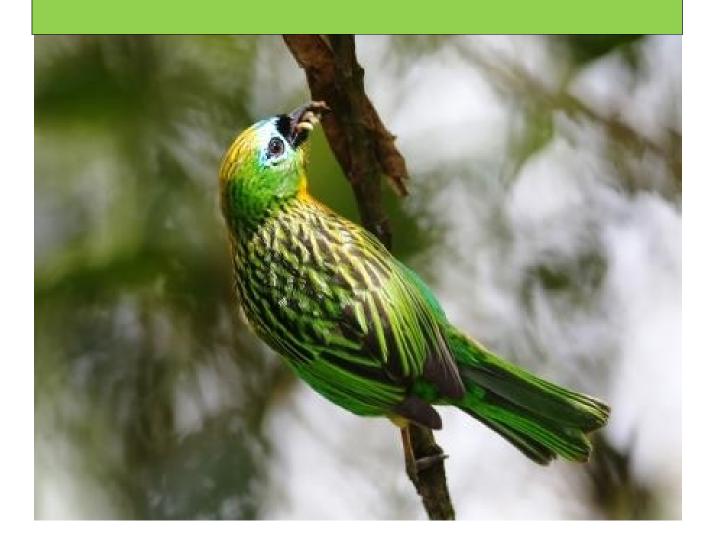
ECOTOURS – WORLDWIDE TRAVEL TOUR TO BRAZIL Atlantic Forest Endemics - Superb Week at 1 centre



Brassy-breasted Tanager – Atlantic Forest Endemic (1 out of more than 70 endemics possible during a week)

Leaders: Gabor Orban & Andrea K.atona



ATLANTIC FOREST ENDEMIC & WILDLIFE BONANZA BRAZIL WILDLIFE & PHOTO TOUR



We planned originally this itinerary as a week-long extension to our annual October or November Pantanal tour, but actually the Atlantic Forest of Brazil is so reach in birds and wildlife that it should be a prime destination itself. It is one of the richest areas on the entire planet in terms of biodiversity, especially the number of endemic bird species but other wildlife as well.

We stay at the Guapi Assu Bird Lodge at Reserva Ecologica de Guapiacu which is a great base for onsight birding and also shorter and longer daily adventures during the week.

It is also quite convenient that the driving distance between the Rio airport and the lodge is just 1,5 or 2 hours. Our idea at this one-base tour that we alternate days spent at or nearby our lodge discovering the various trails with shorter or longer daily excursions to the best birding areas in the region.



When we do this tour as an extension of the Pantanal Tour then we have ann Arrival (or Ground zero) arriving from Cuiaba, Pantanal to Rio and then to the lodge.

Please note that order of the daily programmes can be changed depending on actual weather 1st Day we explore the trails in the reserve, at wetlands, lowland pastures, gardens and sections of primary and secondary rainforest

2nd Day excursion to dry Atlantic Forest near Carmo, 3toed Jacamar Day

3rd Day Waldemor Trail

4th Day full day excursion to Macai de Cima

5th Day 4x4 trail

6th Day full day at the lush montane forests of Pico de Caledonia

7th Day morning at Maroon trail, late afternoon travel to domestic airport



At this time of the year we generally can be lucky with the weather, not much rain however there can be sudden changes, especially when we visit higher elevation areas or when we venture to larger distances. You will be delighted to **record between 200-300 species.** Out of the few hundred species around 60-80 will be endemic without a really serious effort. This means that **almost every third bird species we find should be endemic!** Quite incredible!

Although we have been on tours here several times we will surely use an excellent local guide as well throughout the week to maximize our chance to have an excellent result. We aim to form a great team where all of us help each other not to miss anything. **Gabor** puts the scope on the bird quickly and also helps with a laser pointer with directions while **Andi** helps spotting any new birds and wildlife beside helping in other issues and being a cheerful company.



We usually have excellent possibilities to photograph not just various birds, but mammals, butterflies, dragonflies and a long list of wildflower species as well. It is a perfect birding and wildlife holiday with amazing photography possibilities.

At the end of the tour it is usually very difficult to pick the best species or the most exciting visited areas or other highlights of the tour. The following is just a short list as an example of the possibilities:

the echoing Bare-throated Bellbird and the countryside near Nova Freiburg, Long-tailed Antshrike and the Giant Moth attracted by the moth trap light, White-tufted Marmosets, lush forests of Pico de Caledonia, Three-toed Jacamars and Tapirs, Warbling Finch, White-eyed Foliage-gleaner, the colours of the Brassy-breasted Tanager, Mouse-colored or Serro do Mar Tapaculo.



But there are so many more from colourful toucans, through shining tanagers, manakins and various hummingbirds, hiding antbirds, herons and egrets and the list can go on and on... Surely neither of us will be bored and you will feel that we could easily spend some more relaxing days here and we could easily find even more things. It is also great to learn about the conservation projects here, to feel the success of reforestation.

We will surely enjoy great food which is made locally and the only danger is to became quite quickly addicted to the pre-dinner caipirinha sessions. The extensive library and the different leaflets are helpful as well to read about birds and wildlife around.

It is a memorable holiday in really good company!

Zero or Arrival day, if you do it as an extension of our Pantanal Tour than you arrive from Cuiaba to Rio and then to the lodge in the evening. Alternatively you can arrive from other cities to Rio as well but we need to discuss timing of the arrival and pickup in advance.

1st Day Exploring the trails in the reserve at wetlands, lowland pastures, gardens and sections of primary and secondary rainforest

After a long travel day during the previous day we will not start early today. But of course it is not easy to concentrate on breakfast when you have Fork-tailed Hummingbird, Black Jacobin and some more species around the feeders. Green Ibis, Road-side Hawk, Picazurro Pigeon should be around as well. We spend most of the day with wondering around the Wetland Trails where the first species can be White-barred Piculet, Rufous-tailed Jacamar and White-bearded Manakin.

Violet-capped Woodnymph, an **Atlantic Forest endemic** is not always easy, but **Masked Water-Tyrant** usually performs really nicely. **Great Kiskadee** is always easy and there are several **White-collared Swifts** in the air as well.

At and alongside the water we can find **Purple Gallinule**, **Common Moorhen**, **Cattle Egret** and even some **Boat-billed Herons**. In the meantime we also can see **Sayaca Tanager**, **endemic Yellow-lored Tody-Flycatcher**, **Chestnut-capped** and **Chopi Blackbirds** and **Rufous-bellied Thrush**.

Buff-throated Saltator, Social Flycatcher, *Brazilian endemic Wing-banded Hornero,* **Red-rumped Cacique** and the beautiful **Rufous Tiger-Heron** we all should find easily. Generally it is easier to hear than spot **Blackish Rail**, but if we spend enough time with it we will be able to put on our list, alongside with **Grey-fronted Dove** and **Chestnut-backed Antshrike.**

This is a good time to find the lovely male **White-bearded Manakin displaying.** Another highlight can be **Maroon-bellied Parakeet**, **Atlantic Forest endemic.**



We surely will hear the typical call of a **Gray-bellied Spinetail**, but to get a glimpse of it can be difficult. Various tanager species can be around, including **Yellow-chevroned Tanager** and an **Atlantic Forest endemic**, **Green-headed Tanager**.

After lunch we have a little siesta before we continue our discovery of the area. We look for the cheerfully named **Chivi Vireo, Creamy-bellied Thrush** and **White-eyed Parakeet.** We also try to find **Yellow-backed Tanager, Blue Dacnis** and **Moustached Wren.**

From the tiny Lemon-chested Greenlet through the agile Squirrel Cuckoo till the beautiful Swallow-tailed Tanager, Golden-chevroned Tanager and Blue-winged Parotlet we can find several nice species. Common species are around in good number as well, such as Pale-breasted Thrush, Piratic Flycatcher, Streaked Flycatcher. Everybody would like to see the Brazilian Tanager which is a lovely endemic bird.

Usually a group of funny **White-tufted Marmosets** are around our rooms. It is much harder to find **Silvery-flanked Antwren** than the noisy, colourful **Red-rumped Cacique**. We hope to have a perfect view of **White-headed Marsh-Tyrant**, **Yellow-eared Woodpecker** and **Unicolored Antwren**. Another **endemic Antwren**, **Star-throated** is also possible plus **Rufous-capped Motmot** as well.

We have good chance for some new flycatcher species in the afternoon such as **Yellow Tyrannulet** and **Short-crested Flycatcher.** Other small songbirds should be around as well such as **Violaceous Euphonia**, **Saffron Finch**, **Blue Dacnis** and **Southern House Wren. Chestnut-backed Antshrike** and **Chestnut-capped Blackbird** can be the last bird species today.

2nd Day Excursion to dry Atlantic Forest near Carmo, 3toed Jacamar Day



Today we should be up early, ready to have breakfast at 6am so we can start half an hour later for a full day long adventure to a dry Atlantic Forest area. On the way a bit more than an hour away we stop at a picturesque point with huge rocks which the locals call *God's Finger Rock*. The weather can change quite quickly here, but almost always you can have a good bird activity with regional endemic *Green-headed Tanager* and endemic *Yellow-winged or Golden-chevroned Tanager*, near-threatened *Azure-shouldered Tanager*. More common species can be around as well such as **Streaked Flycatcher**, **Black Jacobin**, **House Wren**. They all love the lilac-flowered beautiful, but otherwise poisonous Manacas trees which flower at this time of year.



After this short break we continue from here, but we stop again after a Federal Police checkpoint to find White-tailed Hawk. Where-ever we look here you can keep finding various things from Saffron Finches through House Sparrows, Tropical Kingbirds, Hooded Siskins, Great Kiskadees, Brown-chested & Gray-chested Martin. We enjoy Fork-tailed Flycatchers, Chalk-browed Mockingbird and Yellow-browed Tyrant. Shiny Cowbird, Brazilian Teal and Fork-tailed Woodnymph will be new to our list. With some luck we can see some near-threatened Blue-winged Macaws flying in a distant. We also can add

Black-crowned Night-heron to today's list as well. It is also a good raptor area, so it can be exciting to find the first a **Short-tailed Hawk** and perhaps a **Black-and-White Hawk-Eagle**.

Some years a **White-tailed Hawk** breeds close to the road so we can observe the bird easily.



We also can find **Crested Black Tyrant** here and **Streamer-tailed Tyrant** plus of course **Sayaca Tanager**. Soon we stop again at a place which gives another restroom possibility. This is a site for **White-eyed Parakeet, Toco Toucan, Yellow-headed Caracara and Gray-breasted Wood—rail.**



We continue a bit further with the bus on dirt roads and then start to walk and add **Sepia-capped Flycatcher**, **Guira Cuckoo**, **Rufous-tailed Thornbird**, **Campo Flicker**, **Pileated Finch**, **Blue Dacnis**, **White-bellied Seed-eater** and finally our first **Three-toed Jacamar**! It is interesting that however it is a very localized species at the right area it is quite common actually. We try to locate **Ash-throated Crake** and hope to see and perhaps even photograph **Blackish Rail**, coming out into a more open area below us. **Red-rumped Caciques** should be around as well.

At midday we stop under a big tree providing excellent shade for picnic. We can see some beautiful butterflies, including huge **Morpho species**.



After the meal and some ice-cold refreshments

we are ready to discover more and can find the stunning White-browed Meadowlark, Short-crested Flycatcher, Pileated Finch, White-tipped Dove and Olivaceous Woodcreeper.

Finally we reach the Carmo road. This area gives another chance for **Crested Black Tyrant**, **Pileated Finch** and some more species such as **Olivaceous Woodcreeper**, **Golden**-



crowned Warbler and the beautiful *Crescent-chested Puffbird*. We also can find White-winged Becard, *Atlantic Forest endemic Ruby-crowned Tanager*, Bananaquit and *Brazilian endemic White-collared Foliage-gleaner*. Some other really good endemic species are around as well so we will try hard to find **Serra Antwren**, **Southern Antpipit and Suruca Trogon**. Surely we will finish a marvellous day after visiting several different areas, beautiful landscapes and enjoying a long list of birds and other wildlife.



3rd Day Waldenor Trail



After yesterday's excursion with longer drives today we opt for local trails which needs just half an hour transfer on the plateau of a truck till the beginning of the trail.

As soon as we start to walk we we will note the first birds such as **Atlantic Forest endemic Green-headed Tanagers, Brazil endemic Plain Parakeets** and **Blond-crested Woodpecker, Flame-crested Tanager**.

Blue or Swallow-tailed Manakin, an Atlantic Forest endemic is an extremely nice bird here. In the meantime **White-collared Swifts** can fly high above our heads. Perhaps **Greyheaded Tanager** will be new here, plus **Violet-capped Woodnymph**.



An **Atlantic Forest endemic, Rufous-capped Motmot** we will add to the list plus perhaps **Olive-green Tanager, Ochre-bellied** and **Sepia-capped Flycatchers** as well. **Red-ruffed Fruitcrow** is also a possibility and we hope everybody will see **Yellow-fronted Woodpecker**, near-threathened **Saw-billed Hermit**, **both Atlantic Forest endemics**.



After crossing this forested section we end up at some gardens and at a lovely house.

After this point the trail becomes for a while a bit steeper and rocky, but soon we should be rewarded by founding a **Crested Becard**, **Rufous-tailed Jacamar** and perhaps a group of noisy **Red-crowned Ant-tanagers**. It is a bit harder to see **Silvery-flanked Antwren** and **the near-threatened endemic Spot-breasted Ant-vireo**, but we will make an effort.

We will also search White-throated Woodcreeper and the endemic Grey-hooded Attila, plus a vulnerable Atlantic Forest endemic, Buffy-fronted Seed-eater, Rufous-bellied Thrush.



We arrive back around 1pm and soon we are ready for lunch. After that we can enjoy a couple of hours siesta again before going out in the afternoon around 15 or 15.30. We might decide to make a circle on the **Wetland trail**.



During our walk we can have some nice birds such as Chestnut-vented Conebill, Atlantic Forest endemic Green-headed Tanager, Sayaca Tanager, Channel-billed Toucan, Masked Water-Tyrant, Band-winged Hornero and Greater Ani.



We should have excellent views of **White-bearded Manakin** and **Brazilian Tanager**, 2 really memorable species. **Yellow-chinned Spinetail** is usually very active here as well. This walk gives another chance for **Rufous-capped Motmot** as well.





4th Day Full day excursion to Macai de Cima

Today we have another excellent full day excursion up in the mountaineous Macai de Cima region. We start around 7.00 am and arrive back to our lodge around 18pm. It is a day full with a long list of new birds and again some really different landscapes and habitats. On the way we might stop shortly for Sombre Hummingbird, another endemic. Before driving up on the steep mountain roads we also stop at a small local hotel to use the facilities. This stop also offers the first birds as well such as Crested Oropendola, Surucua Trogon, Atlantic Forest endemic, Woodcreeper, Streaked Scaled Flycatcher, Saffron Finch, Rufouscollared Sparrow, White-tipped Dove and Olivaceous Woodcreeper.







Later on we drive higher up and at around 1100 meters we start to find different species starting with *a near-threatened Atlantic Forest endemic White-browed Foliage-gleaner*, Burnished-buff Tanager, Scale-throated Hermit, Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner and Grey-capped Tyrannulet.

In the sky we can find again an amazing **Black-and-White Hawk-Eagle**. We should start to hear the echoing calls of the **vulnerable Atlantic Forest endemic, Bare-throated Bellbirds** and soon we will manage to put the scope on it.



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Spotted Bamboowren - which is actually a strange relative of tapaculos and **a near threatened Atlantic Forest endemic** – can be found here and we hope to have good views of **Rufous-browed Peppershrike** as well.

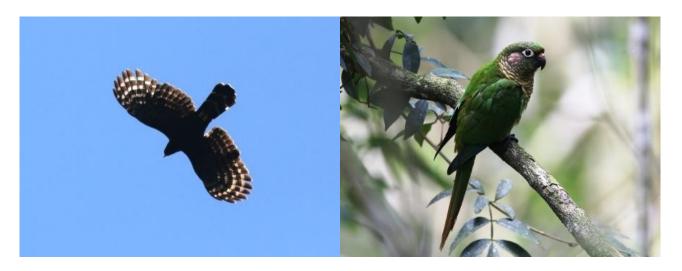
We can add **Green-backed Becard, Streaked Xenops, Piratic Flycatcher** to the list as well. We can find here four different species which all have very good, really describing names: **Whiskered Flycatcher**, **White-shouldered Fire-eye**, **Dusky-tailed Antbird** and **Rufous-capped Spinetail**, all **Atlantic Forest endemics**.

Even during driving on this road we have seen before several interesting species such as **Tarantula** crossing in front of us and also a **Slaty-breasted Woodrail**, **an Atlantic Forest endemic**.



Finally we continue on the **Bacchus Road** where we get out of the van again. We can hear **Brown Tinamu** and several **endemics**, such as **Rufous-breasted Leaftosser**, **Criptic Antthrush** and **Rufous-tailed Antthrush**, all really hard to see species.

We should have excellent views of Cliff Flycatcher and Swainson's Flycatcher and if we work hard we also should have at least a glimpse of Spix's Spinetail. The near-threatened endemic Cinnamon Tanager could be new here. Near-threatened endemic Hooded Berry-eater and White-rimmed Warbler also should be around. We usually add here Ametyst Woodstar and Long-tailed Tyrant as well.



Easier to hear than spot **Brazilian Antthrush** and **Tufted Antshrike**, **Atlantic Forest endemic** but usuallywe have excellent view of **Mottle-cheeked Tyrannulet**.

After an early lunch we start to walk up. The first birds we could be here **Atlantic Forest endemic Rufous-crowned Greenlet**, **Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner** and **Palevented Pigeon**.

We check large trees where we can find **Dusky-legged Guan** and **Spot-billed Toucanet, Atlantic Forest endemic,** plus we search **Hooded Berry-eater** as well.



A bit further up we might find a **Yellow-browed Woodpecker**, a near threatened **Atlantic Forest endemic**. We hope to have excellent views of **Brazilian Ruby** and **Pallid Spinetail**, both endemics plus **Squirrel Cuckoo**.

We will listen for **Brown Tinamu**, **Yellow-legged Thrush** and also **Serra de Mar Tapaculo**. Also we try to add other new things to the list such as **Chestnut-crowned Becard**, **Burnished-buff Tanager**, the **endemic Brassy-breasted Tanager** and **Golden-chevroned Tanager**. **Maroon-bellied Parakeets** are among the trees as well. The possibilities here seems endless, including **Pale-browed Treehunter**, **Blue-billed Black-Tyrant** and many more. It is also an excellent raptor watching point so gives a chance for a superb **Black Hawk-Eagle**.







During the afternoon we drive a little bit further on the main dirt road just a few miles where we have a short walk. This can result more **Maroon-bellied Parakeets**, but **Greenish Schiffornis**, **Atlantic Forest endemic** should be new. We also should find **Ochre-rumped**



Antbird, a near-threatened endemic and White-bearded Antshrike, a vulnerable Atlantic Forest endemic. Ochre-faced Tody-tyrant is not always easy and we might add to the list here Ruby-crowned Tanager, White-throated Hummingbird & Black Jacobin, all Atlantic Forest endemics.

We start our drive back around late afternoon and after about 1,5 hours we should arrive back to our base.

After refreshing ourselves as usual we call out the list, enjoy caipirinha and have a great home-made dinner before we fell off our

perch.

The most interesting insect perhaps during the whole week can be found around our porch: a strange **Peanut-headed Bug.**



5th Day 1 Morning 4x4 trail; afternoon Maroon Trail



We have breakfast at 6.30 and start at 7am first with a short drive till the **Burrowing Owls** where we also usually find as well the tiny but noisy **Blue-winged Parotlets**. We also can witness here how a **Fork-tailed Flycatcher** tries desperately to chase away a nearby **Yellow-headed Caracara**.



From this flat area we drive up on a really steep and bumpy road with a sturdy 4x4.



The idea is that we start the walk from the top and descend step by step finding new and new species.

The first birds can be **Rufous-capped Motmot**, **Atlantic Forest endemic** followed by a lovely **Scaled Antbird**, **Brazilian endemic**. With some great luck we might see through the canopy a rare raptor species, a **near-threatened Atlantic Forest endemic Mantled Hawk**.

There is a long list of attractive species from **Tufted Anthshrike** through **Tropical Parula**, **Rufous-winged Antwren**, **Chivi Vireo**, **Yellow-throated Woodpecker**, **Red-crowned Ant-tanager** till **Sepia-capped Flycatcher**.



We also can add **Yellow-eared Woodpecker**, **White-eyed Foliage-gleaner**, **Black-cheeked Gnat-eater** and **Streak-capped Antwren**, all **Atlantic Forest endemics**.



Near-threatened endemics here include **Spot-breasted Antvireo** and **Eye-ringed Tody-tyrant.**

We also can have a good view of both **Blue** and **White-bearded Manakins**.

Some more birds can be noted before we reach the truck waiting for us a few hours lower down such as **Rufous-breasted Hermit, Yellow-backed** and **Golden-chevroned Tanagers** and **Maroon-bellied Parakeets**.

After a great lunch as usual we enjoy a break till 3.30pm and then we walk out and visit the *Maroon Trail*. We will surely find quite a lot of the birds we had seen before like *Masked Water-tyrant*, *Crescent-chested Puffbird*, *Atlantic Forest endemic*, Sepia-capped Flycatcher and Squirrel Cuckoo among many others, but we should have new Hummingbirds like *White-chinned Saphire* and *Glittering-throated Emerald* as well.

6th Day 1 Full day at Pico de Caledonia



Today we have our last full day excursion, this time to high elevation lush montane forests of Pico de Caledonia. We aim to have 6am breakfast and plan to leave around 6.30.



We arrive to Freiburg after a 90 minutes ride where we stretch our legs, drive further up to a point where we have to abandon the comfortable bus and change vehicles using a truck from this point. We go higher up with this sturdy vehicle another 20 minutes and start to bird.





The first birds perhaps will be **Brassy-breasted Tanager**, **Rufous-browed Peppershrike** and the *near-threatened endemic Black & Gold Cotinga*.

Orange-eyed Thornbird and **White-browed Warbler** are both new **Atlantic Forest endemics**, plus we also can have here **Olivaceous Eleania** and **Fawn-breasted Tanager**.

We should not miss **Planalto Woodcreeper** and of course **Bare-throated Bellbird**.



We hope to have an excellent view of the *Brazilian endemic Scaled Woodcreeper* and perhaps even photograph *Black & Gold Cotinga, an Atlantic Forest endemic*.

We work hard for the chance to examine **endemic Pallid Spinetail** and **near-threatened endemic Serra do Mar Tyrannulet.**

With some luck we will hear and then spot **Rufous-capped Antthrush** and hopefully **Brazilian Ruby, Atlantic Forest endemic.**

Rufous-tailed Antbird, near-threatened Brazilian endemic and Brazilian Antthrush can be nice new surprises here as well.



At each different altitude, even a few hundred feet can result in different species like **Diademed Tanager**, **Serro de Mar Tapaculo** and another great **Atlantic Forest endemic**, **Thick-billed Saltator**.



At about 1800 meters at a stream we can hear and perhaps spot **Sharp-tailed Streamkeeper** and find **Plovercrest**, **Atlantic Forest endemic**. Another nice surprise here can be **Large-tailed Anthshrike**, also **Atlantic Forest endemic**. We still have not run out of endemics since we have a good chance for a lovely **Bay-chested Warbling-Finch**, **Rufoustailed Antbird** or **Diademed Tanager**.



Later on we descend to lower elevation and at that area we can have Variegated Flycatcher, Green-backed Becard, Tropical Kingbird, Great Kiskadee.



The final, lower birding stop is an area with Red-legged Seriama, Planalto Tyrannulet, Swainson's Flycatcher, Shear-tailed Grey Tyrant which is an Atlantic Forest endemic, Rufous-browed Peppershrike, Sapphire-spangled Hummingbird and Ochre-faced Tody-flycatcher.



Finally we travel back to Freiburg and continue our journey back to the lodge. After arriving back soon we have our last supper together during this holiday. We also check the moth trap again tonight where there is always a great variety of species from the huge **Rothschildia** aurata till the tiny **Trosia nigropunctigera**.



7th Day Marron Trail; transfer to airport

After a somewhat harder day we might have a leisurely morning today with a later than usual breakfast. Of course if you still want to give a chance for some missed species you can discover what is around for example at the Maroon Trail. There is a good chance for **Rufous-sided Crake, Blond-crested Woodpecker** and you can be rewarded by an **endemic** in the form of **Silvery-flanked Antwren**.



The rest of the morning we spend with discussing things, packing and preparing to leave to the domestic airport. During the ride we have discussed the many highlights of the tour and finally arrive to the airport late afternoon.

