



Giovanna Fasanelli

A life-long love affair with the sea propelled Giovanna into the world of marine biology, conservation, underwater photography and natural history documentaries. From an early childhood exploring the rock pools of South Africa's shorelines she immigrated to Australia and wasted no time in getting her PADI Dive Master certification. She has since logged over 1,000 dives throughout the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

Whilst completing her marine biology degree at Australia's James Cook University, Giovanna worked at an underwater film company, gaining experience tagging Tiger Sharks and Green Turtles in the Coral Sea and assisting with film production. This opportunity spawned a decade-long career in television, presenting the latest developments in aquaculture and fisheries science. In 2013 Giovanna worked with National Geographic Channel in co-presenting a documentary series, *Australia: Life on the Edge*, as the marine biologist and submarine pilot showcasing stories from around the continent's shores.

Giovanna's passion for wilderness and animals has driven her to explore habitats around the world from Snow Leopards in the Himalayas to Komodo Dragons in Indonesia and Mountain Gorillas in Uganda. Fast approaching 100 countries visited, Giovanna has extensive experience as a guide and naturalist all over the world. A talented photographer and skilled writer, Giovanna's work is regularly featured in several Australian magazines. Her deep love and concern for the environment has led her to be an advocate for conservation.



"When it comes to expedition travel, in particular, one needs to be led by a knowledgeable, enthusiastic, entertaining and confidence-inspiring professional. We have yet to meet anyone quite like Jonathan who so completely ticks all these boxes!"

– Pat G., Durban



Expedition Details

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\$14,970 Per Person Rate

\$16,570 Solo Rate

14 Days Trip Length

12 Guests Group Size

Manaus / Campo Grande Start/End

Included

Apex Expeditions' rates include all accommodations; all meals, activities and excursions as described in the itinerary; air Manaus/Téfe-Téfe/Manaus-Manaus/Brasília/Cuiabá/Alta Floresta-Alta Floresta/Cuiabá/Campo Grande, as noted in the itinerary; services of two Apex Expedition leaders and local guides throughout the itinerary; local beer and local wines at lunch & dinner; all gratuities; airport transfers; permits and entrance fees; all taxes.

Not Included

Costs not included in the price of your Apex expedition include travel to and from start and end point of trip; premium brand drinks and liquor; travel insurance (Trip Cancellation and Interruption as well as Emergency Medical and Evacuation insurance); airport departure taxes; excess baggage fees; passport and/or visa fees; items of a personal nature (phone calls, laundry, souvenirs, etc.); and independent travel arrangements pre- or post-trip.

Payments & Terms

20% of the trip cost will confirm your place on the expedition. The final balance is due 150 days prior to departure. All prices are quoted in U.S. dollars and must be paid in U.S. dollars. Per person pricing is based on double occupancy. The Solo Rate is paid by participants who specifically request single accommodations and is subject to availability. If you are traveling alone and wish to share accommodations, we will try to match you with a roommate of the same gender. However, if a roommate is not available, the published Solo Rate will be charged. Upon confirming your reservation you will be required to pay the published Solo Rate, if we are able to pair you with a roommate, the applicable difference will be refunded at the time that the final trip payment is due for all participants. Please note that solo accommodations are limited and cannot always be guaranteed throughout. For our full set of Terms & Conditions, please visit our web site at www.apex-expeditions.com.

One-of-a-kind adventures to the world's most fascinating places. Join us.



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Reservation Form

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Person 1: (Primary Contact)

Passport Name: _____

Preferred Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Email Address: _____

Mailing Details:

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____ Country: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Double Solo

Person 2: (If applicable and at same address, otherwise please submit a second Reservation Form.)

Passport Name: _____

Preferred Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Email Address: _____

Deposit Information:

My deposit check is enclosed (20% of total tour fare)

Charge my deposit to my: VISA MasterCard American Express

Card #: _____ Expires: _____ CCV Code: _____

Name on Card: _____

Signature: _____

**Please return this completed form to Apex Expeditions.
E-mail: info@apex-expeditions.com or Mail: 3275 36th Ave SW, Seattle, WA 98126**

