

Bird & Mammal Trip Report

Brazil (March - May 2022)



Rob Jansen
photography

Introduction

About us

We are two enthusiastic nature lovers who travel the world together to search for stunning birds, fascinating mammals and incredible nature. Our world travel started in October 2021 in Chile, where we bought a car to drive through South-America in search of birds and mammals for about 2 years.

Rob Jansen is biologist and wildlife photographer, and thus has a lot of knowledge about species and ecology. He is enthusiastic about all that's in nature, but mainly photographs birds and mammals.

Romy Jansen-Houtzager is a marketing professional. The marketing behind our social media accounts, the look and feel of this report and the website are her work. In the field, she is an excellent spotter and very patient (give me some of her patience ...and hurry!).



Rob driving at Dourado



Romy at Pico da Caledonia

Information and how to use this trip report

This trip report covers the Atlantic Coast of Brazil, from Urupema in the south to RN Vale near Victoria, and the central Cerrado, from Serra da Canastra NP near São Paulo to Alto Paraíso de Goiás near Brasília. We travelled this part in about 2 months from the 21st of March – 31st of May 2022. We decided not to split this into smaller reports because that would make you search in multiple reports when preparing for a regular 2-4 week holiday to the Atlantic Rainforest/Central Cerrado. This might mean that not all places are of interest to you, but we hope to provide a good overview of the possibilities. For all photos of our Brazil trip, comments, compliments, any specific questions, visit and/or contact us via our website. We would love to hear from you!

 www.robjansenphotography.com/brazil

 www.instagram.com/robjansenphotography

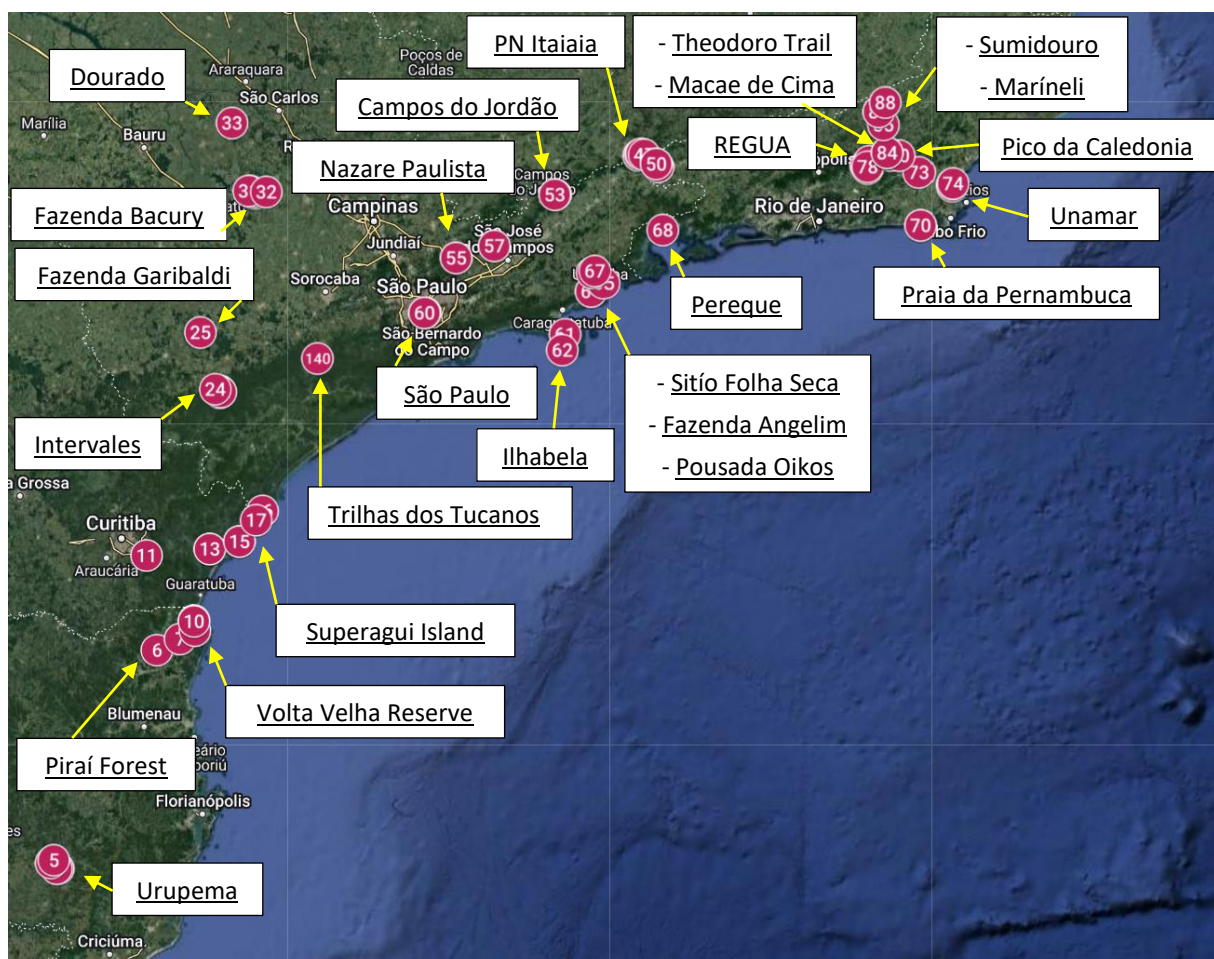
Species are highlighted in this trip report: **blue for birds**, **red for mammals** and **green for herpetofauna**. Target species which we missed at a specific spot are written in *italic*. This gives you an idea which species to pay extra attention to. All observations made by us in this part of Brazil can be found on Observation.org. We observed a total of about 597 bird species and 35 mammal species in the Atlantic Coast & Central Cerrado of Brazil. Click here for the: [total bird list](#), [total mammal list](#) or [the total species list](#).

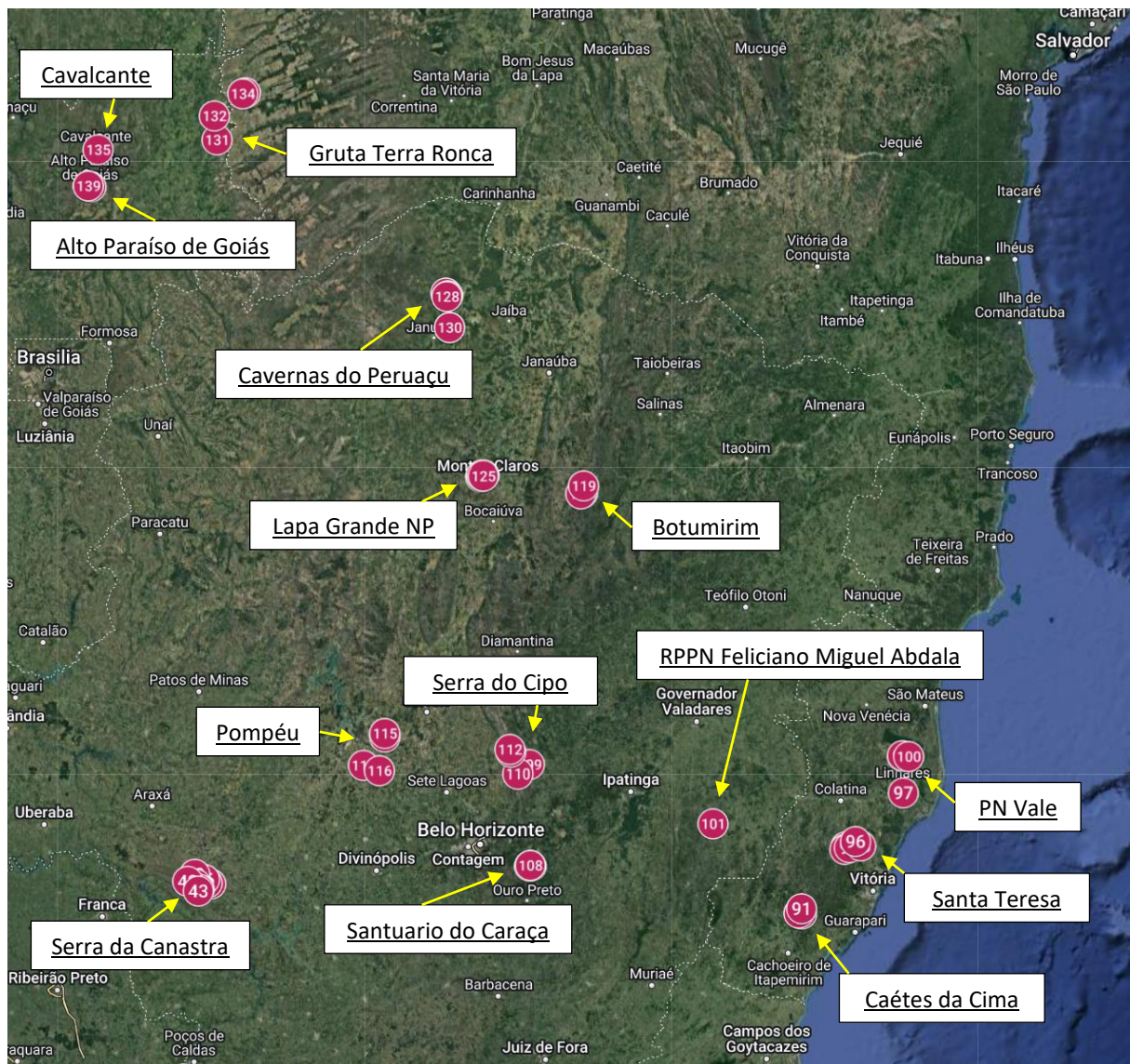
For more trip reports see our website: www.robjansenphotography.com/trip-reports

Map and specific locations

After bird- & mammalwatching the entire Atlantic Coast and Northeast of Argentina (see previous trip reports) we decided to cross to Brazil. Because we crossed in the south of Brazil we decided to start in Urupema and drive north from there. Finding a logical route for seeing most birds and mammals was way harder than in Chile or Argentina, as you will see in our route below. We tried to visit include as many bird & mammal locations, mainly focussing on the Atlantic Forest. As our visa couldn't be extended after the 3 months, we couldn't make it all the way up to Diamantina. Instead we choose to cover some more distances and include the Central Cerrado, but in that way going back towards the border of Paraguay where we could leave Brazil again.

We made a [map in Google My Maps](#) with pointers of interesting trails and places and specific bird and mammal locations. You can view this map, download the points and add them to your own map (click on the three dots above the legend and download the KML file and drag this to your own map), or add them in the app 'Maps.me'. Maps.me has most walking trails on it and is usable offline. Route navigation by car doesn't always work great and it's better to use Google Maps for that purpose.





Weather and timing

We visited the Atlantic Coastal region and central Cerrado of Brazil as part of our world travel from the 21st of March till the 31st of May 2022. The weather was generally quite cold during the night and in the morning, but temperatures still rose quickly during the day (but less than in summer!). This made for nice birding weather, as the bird activity lasted longer in general. However, sometimes it was too cold, and birds wouldn't sing or respond at all. Some species of birds are very hard or even impossible to find during this time of year (Bare-throated Bellbird and Swallow-tailed Cotinga for example). We only had a few days of rain, especially in the end of March and beginning of April. There were way less tourists, which was nice for us, as our way of travelling implies that we reserve guides, reserves and lodges very last minute. But this was almost never a problem, and only once or twice a guide that was our first choice wasn't available for a certain date.

Transportation

Our transportation in this trip report was of course our Toyota 4Runner SR5 4.0 2010 (2x4) called 'Forrest'. We bought this car in Santiago (Chile) and got it converted so that we could sleep in it as well. There are lots of gravel roads which we took with great ease, but other cars had to drive slowly on. Most roads are doable with a normal sedan, but require (way) more care. Especially a car with a good working suspension is advised as many roads are not very smooth and there are many potholes on the roads further away from São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. High clearance will improve the ease of driving on certain roads even more. We would only advise renting a 4x4 if there is only a small difference in fee, but a 2x4 with high clearance and a good suspension should work fine!



Our loyal friend Forrest Fazenda Angelim



Forrest near Serra da Lapinha

Literature

- Birds of Brazil: The Pantanal & Cerrado of Central Brazil by Ridgely *et al.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010. *Really nice field guide with good drawings. There is an English and Portuguese version, and the English version has the local names next to the drawing of a species. Recent and possible splits are mentioned, but unfortunately they don't include species maps for these birds (which could have been easily added by the use of a different color...).*
- Birds of Brazil: The Atlantic Forest of Southeast Brazil by Ridgely *et al.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016. *See Birds of Brazil: Pantanal & Cerrado.*
- A Field Guide to the Birds of Brazil by Ber van Perlo. Oxford University Press, 2009. *Not a very great book. The many small drawings are more like sketches, and are with too many on a page. The book isn't up to date with splits etc. from the last decade. Not recommended, but it's the only resource for some parts of Brazil. Let's hope the other 3 editions of Birds of Brazil will come soon.*
- Merlin app for the birds sound. *Just amazing that this app is free. We didn't miss any sounds, but be sure to download the whole Brazil pack, as some birds occurring in a specific region are not included in the regional packs.*
- BirdNet app for recording the bird sounds. If you don't know all the bird sounds, BirdNet can help you record the sound and give a possible ID. It helped us a few times when we were frustratingly searching for a bird we heard deep inside the shrubs and couldn't find. A sure ID of a more common bird from BirdNet saved us some time here and there ;)

- iOverlander app for camping places. This app gives nice information on where to camp or buy stuff.

Equipment

Photography: Sony A9 II + 200-600mm + 1.4x converter + Sony 24-105mm, GoPro Hero 9

Binoculars and telescope: Swarovski EL 8x32 WB, Eden 8x32 XP, Swarovski 65HD + 25-50mm

Heat scope/Thermal imager: Lahoux Spotter Elite 35V (lahouxbirding.com). A great heat scope from a company in The Netherlands. I owned other brands, but we are super happy with the sharpness, modes and light weight of this heat scope! More here: robjansenphotography.com/lahouxbirding

Spotlighting: Fenix HT18 Long Distance Flashlight (powerful, very focussed and my preferred choice for open areas), Fenix TK35 2018-edition (less powerful and focussed than the HT18, but still very strong and nice for spotlighting!), Fenix FD41 Focus Flashlight (comparable to the LedLenser), LedLenser P7R (can be focussed 😊)

Use of cell phones in Brazil

There are three bigger telecom providers in Brazil; Vivo, Tim & Claro. All require foreigners to register their SIM-card, which can be done in the store. We bought two Vivo SIM cards because they have the best coverage in Brazil. Claro has better speed, but we found Vivo to be excellent most of the time. Activation in the store was a bit troublesome as we didn't have a Brazilian ID (duh..), but a local was fine to give his for the registration. It took a few hours before it was activated. It will most likely go easier on airports where they speak English!

Paying in Brazil

Paying in Brazil is mostly done by card and both debit and credit cards are widely accepted. If you go to more remote locations (Superagui and NP Intervalas for example) or want to employ lots of local guides, be sure to get cash. Get cash from ATM's inside a bank, as skimming occurs regularly in Brazil we've been told. Bradesco Bank was the only bank not charging us a fee for a withdrawal. They do a proposal for a conversion (which is bad), so be sure to press decline. You get your card back, and afterwards you get your money. The conversion rate of your own bank will be way better and saved us about 20-25€ per 2500 Reais we took out!

Water-to-Go

To reduce plastic usage on our travels we bought Water-to-Go water bottles. Read about our experience with Water-to-Go on our website: www.robjansenphotography.com/water-to-go. The bottle and filters are not too expensive, and you will have your investment back within one holiday. If you order with the voucher **RJANSEN15** you will get **15% discount** as well! Check the website here: www.watertogousa.com (United States of America, Canada), www.watertogo.eu (United Kingdom) or www.watertogo.shop (most countries in the EU)

Visited sites

Urupema

[-27.95799, -49.87935](#)

Visited dates: 22-23 March 2022

Urupema is known as the coldest place in Brazil. It can be cold and very windy here and when we arrived we had a taste of the variable weather right away. Dense fog, sun, rain, drizzle, wind; all came and went. Urupema is located in between hills that are covered with Araucaria trees. In between there are pastures with rocky outcrops, and together this made a beautiful scenery to start our trip in Brazil. Araucaria forests harbour good specialties, with some overlap with bird species of north-eastern Argentina. The nice thing about Urupema is that it also harbours birds which are in the most northern part of their range.

We had 2 **Long-tailed Cinclodes** right in front of our car when we were waiting out the rain at the local gas station ([-27.95799, -49.87935](#)). These were the only Cinclodes we saw in Urupema!

We then decided to bird from the comfort of our car towards Morro do Combate ([-28.0115, -49.83266](#)). On the way we had a nice **Crested Black Tyrant**. Near the Morro (hill) we only observed **Grey Monjita** and other more common birds like **Red-legged Seriema**. A stop on the way back at a nice Araucaria patch ([-28.0146, -49.84951](#)) yielded 4 **Araucaria Tit-spinetails**, 2 **Striolated Tit-spinetails** and an **Olive Spinetail**.



Red-legged Seriema

Long-tailed Cinclodes

From 17.00 we went towards a road with good lookouts ([-27.97103, -49.89425](#)). You can stand at any point with a good lookout, but we went to this place which was in eBird. It turned out to be private land, but a local guide invited us (and our car) inside the gate. We had fly overs of multiple small groups of **Red-spectacled Parrot** and **Vinaceous-breasted Parrot**. Note that the Red-spectacled Parrots are only present between April – August when the Araucaria seeds are ripe.

At night we decided to sleep in our car at the waterfall. As we scared a Screech Owl of its roost by accident at daytime we decided to try to tape the two species that occur there. Right after the first two tones a **Long-tufted Screech Owl** flew right up to the small parking lot!

The next morning we focussed our birding efforts on the 5km long road from the village (from [-27.94614, -49.87128](#)) up towards the Antennas. We observed 2 **Mottled Piculets** near the village. Multiple flocks yielded **Olive Spinetails**, **Sharp-billed Treehunters** and **Scalloped Woodcreeper**. From the more open places we observed **Azure Jay** in the far away treetops. There is a small trail from the waterfall towards the antenna road, which goes through great bamboo patches. Here we heard **Mouse-colored Tapaculo**. A **Robust Woodpecker** was drumming and showed itself as well!



Araucaria Tit-spinetail



Mottled Piculet

Pirai Forest

[-26.31655, -48.96857](#)

Visited dates: 23-24 March 2022

The forest of Pirai, near Joinville, is nothing more than a road over a hill covered in good rainforest. We found it quite birdy, but we don't think this is a location to include in your vacation itinerary per se. We had **Black-cheeked Gnateater** the first afternoon and heard **Variegated Antpitta** the next morning. We had multiple flocks with tanagers, foliage-gleaners, with the best species being an **Unicolored Antwren**. There were some nice butterflies at the side of the road, like the White Peacock (*Anartia jatrophae*) and Red Peacock (*Anartia amathea*).



White Peacock



Red Peacock

Volta Velha Reserve

[-26.08187, -48.64053](#)

Visited dates: 24-25 March 2022

General information: To visit this reserve you have to make a reservation. This can be done in English with Lúcio Antônio Machado via +55 47 8829-1582. The entrance fee is 65 Reais p.p. We showed up on an afternoon, and a ranger and Lúcio's sister were there, happy to receive us. She speaks some English as well and with Google Translate the ranger explained the places to search for the local specialties. Try to plan your visit outside of the month March as this place has 10.000s of mosquitos in that month.

The first afternoon we set out on the trail towards the river (the forest starts here: [-26.08804, -48.64163](#)). This one can be driven (high clearance needed), which saves you the energy of the first more boring part. We had 2 **Scaled Chachalacas** on the way towards the forest. This species comes to feeders certain times of the year here as well. Rains prevented us to bird the rest of the afternoon.

The next morning we went towards the same trail and quickly had **Russet-winged Spadebill** responding around the coordinated indicated by the ranger. It wouldn't show itself well though. An **Eye-ringed Tody-tyrant** did show well luckily. Walking further towards the river we only got a short response call from **Kaempfer's Tody-tyrant** and a faraway **Yellow-legged Tinamou**. **Restinga Tyrannulet** showed well multiple times. At the river we observed **Black-backed Tanager** (thanks again to the ranger's directions). As we had all our prime targets we decided to leave this mosquito-infested place and be on our way.



1000's of Mosquitos



Volta Velha Reserve

Balsa Vila de Glória

[-26.22509, -48.76623](#)

From Joinville we took a small ferry, Balsa Vila de Glória/Joinville ([-26.22509, -48.76623](#)), where we saw lots of **Scarlet Ibises**. After that we made a quick stop at a marsh area about 15km south of the reserve ([-26.16424, -48.6364](#)). Here we observed 2 **Paraná Antwrens (Marsh Antwrens)**.



Scarlet Ibis



Paraná Antwren

Várzea na Estrada do Curralinho

[-25.5706, -49.05694](#)

On the way from Paranagua towards the northern part of Superagui we made a quick stop for **Marsh Tapacuo**. We heard multiple, one within a metre of the road. Unfortunately we never got to see it. But then, this species is called the hardest-to-see-bird of Brazil.

Superagui Island (South)

[-25.45608, -48.24429](#)

Visited dates: 25-28 March 2022

How to get there: There are boats going from Paranagua every day at 14.00, and more often in weekends. Ask around, ours left here ([-25.51973, -48.50429](#)). There is ample parking near the docks, and you can also find guarded parking ([-25.51842, -48.50477](#)). Costs were 60 Reais p.p. one way and the bumpy journey takes about 1h. There are many hostels in the village; we stayed at Pousada Sossego Ilha de Superagui for 200 Reais p.n. including a good breakfast ([-25.45608, -48.24429](#)). Almost nobody speaks any English here.

On the bumpy boat ride towards the island we had some rain, but luckily Rob still managed to see 2 **Guianan Dolphins**. The reason to go to the south side of the island was to find the **Black-faced Lion Tamarin/ Superagui Lion Tamarin**. Researchers had most sightings on the south side, so we hoped we would be lucky here. Asking around the village all pointed towards one man: Marcel Skenine. He didn't respond well on WhatsApp, but luckily he was the cousin of the hostel owner. Communication wasn't very good: first he would be available after breakfast the next morning, then after lunch, and then it changed to 15.00. We spend the morning walking the only trail towards the Praia Deserta south of the village. We played the audio of the Tamarins but got no response at all. We tried to walk 'trails' into the forest, but most ended after 200m ending at a swamp.

**Superagui Island****Ample food to get us through the day**

When we finally met he said he needed time to prepare, so it would be better to leave the next morning at 06.00. Marcel said that chances to see the Lion Tamarins are about 60%, which sounded like music to our ears.

Early next morning we went into the forest behind his house ([-25.45487, -48.24458](#)) and walked only about 300m. There he imitated some sounds, but after he heard recordings that I got from [Jon & Luqman's youtube video](#) (2018) he made us play that all morning. He said that these were calls that the Tamarins make when they are scared, so he wasn't totally sure if this would attract them. His tactic involved waiting for 2 hours at the spot, where he said the Tamarins often passed by. After 2 hours we tried another place more south in the village where they are also often seen and where a boy had seen them a week before. He said that there is no point in walking far into the forest, as the Tamarins are quite shy and afraid of humans. It happened Marcel multiple times that he searched far away in the forest, and that a group of Tamarins meanwhile visited the village. He also said that they often don't respond vocally and just curiously watch from a distance. So the tactic was: sit still, don't move, play the recording every now and then and observe well. After 6 hours switching between a few places we still had nothing. We agreed on meeting back at his place at 13.30. He passed us a recording of territorial calls via WhatsApp.

After brunch we arrived at Marcel's house at 13.30, to hear from his wife that Marcel left to search in the forest alone. A bit surprised we decided to repeat his tactics from the morning with the new recordings and we switched between the two places the whole afternoon. We also tried a better 'marked' trail north of the village, but after 500m it got too marshy to walk. Marcel didn't return to his house until it was dark at 19.30. He said he searched the forest all around the village and further, but didn't see or hear any Tamarins at all. Although he asked us two days before if we were able to stay 1 or 2 days more, suddenly it turned out he had to work the next days and wasn't available to guide us...

The third day we repeated the tactic from the day before at the two places, but again got no response at all. As there were no good trails to be walked alone, and there was no knowledgeable guide available to us, we decided to leave the island. Disappointed we missed this big target.

Birds of note we found during our quest were **Red-tailed Parrot** (multiple flying over our heads at night and once in the forest) and **Crescent-chested Puffbird**.

If you decide to go to the south side of the island to search for the Tamarins, be sure to contact Marcel well in advance (via WhatsApp in Portuguese via +55 41 8479-3895) and plan to go in June/July. He says he normally does more preparation, to find the places where they eat and to get them used to humans a bit more.



White-crested Tyrannulet

Azure Jay

Superagui Island (North)

[-25.29102, -48.09368](#)

Visited dates: 29-31 March 2022

How to get there: This is the place where other mammal watchers observed the *Black-faced Lion Tamarin/ Superagüi Lion Tamarin*. You have to get in contact with Márcio from Pousada Recanto Ararapira (+55 13 99615-8170). Then drive up to Ariri on the relatively good gravel road and he will pick you up by boat from there ([-25.21814, -48.03899](#)). He speaks only Portuguese. Costs are 100 Reais p.p.n. including breakfast. Lunch/dinner is 40 Reais p.p. Guiding is 160 Reais per day.

A way more relaxed boat ride than towards the south of the island, and without a wait, we quickly arrived at the pousada. Directly after lunch we went searching for the Tamarins in the forest. According to Márcio the Tamarins mainly forage and migrate along the edge of the forest and less inside the forest. Maybe this is true, but it could be a bias because most sightings are done by residents who (only) live along the forest's edge. South of the village there is a 'trail' in the forest parallel to the shore which we walked, while playing the recordings. Stopping about every 100m to listen and look for any movement. After that we went looking on a trail north of the village. This is actually a good trail, which can be followed on your own for many kilometres if you want to search on your own without a guide. However, we recommend hiring the service of Márcio as a guide! He knows the primates, knows where to look and listen for and he chops away any plants on your path. Most importantly, being the first person in line he at least attracts 60% of the mosquitos. We covered at least 5km of forest edge this way, but we didn't see or hear any Tamarins.

The next morning we went back to the south of the village, because this was the most recent place the Tamarins had been seen by a resident, about a week before. In the afternoon we took a boat about 3km north of the village and picked up the same trail. Again, no Lion Tamarins.

The 6th morning it was raining, and the weather forecast was terrible for the next few days. We decided to give up on this Lion Tamarin.

Márcio said that June and July are the best months, as there is less food in the forest. This is the same what Marcel said as well, so it seems to check out. While rereading the text of our trip report, I just received a WhatsApp message from Márcio with photos and videos of the Tamarins visiting the village the 31st of May and 1st of June. To improve your chances, let Márcio search for the Tamarins the week before you arrive, and ask him to make the trails already passable so he has to chop less when you are trying to find the Tamarins. While we were there he had no recent information (all gathered while we were there) and he had to do a lot of whacking with his machete in the forest to make the trail passable. This noise probably didn't help in our search for the (shy) Tamarins.



Romy pushing our stranded boat



Márcio slapping mosquitos with a branch

Parque Estadual Intervales

[-24.26544, -48.41336](#)

Visited dates: 31 March-5 April 2022

General information: This place is open 7 days a week. Entrance is a one-time fee of 36 Reais p.p. A cabin is 201R\$ per night, a motorhome (no camping by tent!) is 62R\$ p.n. Payments can only be made in cash at the reception. Nobody at the reception speaks any English. Don't forget to look for the two **Black-capped Screech Owls** roosting right in front of the reception building ([-24.26544, -48.41336](#)). There is a restaurant in the park with WiFi and they serve really good breakfast (20R\$) and lunch/dinner (32R\$). If there are not too many people, make sure you reserve a meal.

Parque Estadual Intervales is part of the largest remaining area of Atlantic forest. Lots of amazing species can be seen here, which is why we looked forward to this place! However, 4 out of 6 days it rained while we were there. Drizzle and rain, the whole day long. We tried to bird some common

species in the rain around the main area. We brought bananas which we put on the feeder at the restaurant. This yielded mainly thrushes and common tanager species over the days.

There are 2 feeding places in the marsh area, where we had superb views of **Blackish Rails** & **Red-and-white Crake** (both places) and **Rufous-sided Crake** (near reception). One of the places is in front of the reception ([-24.26553, -48.41306](#)), the other besides a road going through the marsh ([-24.26504, -48.41139](#)).

There is another feeder in the forest ([-24.26883, -48.41455](#)) good for **Short-tailed Antthrush**, **Variageted Antpitta** and **Spot-winged Wood Quails**. We didn't get anything here, but the best time for the feeder is September-November.



Rufous-sided Crake

Red-and-white Crake

We were very happy that we hired Betinho Rodrigues as our guide for two days (+55 15 99643-4443). Betinho only speaks Portuguese, but he knows most bird names in Latin and English. His pronunciation made us ask him to say them twice many times, but we didn't find it a problem. He charged 250R\$ for a day, which started at 06.30. We can highly recommend him! The first day we went to the Carmo Road (entree only allowed with a guide), where we had many good bird species. Best were **Atlantic Royal Flycatcher**, a female **White-bearded Antshrike**, **São Paulo Tyrannulet**, **Sharpbill**, **Cinnamon-vented Piha**, **Mantled Hawk** and great views of a male **Hooded Berryeater**. We had a break from 13.00-15.00, after which we went onto the road besides the restaurant. There we had **Serra do Mar Tyrant-manakin** within no-time. This great streak went on as we had another **Sharpbill**, a **Rufous-tailed Attila**, a **Three-striped Flycatcher** and nice but short views of **White-breasted Tapaculo**.



Atlantic Royal Flycatcher

Hooded Berryeater

The next morning we finally had a dry day, but this also caused bird activity to be way lower. And because we had such a good streak already the day before, there were way less targets left. We focussed on the end of the Carmo Road, where we were able to hear and see **Rufous-capped Antthrush**, **Short-tailed Antthrush** and **Slaty Bristlefront**! In the afternoon we went up to the observation tower (Mirante de Anta). Walking towards the restaurant we already saw a **Black-and-white Hawk-eagle** flying above it! From the tower we scoped 3 **Bare-throated Bellbirds**, even though Betinho said they weren't here this time of year. These turned out to be the only ones we saw during the whole trip. However, clouds and rain came in and we didn't see the much hoped for **Black-fronted Piping-guans** or **Blue-bellied Parrots**.

In the good time of the year (September onwards) there should be a **Purple-crowned Plovercrest** at the entrance road ([-24.24869, -48.45828](#)), but it wasn't active this time of the year.

Fazenda Garibaldi

[-23.79822, -48.58428](#)

Visited dates: 5-8 April 2022

General information: To stay here you have to reserve in advance. There are cabins and you can camp. To make a reservation, contact Laura (+55 15 99631-1225) or Vinícius (+55 15 99735-8480). They both speak some English, which makes this process easier.

The Fazenda itself is family owned and just outside of Buri. The location itself is nothing to write home about. It's not very green (lots of plain grass), next to a busy road and besides the cabins there are lots of other houses and twice as many (loudly barking) dogs on the property. But it's not the ambiance we came for. No, this orange farm has also some advanced secondary/primary forest left next to the river. In these and some other forest fragments on the farm live a total of 6-7 groups of Black Lion Tamarins/Red-rumped Lion Tamarins. Laura and Vinícius are two biologists who discovered the groups on their (family) property and study them. Both of them are very nice and we got a warm welcome when we arrived. Vinícius was so kind to take us on a night drive in search of

mammals, birds and amphibians that night around the farm. Although **Giant Anteater**, **Maned Wolf**, **Crab-eating Fox**, **Hoary Fox**, **Dwarf Hairy Porcupine** and much more can be found, we didn't see any mammals. In search for the **Tiger-legged Tree Frog** (*Phyllomedusa tetraploidea*) we found only two other frog species: **Dwarf Tree Frog** (*Dendropsophus nanus*) and **Spotted Tree Frog** (*Boana albopunctata*). The second night spotlighting yielded a **Striped Owl** (HO), **Little Nightjar** and 2 **Brazilian White-eared Opossums**.



Little Nightjar



Brazilian White-eared Opossum

The next morning Vinícius took us into the forest around 06.30. He charges 250R\$ for guiding and without his help we would have never found the Tamarins! Besides that, you are not allowed to search on your own here. We went to a territory of a group that is a bit habituated to humans. After walking past multiple sleeping places and playing the recording every once in a while, we hadn't heard anything after 3,5 hours of searching. We enjoyed ourselves with the many **Southern Antpitts** in the forest though. We walked to a part of the forest Vinícius said we hadn't been yet (we would've gotten hopelessly lost) and right when we thought this Tamarin was going to be as hard as the previous Lion Tamarin, they responded! A group of 6 **Black Lion Tamarins/Red-rumped Lion Tamarins** was high up in the trees. Amazing to see them! Only the two young ones had more red on their rump, the rest of the group was almost totally black. They were a bit skittish in the beginning, but went on with their regular foraging business and even came down to the ground. Licking its fingers after eating something sticky, searching in holes with its whole arm, grooming each other, relaxing on a branch. Amazing to see these creatures in the wild!



Black Lion Tamarin



Black Lion Tamarin

Fazenda Bacury

[-22.68449, -48.11353](#)

Visited dates: 8-11 April 2022

General information: Reservation is done by email and can be done in English (fazendabacury@gmail.com). You get a house for yourself and we paid 440R\$ p.n. for 2 persons, no meals included. It can take a while before you get an answer.

Fazenda Bacury is not really 'on route' for most Atlantic Forest birding/mammal watching vacations. It is quite the detour, but then: where do you get a huge block of Atlantic forest totally for yourself? The potential for quite a few mammals drove us here, and we were rewarded right away with 2 **Hoary Foxes** when we drove up to the fazenda ([-22.68357, -48.11513](#)). The small patch of forest which can be seen north from these coordinates should also be good for **Brown Howler**. After meeting Luiz, who works here for 8 years now, he took us to the forest to show us the best places to search for the main targets. There is a gate with a lock which you have to pass ([-22.67443, -48.13491](#), you will get a key). After driving a few 100 meters you turn left and go through another gate which is unlocked ([-22.67161, -48.13375](#)). The first 800m from the track is already good for all the primates here. After this first stretch there is a big tree with a small parking haven next to it ([-22.66846, -48.14059](#)). Southern Muriquis apparently like this tree, and tend to hang out here a lot of times according to Luiz. The next 450m after this tree are also good for primates. After that the road passes an area which has been burned down respectively chopped down a long time ago, but which still hasn't recovered till that point that it is interesting enough for primates. Another parking haven ([-22.66068, -48.15817](#)) is located near the beginning of a 100m long trail to a hide. A corn feeder is set up before the hide. We sat in the hide every day between 06.00-08.00, and two afternoon from 17.30-18.30. But in the total waiting time of 8 hours, we only saw 1 group of 13 **Collared Peccaries** and 1 **Black Capuchin**. **White-lipped Peccary** is seen here as well, but less regularly.



Guest house at Fazenda Bacury



Living room

The road continues for about 400m after the parking haven for the hide and comes to a T-intersection. Diagonally to the right/northwest there is a small trail ([-22.65893, -48.16195](#)). This part is again good for all the primates according to Luiz. The road to the left/south (750m) could also possibly yield Titi and Muriqui.

Enthusiastically we started walking all the before mentioned roads and trails from 08.00 in the morning till 12.00/12.30 and again from 15.00 – 17.30/18.00. The first groups of **Black Capuchins** were easily found. The first afternoon we only found Capuchins. The second day was not very different, with only Capuchins in the morning and a very short calls of **Black-fronted Titis**. Luiz proposed to join us for the afternoon, but even with his keen eye we didn't see anything else. The third morning was a continuation of the previous. Luiz said that only one (Dutch) person has been here for 3,5 days and missed the Muriquis in the 8 years he had been at the Fazenda. We knew he was trying to get our hopes up, but being Dutch and being here for 3,5 days as well didn't help ;-). Walking the first part after the gate at the end of the morning **Black-fronted Titis** began to call loudly! We hastily ran towards the sound, but they were in between lots of vines and leaves. Luiz spotted 2 of them, but we only saw Capuchins which were in the same group. He said that Titis are shy and will sometimes sit still on a branch when they spot humans. This is why we decided to work ourselves through the shrubs towards the tree where we heard the sound. Luiz proposed that I would play the playback and he would search around the tree. Only a few minutes later he signalled us to come quick. We ran towards him and we couldn't believe what we saw. In a split second my brain realized that those Titis were too big and light to be Titis, and in fact they were **Southern Muriquis!** About 8 of them made their way through the canopy and within 2 minutes they were gone, never to be seen again by us. Three primates so close to each other, amazing! With high hopes we continued back on the path, but we didn't hear or see anything else for the day. The fourth day wasn't any different, and in the evening we had to leave without having seen or heard **Brown Howler** and **Buffy-tufted Marmoset**.

I'm not sure if we were unlucky to see only Capuchins and Muriquis in about 30 hours of searching the trails, or that others were just really lucky. Luiz said that November – March are the best months for seeing the primates here, with June-August having the lowest chances.

Birding wise there are less special targets here. **Violaceous Quail-dove** can be seen in the forest, but unfortunately we didn't see it. We did see **Black-capped Screech Owl** at the lodge.



Southern Muriqui



White-throated Spadebill

Tanquã – Minipantanal Paulista

-22.67043, -48.01032

A place relatively close to Fazenda Bacury that might interest birders, is Tanquã. This 'mini Pantanal of São Paulo' hosts some interesting species like *Yellow-breasted Crake*, *Spotted Rail*, *Grey-breasted Crake*, *Southern Pochard* and much more! A boat trip is about 3 hours long and costs between 300-350R\$. A good bird guide to arrange the boat, go along with you on the trip and bird the region afterwards is Ivan Costa (+55 19 98283-4605). He speaks English and was very friendly helping us get in touch with Bacury and finding good options for Tanquã. Time/planning hindered us in actually visiting Tanquã, but it seems like a perfect combination with Bacury!

Dourado

-22.1136, -48.31166

Visited dates: 11-12 April 2022

General information: Dourado is a small town in São Paulo state, where cerrado and patches of rainforest come together. Around the town are some interesting birds that can be targeted. The main reason for us to contact Cal Martins (+55 16 99700-4565) was to see the Rufous-faced Crake. Cal understands some English, but communication went better in Spanish. He asked 250R\$ for a day and we could camp in their garden.

We arrived around 20.00 and Cal was luckily flexible with his schedule and took us right away to the place for the *Buff-fronted Owl*, another great target in the region. Unfortunately we only heard it from far away, but the night ended really well after we went to another place for *Giant Snipe*. We heard 3 of them, and one of them even came walking within one meter of us!

The next morning we went to the open cerrado for the main target. Walking up to the feeding place for the *Rufous-faced Crake*, Cal pointed towards the place and said that the bird doesn't show anymore lately. Unhappy with this information and the way it was given (we mentioned this as our main target many times over WhatsApp, but he never mentioned it couldn't be seen at the moment). We made the best of this trip by targeting species like *Rusty-backed Antwren* and *White-tailed Goldenthrout*. As Cal didn't even bring binoculars, and he didn't know most bird names in English, the guiding was ok at best. But good knowledge of sounds and knowing the places made up for that a bit. We had incredible views of *Helmeted Manakins* and heard and shortly saw a *Black-fronted Titi* walking in a tree.



Rusty-backed Antwren (female)

Helmeted Manakin (male)

Luckily another place for **Russet-crowned Crake** was still really good, and the views were amazing! **Large-billed Antwren** showed as well at the same spot, and driving through the open landscapes we observed multiple **Streamer-tailed Tyrants**.



Large-billed Antwren (female)

Russet-crowned Crake

Later in the afternoon we went back to the place for the Owl. Even though it was scorching hot, we encountered nice bird activity with **Rusty-backed Spinetail**, **Hooded Tanager** and **White-wedged Piculet**. Towards the end of the afternoon clouds were forming and we saw the lightning and heard loud thunder far away. **Planalto Slaty-antshrike** and **Black-bellied Antwren** were found just before it really got dark. The dark clouds came rolling in, and lightning wasn't far away anymore. We decided to leave the open land and wait safely in the car. Sitting in there for one minute the **Buff-fronted Owl** started calling far away. Some taping lured it a bit closer, but still no sighting. As the road was bad and the car we came with was even worse, we didn't know how much longer we could stick around. The first raindrops fell down; we went to the car once more. In darkness I still managed to see a small owl-like silhouette flying to the tree nearby. Quickly we went towards the tree, and seconds later we finally saw one of the most beautiful Owls in South-America! Just in time; two minutes later rain came pouring down and we had to go back to Dourado quickly.



Black-bellied Tanager (male)



Buff-fronted Owl

PN Serra da Canastra

[-20.24294, -46.44655](#)

Visited date: 14-16 April 2022

General information: The park is open from 08.00 – 18.00, and outside these hours you can only enter with an official guide. There is no entrance fee.

Upper Part

[-20.25474, -46.41753](#)

Serra da Canastra NP, in the southwest of Minas Gerais, has breath-taking landscapes. Cerrado, the tropical savannah, covers the hills and gives endless views. Besides that, there are gallery forests along rivers, waterfalls and rocky fields. The main birding area can be reached via the town of São Roque de Minas. After this town the road gets worse, and some parts are just terrible. With rain it should only be driven with a 4x4. We did see some normal sedans driving up there, but we would only recommend driving up with a high-clearance vehicle. Otherwise, make sure your rental car is all-risk insured ;-).

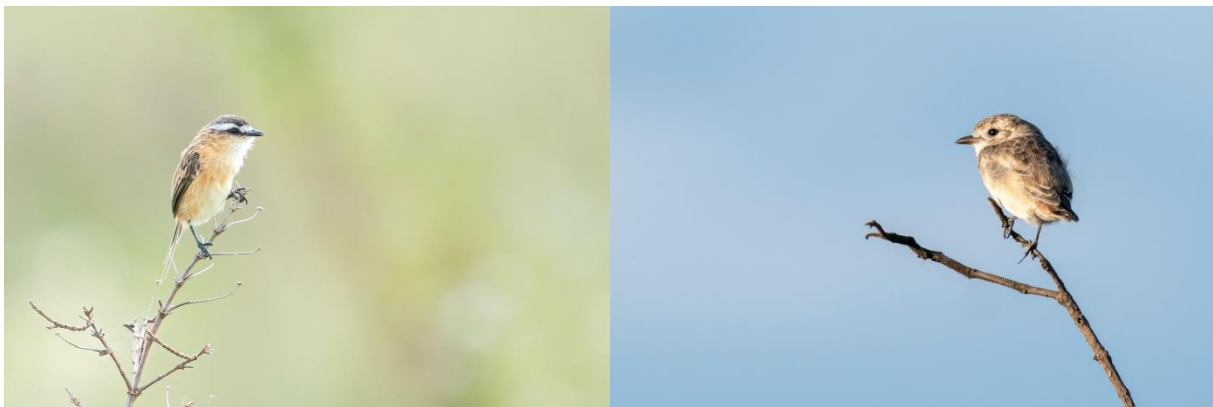
There is a small trail that can be walked at the visitor centre ([-20.25474, -46.41753](#)), which can be nice if you don't have guide and you do want to bird a bit before 08.00. We had **Helmeted Manakin** in the forest and heard **Dwarf Tinamou** as well!

After about 4km there is a bridge ([-20.24359, -46.44645](#)). On the right side is the spring that 'gives birth to River São Francisco', a river that flows all the way to northeast Brazil, east of Salvador (2800km+ further!). The spring is *the* place to try for **Brasilia Tapaculo**. We heard it every day, but never managed to see it. We also observed **White-rumped Tanager** in the shrubs around the parking lot. The first afternoon Romy managed to find 2 different **Giant Anteaters** in the surrounding fields!

**White-rumped Tanager****Sooty Tyrannulet**

4km further there are some ruins on the left side of the road ([-20.21807, -46.47665](#)). This is where we found many Seedeaters every time; **Pearly-bellied Seedeater**, **Plumbeous Seedeater** and **Copper Seedeater**. As this was the only recently burned area we came across we tried to find **Campo Miner**, but we didn't manage to observe it in the 4 days we were in the park.

The grasslands after the ruins till the turn-off towards Cachoeira Rolinho ([-20.24338, -46.54534](#)) are good for **Cock-tailed Tyrant** and **Sharp-tailed Tyrant**, which we found relatively often here. **Dwarf Tinamou** responded well to playback in this part as well. This is the only part where we observed **Pampas Deer** (multiple times). The road towards Cachoeira Rolinho goes through some woodland, and this is where we encountered **White-banded Tanager**. A valley further up the road ([-20.19701, -46.57279](#)) had some singing **Ochre-breasted Pipits**, although we didn't manage to see them. The gallery forest along the stream at Cachoeira Rasga Canga held the beautiful **White-striped Warbler** ([-20.17438, -46.5603](#)). Driving back we flushed a **Dwarf Tinamou** from the side of the road. It flew away in a quail-like flight, but we couldn't find it again afterwards.

**Sharp-tailed Tyrant****Cock-tailed Tyrant**

A bit further on the main road is the turnoff towards the upper part of the Danta waterfall ([-20.2548, -46.55134](#)). This road was good for **Stripe-tailed Yellow-finch**, and we had a **Giant Anteater** up close along this road the first afternoon. The big price however can be found on the river at the end of the road. The first afternoon we encountered 2 **Brazilian Mergansers** in the pool right next to the parking

lot. We were able to observe them for a while, but loud visitors made them fly away. We found them again here another morning, but again they flew after an hour or so. Interestingly they seem a bit habituated to people, as some people were just sitting at the edge of the water. Only when loud talking people walked close by, they flew away. They followed the river, so if you can't find them here, try to walk along the river edge to the first corner ([-20.29779, -46.51872](#)). It seemed like they landed there both times.

**Brazilian Merganser****Brazilian Merganser**

The third day we continued the road all the way to the viewing point at Garagem de Pedra ([-20.23236, -46.62558](#)). Here we had a cool fly-by of a **King Vulture**! We also observed no less than 3 **Giant Anteaters** from this point! Don't drive towards Cachoeira Do Fundão, as the last part of this road is only for 4x4's. They will tell you this only when you get to that point..

**King Vulture****Giant Anteater**

On the last night we drove back after 18.00 to give spotlighting a try. We only found **Band-winged Nightjar** unfortunately, but didn't get in trouble for being 1,5 hours late at the gate.

Even though we tried hard and stayed for 4 days, we didn't find **Maned Wolf**, **Campo Miner**, **Chapada Flycatcher**, **Black-masked Finch**, **Black-throated Saltator** or **Collared Crescentchest**.

Lower Part

[-20.31332, -46.52793](#)

The lower part is not much more than a small forest with one trail towards the waterfall. The waterfall is spectacular though! In the forest it should be possible to see *Helmeted Manakin* and *Russet-mantled Foliage-gleaner*. There were also no *Great Dusky Swifts* at the waterfall. We did see a *Black-tufted Marmoset*, which came quite close after recording and playing back the sound.

We searched along the river as well for the Mergansers, but it's quite hard to get to the river and see big parts. We would recommend just trying multiple times at the upper waterfall for this species. We did encounter a group of *Black-tufted Marmosets* along the riverbank! At the camping along the river where we were staying one night we had 2 *Hoary Foxes*.



Black-tufted Marmoset

White-banded Tanager

PN Itatiaia

[-22.46265, -44.59253](#)

Visited dates: 20-22 April 2022

General information: The park is open from 08.00 – 17.00. The entrance fee is 40R\$ p.p. and 20R\$ for a car. We were allowed to sleep in our motorhome at Hotel Donati (lower part).

Upper Part

[-22.37651, -44.76053](#)

Birding the upper part of PN Itatiaia doesn't actually involve going into the park. All the targets can be found along the entrance road. We walked the first part, from the main road ([-22.37651, -44.76053](#)) towards the first hairpin bend. Birds like *Buff-throated Warbling Finch* and *Bay-chested Warbling Finch* were common. We heard and even saw *Mouse-colored Tapaculo* two times and heard (but didn't see) *Rufous-tailed Antthrush*. We also heard multiple groups of *Black-fronted Titis*. Other good birds were *Green-crowned Plovercrest*, *Serra do Mar Tyrannulet*, *Serra do Mar Tyrant-manakin* and a *Rufous-tailed Antbird* in the bamboo in the bend. A big flock on the way back to our car yielded the big price: *Black-capped Piprites*!



Serra do Mar Tyrannulet

Black-capped Piprites

Following the bumpy road further up the hill we made a stop at the Casa Pedra ([-22.36847, -44.74563](#)) and walked about 200m back towards the bend. Bird activity was high, with the best bird being a male **Large-tailed Antshrike**.

Again further up we made a stop at an open patch with Araucaria trees ([-22.35595, -44.73386](#)). **Shear-tailed Grey Tyrant** is often seen here, but we failed to find one. We did hear the high pitch clear whistle of the **Black-and-gold Cotinga**.

Almost at the entrance the trees have made way for low shrubs and bamboo ([-22.36655, -44.71439](#)). Here we easily found multiple **Itatiaia Spinetails** along the road and heard 2 **Speckle-breasted Antpittas**.



Large-tailed Antshrike

Itatiaia Spinetail

Lower Part

[-22.46265, -44.59253](#)

The lower part has many hotels with restaurants and is more easily reached. There are plenty of walking trails here. One morning we walked the trail going north from the Hotel Donati ([-22.44272, -44.60108](#)). It passes through a lot of bamboo, and this is where we found **Fork-tailed Pygmy-tyrant** besides the plenty **Star-throated Antwrens**. A **Smooth Horned Frog** (*Proceratophrys boiei*) made a

small jump when I walked past it. It was only because of this that Romy noticed this well-camouflaged frog on the forest floor littered with leaves.

The trail from the hotel ends as an abandoned hotel ([-22.43875, -44.60823](#)). You can also drive up here and park in front of it. On the open field next to the parking lot is a big tree with huge flowers, where we observed **Black-eared Fairy**. From here we walked the first part of the trail towards Tres Picos. The first part held multiple **Orange-eyed Thornbirds**. Another open area with abandoned buildings I said to Romy that I was surprised that we hadn't seen a Tayra yet, while we are on good trails all the time in the morning and afternoons. Not even one minute later a **Tayra** climbed in a fruit tree behind the soccer field!! We were able to observe it for a while. We also hadn't seen a Jaguar yet, I said right after... but that trick only worked once. Going into the trail, passing the very high bamboo stands, turning right afterwards up the stairs we flushed a **Tawny-browed Owl**. Following this owl we suddenly observed a male **Pin-tailed Manakin**. Following the path uphill we encountered **Drab-breasted Bamboo Tyrant**, **Ferruginous Antbird** and **Tufted Antshrike**. A **Cryptic Antthrush/Such's Antthrush** started calling after 16.00. **Half-collared Sparrow** can be observed here as well, but we didn't even hear it.



Ferruginous Antbird

Tawny-browed Owl

Campos do Jordão

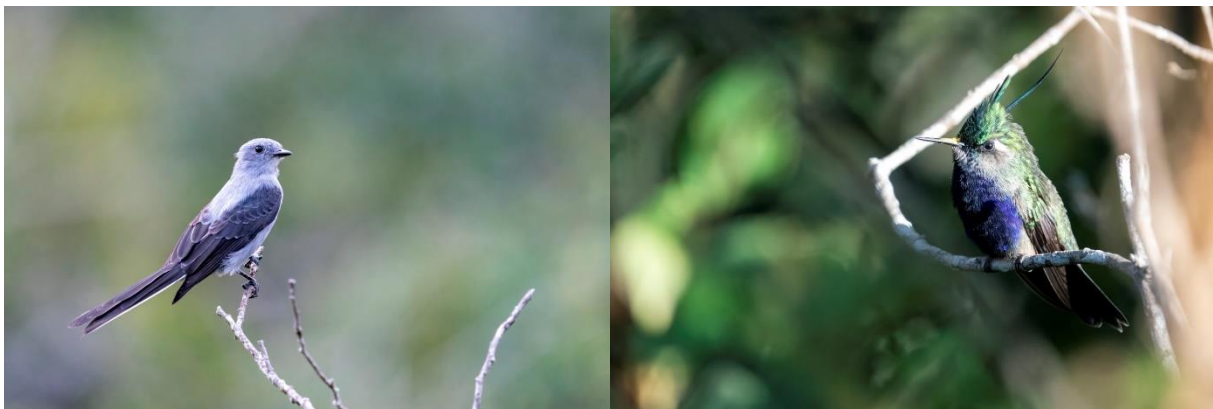
[-22.68988, -45.48117](#)

Visited dates: 23-24 April 2022

Campos do Jordão is a very touristy, German/Swiss/Austria-style town near São Paulo. We arrived on a Friday in a Holiday-weekend, and the town was crowded. Birding-wise this site should hold more or less the same species as in NP Itatiaia. It has some more Araucaria forests, which gave great sights from the River Trail inside the State Park ([-22.69027, -45.47971](#)). We had a nice flock with **Buff-throated Warbling Finch**, **White-winged Becard**, **Sharp-billed Treehunter** and a **Fawn-breasted Tanager**. It got really busy in the park soon after we came out of this trail. After walking another trail and seeing absolutely nothing we decided to leave the park.

The park only opens at 09.00 in the morning, which is late. It's probably better to bird the dirt road just outside the park (starting here: [-22.69127, -45.49132](#)). This road goes up the forested mountain, and there are some small inlets along the bumpy road where a car can be parked so one can bird parts of the road from there. As it was very windy we didn't see much on the first day, but we did hear a **Black-and-Gold Cotinga**. We spotlighted the road in the evening from the small residential neighbourhood at the start all the way till the open areas on the other side of the mountain. We only had one calling **Stygian Owl** far away, but encountered nothing else. **Long-trained Nightjar** is seen sometimes, especially later in the year. The next morning we birded from the viewpoint till the open area at the top of the mountain and back. We only observed multiple **Green-crowned Plovercrests** and a **Shear-tailed Grey Tyrant** as mentionable species. **Black-fronted Titi** called from the valley, but we couldn't locate it. Then many cyclists came up the mountain. We're not sure if this was because of a tournament, or if this was a regular Sunday... but we left after the first 100 cyclists passed by.

We would recommend spending all your time at Itatiaia NP. However, with a family or company that are non-birders this town might offer them some more as well.



Shear-tailed Grey Tyrant

Green-crowned Plovercrest

Nazare Paulista

[-23.20015, -46.35306](#)

Visited dates: 24-25 April 2022

This is a well-known place to search for the **Buffy-tufted Marmoset/White-eared Marmoset**. We drove towards the IPE (Instituto de Pesquisas Ecológicas) but already heard some sounds just north of the place. We stepped out, but didn't hear it again. Looking up there was a **Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth** in a palm though! After we parked our car a bit further we started walking the main road. Traffic was not too busy, but the road is very dusty and the dust stayed in the air for a long time. This caused a hazy field of view when searching. However, the monkeys are most easily located by sound (and they respond to playback). It took about 45 minutes to find a group of at least 5 individuals on the small road towards a church ([-23.19956, -46.35276](#)). The next morning we found a

group of 3-4 here at the beginning of this road (near the marsh). Another group of at least 11 individuals was located north of the IPE. Half the group crossed the road to some lower trees and later back to the other side of the road again. Amazing views of this really cool but scary, clown-looking primate!



Adult **Buffy-tufted Marmoset**

Young twin **Buffy-tufted Marmosets**

São José dos Campos: Sítio Bicudinho

[-23.10055, -46.01758](#)

We visited this site on route from Campos do Jordão to Nazare Paulista. There is a small turn-off from the road ([-23.10186, -46.01736](#)) where you can drive into with your car. You can drive down, cross the small bridge and park your car on the side of this road ([-23.10055, -46.01758](#)). The main target here is **São Paulo Antwren (Marsh Antwren)**, of which 2 males and a female were quickly located right next to the parking place. A bit further along the marsh we also observed 2 **Orange-breasted Thornbirds**. We couldn't find any **Chestnut-bellied Seed Finch**, which should occur here as well.

São Paulo – Botanical Gardens [-23.63926, -46.62729](#)

Visited date: 26 April 2022

General Information: The Botanical Gardens are closed on Mondays. On the other days it's open from 09.00 in the morning, with a 10R\$ entrance fee p.p.

The Botanical Gardens in São Paulo are a good place for **Brown Howler Monkeys**, whose populations were decimated by the yellow fever. We entered the park at around 09.30 and started searching in the trees on a field where they are most often sighted. We were also on the lookout for a **Stygian Owl**, which is sometimes found roosting in the open trees on the same field. We asked some people and a friendly lady brought us to a tree where she most often saw it ([-23.6387, -46.62385](#)). Unfortunately it wasn't there. She said the Howlers are often sighted in the trees around the lakes. Over there everybody pointed us towards the north side of the lake, towards the forest which borders to the

zoo. We walked a trail from there and heard some Marmosets. Playing some sounds we were quickly surrounded by at least 5 **Black-eared Marmosets**. Walking the trail further we suddenly heard a sound. A beautiful rich brown coloured primates sat in a palm tree. We went into the forest to get closer and found 4 more. After observing them for a while we walked back towards the more open area ([-23.64012, -46.62545](#)), super happy we managed to find a group. A last try for the owl on the field where our search started suddenly yielded another group of 7 **Brown Howlers!**



Adult **Brown Howler**

Young **Brown Howler**

Ilhabela

[-23.93628, -45.42732](#)

Visited date: 27 April 2022

General Information: There are regular ferries going from São Sebastião to Ilhabela ([-23.80932, -45.3974](#)). The price is 19R\$ for a car (incl. passengers) and there is no need to reserve.

The main target on the island for us was Black-fronted Piping-guan, which we missed in Uruguaí Park in Argentina and in Intervalles in Brazil. We started walking the Trilha Do Bonete around 06.30 in the morning ([-23.93628, -45.42732](#)). There was nobody at the guard house yet (entrance 10R\$), but the pedestrian entrance is always open. The trail is intermediate difficult and can be slippery at points. We had **Black-cheeked Gnateater** and **Squamate Antbird** at the beginning of the trail, and many **Southern Mealy Parrots** flew over (they are common on this island). At some bamboo patches we connected with 3 **Streak-capped Antwrens**. We had multiple **Solitary Tinamous** crossing the road, and at different points we observed **Rufous-breasted Leaftossers**. We had a great group of 10 **Red-necked Tanagers**. I suddenly felt something wet on my shoulder and found out I was being peed on by a **Black Capuchin**. At the first waterfall we hoped we would see the Piping-guans standing on the rocks or so, but none of that. We did see a cool **Brazilian Torrent Frog (*Hylodes asper*)**.



Brazilian Torrent Frog (*Hylodes asper*)

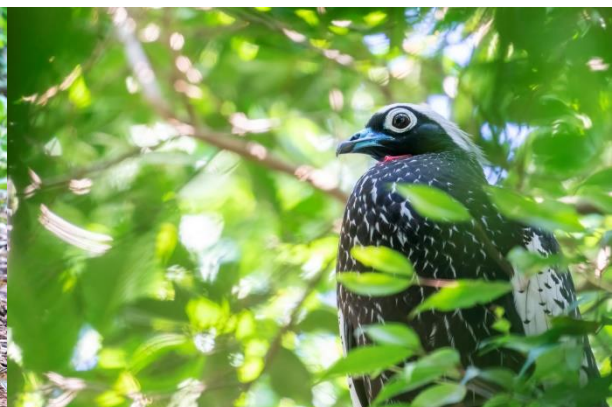


Two-headed Sipo (*Chironius bicarinatus*)

We decided to continue walking, and I started playing the recording of the Piping-guan every few hundred metres. I wasn't even sure if these birds responded to playback, but otherwise it would be a good way to keep my ear tuned to the sound. After a while we thought we heard the sound far away, but it wasn't the same as in the Merlin app. Instead of a five-toned rising whistle we just heard one high-pitched whistle. We played the recording again, and it kept on calling like that. After 10 minutes we gave up, deciding that it must have been something else. A **Brazilian Squirrel/Guianan Squirrel** made us look up and then a group of 8 **Olive-green Tanagers** got our attention. Trying to photograph these in the right light we walked about 20 metres back, and looked up again. Suddenly there it was! A **Black-fronted Piping-guan**! It sat there almost motionless in between the branches and only looked a bit curiously down once we played the recording again. Amazing!! Walking back we heard some rustling multiple times in between the leaves on the ground. The 2 times we managed to find something these were snakes! A beautifully metallic green coloured **Two-headed Sipo** (*Chironius bicarinatus*) and a small **Brown Sipo** (*Chironius fuscus*). Almost back at the car we had another flock, with as best species **Pale-browed Treehunter**. Quite a rewarding walk, and definitely a place to consider for a holiday birding-itinerary.



Solitary Tinamou



Black-fronted Piping-guan

Sítio Folha Seca

[-23.46945, -45.16935](#)

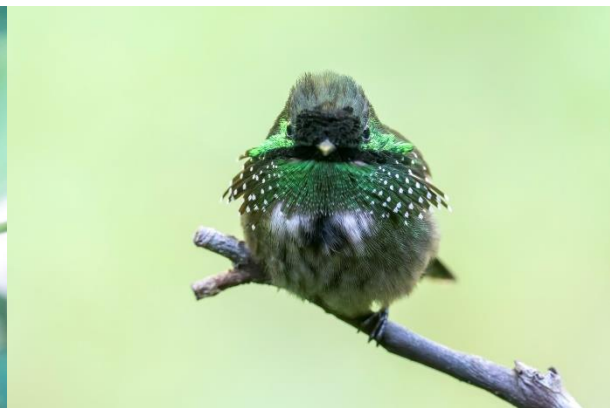
Visited dates: 27-28 April 2022

Jonas has a garden in which he put out some hummingbird feeders. No reservation is needed to visit this place. The feeders are already up around 06.00 in the morning (but activity and the light only getting really good after 08.00). Many different hummingbirds can be seen in this garden, depending on the time of year. Despite its small size, **Festive Coquette** will most likely be the show stealer here. Other nice species are **White-chinned Sapphire**, **Black Jacobin** and **Saw-billed Hermit**.

The road towards the garden is a bit bumpy, but alright till the garden as long as it hasn't rained too much. About a few 100m before the garden is a good place to look for **Tawny-throated Leaf-tosser** ([-23.47159, -45.17229](#)). At night this is where we encountered **Tawny-browed Owl** and heard a **Mottled Owl**. Right at the garden we had 2 **Southern Black-eared Opossums** at night and **Black-capped Screech-owl** and **Least Pygmy Owl** (both heard only). We also birded the road behind the entrance to the garden by foot. We had a response from **Shrike-like Cotinga** and **Spotted Bamboowren**. Just after a 'gate' (just 2 stone pillars) we had a close-up encounter with 2 **Slaty Bristlefronts**. Driving back to town a **Brown-throated Tree-toed Sloth** crossed the road. Of course we put it safely in a tree to save it from the trucks which use this road.



Saw-billed Hermit



Festive Coquette

Fazenda Angelim

[-23.40113, -45.06296](#)

Visited dates: 28-29 April 2022

General Information: No reservation is needed, but we encountered a closed gate. It is best to contact the owner Paul beforehand to smoothen your visit (paul@palle.com.br / +55 11 4727-1444). There are also other numbers on a sign at the gate, but they only speak Portuguese.

The main target here is **Buff-throated Purpletuft**. They tend to hang out in the trees around the main building in the morning (best time between 09.00 – 11.00). There are great **White-bearded Manakin** leks right next to the entrance road before the open area, and we saw them dancing the whole morning. We also had a **Spotted Bamboowren** calling here. There are some trails after the main building. At one of the side trails we took the opportunity to take a swim in a natural pool during the heat of the day. In the afternoon we encountered a **Black Hawk-eagle** from a high tree about 100m in the Waterfall trail (follow the broad road-sized trail till the end).

**Buff-throated Purpletuft****Buff-throated Purpletuft**

Pousada Oikos

[-23.31998, -45.16369](#)

Visited dates: 29 April – 1 May 2022

General Information: Accommodation can be booked via the website, but you can also contact the really friendly and English speaking Sinara Ferraz (+55 19 99265-1447). The road up the mountain is good, and only the last 7km are compact gravel, which was no problem even in the rain.

Pousada Oikos has some nice hummingbird feeders set up, which are good for photography. Species composition is more or less the same as at Sítio Folha Seca. In addition we had **Swallow-tailed Hummingbird** here. As it rained for the days we were here we couldn't search for **Swallow-tailed Cotingas** or go spotlighting for **Long-trained Nightjar**. There is a **Speckle-breasted Antpitta** territory in the area ([-23.30767, -45.14271](#)), but this location was a bit hard to reach by car and on foot. Rob did manage to see about three speckles though. They are way more easily heard at NP Itatiaia.

**Violet-capped Woodnymph****Scale-throated Hermit**

Pereque

[-22.97343, -44.54952](#)

Visited date: 1 May 2022

A short stop should be enough here to encounter the main target: **Black-hooded Antwren**. We parked the car and we had a pair within 100m ([-22.97343, -44.54952](#)). Walking a bit further we observed another pair. We didn't like the feel of the neighbourhood and many cars and motorcycles passed (it was a Sunday), so we decided to leave the place without doing much additional birding.

Praia da Pernambuco

[-22.93715, -42.29465](#)

Visited date: 3 May 2022

We parked our car in front of the big house and walked around it to find the entrance to a trail through the restinga habitat (start here: [-22.93715, -42.29465](#)). We heard **Restinga Antwren** at multiple places along the trail and observed 2 about 100m in ([-22.9367, -42.2934](#)). Here we also had **Sooretama Slaty-antshrike** and after a lot of searching and walking we had **Hangnest Tody-tyrant** at the exact same place in the end.



Hooded Antwren



Restinga Antwren

Unamar - Golden Lion Tamarin [-22.60834, -42.02261](#)

Visited dates: 3-4 May 2022

How to get there: Put the navigation on the coordinates at a gate in the village ([-22.62277, -42.02408](#)) and just drive straight until you reach another gate ([-22.60834, -42.02261](#)) open 24/7.

Most people go to the Golden Lion Tamarin Project to see the project's namesake primates ([-22.51087, -42.30765](#)). However, this place was still closed for visitors and you need a local guide which you have to arrange on your own. Thanks to Jens Bokelaar we got to this place near the town Unamar. There are many Tamarins here, and in the afternoon we heard a group of about 6 **Golden**

Lion Tamarins while driving the road behind the gate. They are quite habituated as locals feed them bananas, so they are quite easy to observe. The next morning we found them at the exact same place around 07.30 and counted 11 this time, including young twins. This part of the road is quite busy, so we decided to also drive to the visitor centre ([-22.60272, -42.01078](#)). We encountered another group of 3 crossing the road and 2 more at the centre. Both groups were way less habituated. The visitor centre was being rebuilt after being left alone for 2 years during Covid, and there wasn't much to see. There is no accommodation on site (anymore).



Golden Lion Tamarin

Golden Lion Tamarin

REGUA

[-22.45352, -42.77031](#)

Visited dates: 4-5 May 2022

General Information: This place can only be visited with prior reservation (day visits or overnight stay) by contacting Thomas Locke (thomas.locke@hotmail.com). It is closed in January.

REGUA is a great project where a family fazenda has been reforested again, and they are expanding by the purchase of new land. The money for this comes partly from donations, but also from visitors like you and me. The price for overnight stay is quite steep, but your money will go to a good cause!

In the afternoon we birded the brown trail, followed by the purple trail to the observation tower. We saw **White-flanked Antwren** where the brown trail connects with the yellow trail. As it started raining we didn't see much that afternoon. The next morning we observed **Ferruginous Pygmy Owl** from the observation tower. Just behind the observation tower we saw a **White-bibbed Antbird** skulking underneath the vegetation. This place should also be good for **Shrike-like Cotinga**, which we didn't hear or see unfortunately. **Scaled Antbird** was heard and seen and **Chestnut-backed Antshrike** was heard calling from the purple trail. **Common Marmosets** were seen multiple times, but these populations are all descendants from captive individuals and can't really be considered 'wild'. We encountered 2 species of amphibian: **Ornate Forest Toad** (*Rhinella ornate*) and **Boie's Frog/Rio de Janeiro's Smooth Horned Frog** (*Proceratophrys boiei*).

Southern Muriquis can be seen with a guide on the green trail by going into the forest for 5-7 hours (start trail: [-22.41722, -42.73922](#)). About 40% of the tourist that are going there with a guide are apparently seeing the one group of about 25-30 individuals that is left. We didn't try for these primates as we had already seen them, but this place might be a nice alternative to Fazenda Bacury which is off route for most naturalists visiting this region on holiday.

At night we went to the road next to wet grassland in which **Giant Snipe** can be heard ([-22.48116, -42.75991](#)). After about 30 minutes we heard 2 of them calling, but they were far away in the grasslands and we let them be as we have had close encounters in Dourado with this species.

On the way back to REGUA we stopped in the forest in the corner of the road ([-22.46821, -42.76153](#)). There we tried for **Black-banded Owl**. We walked the road into the forest (which doesn't seem to be private or ending at a house), but only encountered **Tawny-browed Owls**.

Theodoro Trail

[-22.37614, -42.55716](#)

You can park in front of the trail, which starts on the left side of a driveway. The trail is mostly paved and goes through some interesting forest. It should be good for **Shrike-like Cotinga** and other species like **Tawny-throated Leaf-tosser**, **Sharpbill** and **Bare-throated Bellbird** (right season only), but we had lots of clouds and no bird activity. It was still a pleasant walk though.

Macaé de Cima

[-22.37558, -42.48298](#)

Visited dates: 5-6 May 2022

We visited this place after De Temmerman (2021) had some of their best birding here. The drive up is a bumpy gravel road. We parked at the coordinates ([-22.37558, -42.48298](#)) and just like De Temmerman we went into the private reserve via the pedestrian gate to bird the main road, both in the afternoon and again the following morning. We didn't have overly good birding here, but we did see **Black-billed Scythebill** and short sighting of a **Such's Antthrush/Cryptic Antthrush**. In the morning we also had an encounter with 4 **Buffy-tufted Marmosets**! Unlike the other birders we didn't have any response from **White-bearded Antshrike**, **Variagated Antpitta** or **Spotted Bamboowren** though. Although the birding was ok, we wouldn't include this location in our normal holiday schedule ourselves.

Pico da Caledonia

[-22.35061, -42.58325](#)

Visited date: 6 May 2022

This very steep mountain can be driven almost to the top, but as the road gets worse higher up, we would advise to park it along the side of the road ([-22.35061, -42.58325](#)). Driving up we already observed **Shear-tailed Grey Tyrant** and heard many **Black-and-gold Cotingas**. The main target, Grey-winged Cotinga, wasn't found that easily though. Clouds rolling in, wind and almost too many Black-and-gold Cotingas calling, made finding the main target quite difficult. We ran into a Brazilian Birding Experts-guide who hadn't heard or seen them still after 2 hours searching. We walked the steep road up and down, listening for the sound and scanning the trees. There is a good lookout just before the gate that leads to the stairs ([-22.35119, -42.58432](#)), and two bit lower (here: [-22.3509, -42.58399](#) and here: [-22.34944, -42.58469](#)). At the higher lookout we scoped out a **Black-and-gold Cotinga** from a tree. The Grey-winged didn't seem to respond to playback either. After 5 hours we were almost about to give up when we heard 2 clear calls of a **Grey-winged Cotinga**! If only he/she knew how happy 2 calls made us :-)

Another good bird on the mountain is *Itatiaia Spinetail*, but we didn't have any response (but didn't try hard as we had seen it at Itatiaia NP). *Swallow-tailed Cotinga* occurs here as well in the right season (not winter).



Blue Dacnis



Green-crowned Plovercrest

Marinéli – Dona Mariana

[-22.12736, -42.61907](#)

Visited date: 6 May 2022

We found a good place to camp via iOverlander and decided to go here. We drove the road from Marinéli that goes over a Fazenda (but has been opened to public) and after passing a tunnel we suddenly saw something small on the road. Just busy driving instead of spotlighting, our first thought was that it was an opossum as it was small and quite low to the ground, but only seconds later we

realised it was actually a cat. Of course the feline went into the shrubs and we thought we would never see it again. Most likely a domestic cat anyways so close to town.. Just when we wanted to step back into the car Rob caught some eyeshine only 6m from us in the vegetation. It turned out to be a **Southern Tiger Cat/Southern Tigrina!** Later at the unofficial camping place we had many **Southern Black-eared Opossums** in and around an avocado tree. Other campers had **Maned Wolf** and **White-lipped Peccary**, so who knows what else can be found in these forest remnants.

After watching the Túneis de Murineli (remnants of an old railway) the next morning we drove back to Marinéli. Just before the small town is a good place to scan for **Black-necked Aracari** as there are some sightings lower in the valley on eBird. We didn't see them, but we did observe 2 **Blue-winged Macaws**.

Sumidouro/Carmo

[-22.02106, -42.65803](#)

Visited date: 7 May 2022

Sumidouro

[-22.02106, -42.65803](#)

This is a reliable place for **Three-toed Jacamar**. After the turnoff from the main road ([-22.02256, -42.65944](#)) you only need to drive about 100m and park the car. We had the Jacamars right above our car within seconds.



Blue-winged Macaw



Three-toed Jacamar

Carmo

[-21.94773, -42.60332](#)

This is another reliable place for **Three-toed Jacamar**. Also here we saw them within seconds in a tree next to the car. We also birded the road after the (unlocked) gate for about 1km and encountered **Serra Anwren** and more Jacamars. **Rio de Janeiro Antbird** should be possible as well in

the forest remnants after 500m, but we couldn't connect with it. Back at the car we had many swifts flying over, some **White-collared Swifts** but also many **Biscutate Swifts**!

Caetés da Cima

[-20.51179, -41.00396](#)

Visited date: 7-9 May 2022

General information: To arrange a visit with the research team to the recently bought reserve where the Cherry-throated Tanager has been breeding, contact Gustavo Magnago (gmagnago@institutomarcosdaniel.org.br). The cost is 85 \$USD p.p. per day. Gustavo leads the project to monitor this bird, and he arranges the visits.

The main reason to visit this area was the **Cherry-throated Tanager**, which was only rediscovered relatively recently. We made our way towards some locations mentioned in trip reports, where other birders had found some by themselves. We walked the same road (starting here: [-20.51179, -41.00396](#)), and walked for about 2km before the road came to a fence with a sign that indicated private property behind it. Right there we had a **Rio de Janeiro Antbird** and a **Cinnamon-vented Piha**. We walked the same road back and met the owner of the private property. He only spoke Portuguese but seemed to mention that we had to have permission to bird here, but then also indicated it wasn't actually a problem. More people passed us later and just waved. When we came back to the road the gate was closed and locked. We walked the main road as well, and encountered **Buffy-headed Marmosets**. The next day we walked both roads again and (again) encountered many mixed species flocks, including with tanagers, but no Cherry-throated.. Interesting birds we did encounter were **Sharp-tailed Streamcreeper**, **White-bibbed Antbird** and **Robust Woodpecker**. We also heard some Marmosets calling again, but these didn't get any closer, but are most likely of the same species. There might still be a healthy population of these Buffy-headed Marmosets here.

We also arranged to go with the research team, which does its research on the other side of the same hill in the private reserve ([-20.5058, -41.0291](#)). Gustavo already told us it was a bit harder to find the Tanagers this time of year. The researchers didn't speak any English, so unfortunately they couldn't explain anything about the research, the species or the reserve. The research seemed to involve mostly just walking three small stretches of road in a forest where the tanagers have been nesting before. So the 'day with the researchers' just involved paying quite some money to slog behind two persons walking a road which was 1km (as the crow flies) from the location we had been searching the day before. We did see **Hooded Berryeater**, **Crescent-chested Puffbird** and a **Cinnamon-vented Piha**. We tried to ask some questions via Google translate. The researcher wrote that they work 5 days in the week, and later answered they hadn't been seen for more than 20 days. So for us this wasn't worth it. We would advise to tag along when the Tanagers are seen regularly or even better, when they are breeding! Unfortunately after 3 days of searching in this area, we had to leave without seeing this really special species.

We tried to bird the premises of Hotel Fazenda Monte Verde ([-20.46653, -41.00277](#)) but were refused entrance. It looked like they were rebuilding, which is probably the reason. *Half-collared Sparrow* and *Swallow-tailed Cotinga* are good species that can be seen here.



Buffy-headed Marmoset

Crescent-chested Puffbird

Santa Teresa

[-19.93564, -40.59946](#)

Visited date: 1 May 2022

Instituto Nacional Da Mata Atlántica

[-19.93564, -40.59946](#)

This little park within the city is open from 08.00 – 17.00 and is free to enter. There are multiple aviaries with birds and terrariums with snakes etc. We came here however for two species of primates, which are quite easy to see here. Three **Atlantic Titis/Masked Titis** were found at the hummingbird feeders, where they were calling high up in the tree. Not much later **Geoffroy's Marmosets/White-headed Marmosets** began calling near one of the aviaries. We encountered the latter also on fruit feeders that are in the park. The hummingbird feeders are in quite a dark place, which makes observing the hummers a bit less nice. *Friilled Coquette* should be there sometimes.



Geoffroy's/White-headed Marmoset

Atlantic/Masked Titi

Pousada Vita Verde

[-19.95623, -40.60629](#)

This pousada is known for having many hummingbird feeders. The price to watch the feeders has gone up already to 75 Reais p.p., which is quite steep for the way they are set up (not really good for photography). However, it is a reliable place for the **Friilled Coquette** which we missed at other places, so we went in anyway. Many different hummingbird species came to the feeders and it was busy all day long. We had about 5-6 Friilled Coquettes, but only one male which had its full breeding plumage (they look quite sad with only half). **Amethyst Woodstar**, **Rufous-breasted Hermit**, **White-vented Violetear** and **Glittering-bellied Emerald** were other nice species besides the more common ones. In a fruiting tree next to the owner's house we found **East Brazilian Chachalaca** and **Yellow-green Grosbeak**. In the afternoon 2 **Black-necked Aracaris** sat shortly in a tree before taking off again.

Mata da Penha

[-19.94369, -40.56196](#)

The dirt road goes through some good forest here for about 500m. This is a good place for **Wied's Tyrant-manakin**, of which we encountered 2 within minutes where the road leaves the forest again. A possible third individual was encountered in the middle of the forest. We also heard **Rufous-brown Solitaire** and observed a male **Spot-billed Toucanet**.

Reserva Biológica Augusto Ruschi

[-19.887, -40.506](#)

We didn't actually visit the reserve, but went to the same place as mentioned by De Temmerman (2021). The road is a bit long from the main road ([-19.92477, -40.45758](#)). After parking at the coordinates above we walked about 200m until we encountered a flock, in which our main target was: **Salvadori's Antwren**. In total we found 3 of them!



Salvadori's Antwren



Friilled Coquette

Reserva Natural Vale

[-19.15127, -40.07363](#)

Visited dates: 12-13 May 2022

General information: The hotel was still closed in May 2022, but otherwise one can stay in the reserve. Send an email to Sayonara (RNV.Pesquisas@vale.com) to inform about this, or look on the [website](#). You are allowed to enter the reserve (for free) with a guide (compulsory), which you have to arrange yourself. Sayonara has a list of possible guides. Entrance with a guide is between 06.00-18.00. Guides can be contacted by WhatsApp:

- Gustavo Magnago (+55 27 99920-7878). Speaks English very well and is very knowledgeable. He is also the same contact for the Cherry-throated Tanager project.
- Justiniano (+55 27 99960-7161). Only speaks Portuguese, but is enthusiastic and tried to communicate in English via an app.
- Gabriel Bonfa (+55 27 99740-3575). He speaks English quite well and knows many birds in Latin and English. He charges 500R\$ for a day.
- Edison (+55 27 99783-5498). He doesn't speak any English and only knows some of the birds in Portuguese and Latin.



Red-billed Curassow



Black-headed Berryeater

As we arranged everything last minute we were stuck with the last guide. He is a friendly man, but didn't try to communicate in English via an app or show any birds in Merlin for example. He also didn't seem to know the right spots for certain species. However, it was our only way to get into Vale outside of the normal visitation hours (08.30-16.00) and outside the small visitation area with 3 short trails. And for 180R\$ a day that was worth it for us.

Right when we arrived the first morning there were already 8 **Red-billed Curassows** on the entrance road, just before the gate. These birds are quite common here and hung around the whole day in the area behind the gate. We then went to a territory from **Plumbeous Antvireo** ([-19.14755, -40.07137](#)) and quickly got good views! We couldn't find any **Pearly-breasted Cuckoos** here.

After this we went towards an open place in the forest ([-19.15307, -40.01896](#)) and had **Collared Peccaries** crossing the main road, and after the gate we had a **Jaguarundi** quickly crossing the path. On the path between the gate and the open forest patch we heard many **Atlantic Titis/Masked Titis**

and **Geoffroy's Marmosets/White-headed Marmosets** and saw **Crested Capuchins**. We were also lucky with a very responsive **Black-headed Berryeater**, which came right to the path! Besides this we had **Ringed Woodpecker**, **Red-stained Woodpecker** and **Cream-coloured Woodpecker**. We also encountered a group of **Maroon-faced Parakeets** in a fruiting tree.

The path going north from the clearing was less productive, but we still had **Black-necked Aracari**, **Ochre-marked Parakeet**, **Brown-winged Schiffornis** and a **Minute Hermit**.

Back at the entrance of the reserve we birded a patch of trees west of the big pond. There were many fruiting trees with berries on them. This is where we had many **Blue-winged Macaws** and some **Ochre-marked Parakeets**. From the observation tower we later saw **Golden-tailed Parrotlets** leaving from this patch, so well worth scanning it well if the trees are fruiting! From this tower we had many **Scaled Pigeons** fly by, and a flock of **White-bellied Tanagers (Turquoise Tanagers)** came by.

Floresta Nacional de Goytacazes

[-19.4682, -40.0673](#)

On the way towards RN Vale we made a quick stop around FN de Goytacazes. We walked the road for about 200m, playing a recording of **Minute Hermit**. Within 10 minutes we saw 3 of them. We also heard **Brown Howlers** calling from the Floresta itself.



Crested/Robust Capuchin



White-bellied Tanager

RPPN Feliciano Miguel Abdala [-19.73126, -41.81715](#)

Visited dates: 14-16 May 2022

General information: A reservation has to be made in order to visit the reserve. This can be done by contacting Rodrigo (rodrigo.abdalla@preservemuriqui.org.br).

The full name of this reserve is 'Reserva Particular do Patrimônio Natural Feliciano Miguel Abdala', but it's also known for the previous name: 'Caratinga Biological Station'. We were allowed to stay in our motorhome with the super friendly Rodrigo, who is one of the ancestors of the founder of the reserve. Rodrigo has great plans for the reserve, in both lodging opportunities as well as realizing

ecological corridors with existing forest patches and reserves in the area. When we arrived in the middle of the day we met Rodrigo at the gift shop, and we got a gift right away: 5 **Brown Howlers** were in the tree above! After drinking some coffee, eating some delicious pie and watching the Howlers till they disappeared in the forest, we went to search for our main target here; the **Northern Muriqui**. The reserve has a total of about 300 Northern Muriquis, split into 5 different groups spread out over 1000 hectares. Individuals within one group can be far apart though, so chances are higher than you expect. We were afraid it would be like our search for the Southern Muriqui all over again, where we searched for 4 days and only saw them for 2 minutes. But optimistically we started walking the main road. After about 100m we heard a whinnying sound like a horse! Luckily these Northern Muriquis are more vocal than the Southern species (at least at Bacury). We saw 2 mothers with 2 young, and later we saw a total of 12 Muriquis right next to the gift shop. As we had encountered our main target, we took it easy for the next 2 days. The second day we were following a clearing butterfly and once Romy looked up she saw another mother with a young in the tree above. The third morning we walked the main road, but couldn't find anything. When we wanted to leave for the next stop the researchers pointed at some Muriquis, again hanging out around the gift shop.



Northern Muriqui



Brown Howler

Black Capuchins were observed regularly, sometimes even together with the Muriquis. The Muriquis and Capuchin populations 'only' went down about 10% because of the yellow fever outbreak, while the populations of Howlers and **Buffy-headed Marmosets** went down about 80-90%! There is still a good place to search for the Marmosets with a guide in the middle of the forest, but we were so fortunate to have seen this species a week before at Caetés da Cima.

We didn't do any spotlighting or a lot of birdwatching as it was quite unique that we got all our targets so soon. Quite relaxing for a change.



Northern Muriqui

Northern Muriqui

Santuário do Caraça

[-20.09743, -43.48854](#)

Visited dates: 16-18 May 2022

General information: One can visit as a day visitor (20R\$ weekdays/30R\$ weekends), or one can stay at the monastery for about 500R\$ per night for a double room, including meals. Reservations can be made by email in English (centraldereservas@santuariodocaraca.com.br).

Driving towards here one sees all the nature the mining company Vale S.A. did not preserve, and unfortunately these areas are much bigger than RN Vale which they preserved at the coast.

The main attraction and reason to come to Caraça is the tray with bananas and meat which is put out every night at 19.30 in front of the chapel. Maned Wolf comes here often. After we hastily ate our dinner (served 18.30-19.30) we went to sit outside and waited. Two **Maned Wolves** showed up already at 19.15, but with so many people around the tray it did feel a lot like a zoo. After a while the general manager started to explain some things about the foxes very loudly, and off they went, not to be seen again that evening. Three **Hoary Foxes** showed up after an hour. The second night nothing showed around 19.30, but somebody had seen the Wolves already at 18.00 walking across the garden below the stairs. We went for a night walk for a chance of a more natural feeling encounter with mammals, but only found a **Band-winged Nightjar** and some other nocturnal birds. We did find fresh Tapir and cat prints though. When we came back we heard that only the Hoary Foxes showed and they were still hanging around. We waited for half an hour and just when we wanted to walk inside a **Maned Wolf** came walking up the stairs. Now we were able to watch it for a while with just one other couple there, making the experience way more pleasant. **Brazilian Tapir** is regularly coming up the stairs as well, but not during the time we were there. It does seem to pay off staying way longer than most people do.

The first morning we tried to find **Masked Titi/Atlantic Titi** again, which should be regularly heard and seen at the Tanque Grande Trail (starting here: [-20.09852, -43.49109](#)). Maybe it was because of

the cold, but we didn't see or hear them during our whole stay, and these primates know how to throw a loud party! We did see a **Red Brocket Deer** along the main road though.

After breakfast we walked a bit of the 'Capelinha trail' (starting at the lower parking lot: [-20.09875, -43.48678](#)). Mainly to try for **Rock Tapaculo**, which has been found here. We couldn't find it and weren't feeling like walking more of this steeper trail, so we went to the 'Lobo Guara trail' on the other side of the lower parking lot ([-20.09915, -43.48715](#)). When we arrived in the more open area we quickly observed a male **Hyacinth Visorbearer**, a female **Frilled Coquette**, **Cinnamon Tanagers** and **Ultramarine Grosbeak**. It is possible to cross the stream to the 'Pedra da Paciência trail' ([-20.10409, -43.48215](#)). This trail goes through some good grassland, in which we found **Gray-backed Tachuri** and **Pale-throated Grass Finch/Serra Grass Finch**. The very rare **Diamantina Sabrewing** has been observed at Caraça, but like most people we couldn't find one.

The trail to Mirante 1 after the piscina ([-20.09887, -43.49929](#)) was particularly good for **Hyacinth Visorbearer**, and we observed at least 3 males there. The view of the Caraça/Head (of the Giant) from the Mirante 1 was very nice as well. Save yourself some energy; the second viewpoint is a steep climb and gives more or less the same view.

We made an appointment with the biologist to go into the chapel's tower to search for **Black Myotis**. Being in the tower was really cool, but we didn't see any bats. It was very cold, and they might not even be there in winter time.

On the last morning we tried another time for **Rock Tapaculo**, this time at the end of the 'Cruzeiro trail' ([-20.09757, -43.48974](#)). We couldn't find it here, but the view of the monastery and its surroundings are stunning from there!



Pale-throated Grass Finch



Grey-backed Tachuri

Serra do Cipó

[-19.30258, -43.60126](#)

Visited dates: 20-21 May 2022

RPPN Aves Gerais – Alagado

[-19.22014, -43.49609](#)

We drove the potholes-with-some-tarmac-road towards a marshy area. You can park your car at the coordinates and walk along the road. This is the place for **Marsh Tapaculo**. We had 1 responding quickly. We also saw **Gray-backed Tachuri** here.

Trilha Mãe D'Água

[-19.30258, -43.60126](#)

This semi-private road is locked with a fence, but the locals that live along that road seem fine with birders walking it. You can park in front of it and climb over the fence. We walked this trail twice, both in the afternoon. The first time we found a **Blue Finch** in one of the trees. Then we walked through the vegetation towards the marshy area near the main road, and suddenly flushed a small quail-like bird, which had quite a resemblance to the one we flushed in Canastra; a possible **Dwarf Tinamou**?! Good to pay attention to any calls when walking here. **Horned Sungem** is seen here regularly, as well as **Cinereous Warbling-finch**. We couldn't find either on both afternoons. Because we missed out on the Cinclodes at Serra da Lapinha (see below), we tried some playback here. Near the residential area we got a response of 2 **Long-tailed Cinclodes (Cipo Cinclodes)** from the grassy area near the foot of the mountain. We got a short call later, but didn't get to see the birds unfortunately.

Serra da Lapinha

[-19.1171, -43.671](#)

We started walking the Serra da Lapinha trail around 07.00. Before this we scanned the grassy area around the water in vain for **Long-tailed Cinclodes (Cipo Cinclodes)**, where it is regularly seen. We passed the gate ([-19.1171, -43.671](#)), which was unlocked as Gallardy (2018) found out. You have to pay the entrance fee on the way back (25R\$ p.p.). As it was freezing cold and very windy, we didn't really get to see many birds except for some **Gray-backed Tachuris**. After the sanitary facility up the hill we continued the path towards the west, ending up in a valley with grass surrounded by rocky slopes covered in low vegetation. Covered from the wind we were actually able to see many birds, amongst which one of our main targets: **Cipo Canastero**. Watching this bird a **Rock Tapaculo** started calling from nearby, but we didn't get to see it. A stunning male **Hyacinth Visorbearer** chose a branch near us as its lookout point, giving great photo opportunities. When the sun showed itself 2 **Rock Cavies** came out to enjoy it with us. On the windy way back we did look out for the very rare **Diamantina Sabrewing**, but like most birdwatchers here, we didn't get to see it. **Cinereous Warbling-finch** is regularly seen here, but probably because of the strong wind we couldn't find any.



Cinnamon Tanager



Hyacinth Visorbearer

Pompéu

[-19.22767, -45.01616](#)

Visited date: 22 May 2022

General Information: You can contact the birding brothers via WhatsApp. Luiz (+55 37 9964-7471) doesn't speak any English, but at least he takes the effort to use Google Translator 😊

We picked Luiz up at his house at 05.00 to drive straight towards the area with most of our target species. On the drive we had a **Six-banded Armadillo** crossing the road. About 45 minutes later we were freezing our hands off, waiting for the sun to rise (around here: [-18.98635, -44.82357](#)). After there was enough light we got great views of 2 **Chapada Flycatchers**, doing their epic 'wings-up-high'-dance, not dissimilar to the dance of Streamer-tailed Tyrants. Walking the grassy area Luiz heard a bird, and not much later we got great views of a male **Black-masked Finch**. A bit further up in the field we found a male **Blue Finch**, many amazing **Coal-crested Finches** and **Black-throated Saltators**.



Black-masked Finch



Chapada Flycatcher

Luiz was quite sharp, but knowing these birds and places is not there specialty. The specialty of the brothers is having great photography places for a whole bunch of crakes and rails. In the same field as above we got spectacular views of an **Ocellated Crake**. As it was winter and very cold, the other

crakes wouldn't show themselves. But in spring/summer one can have great views of **Rufous-faced Crake**, **Rufous-sided Crake**, **Paint-billed Crake**, **Gray-breasted Crake**, **Ash-throated Crake**, **Blackish Rail** and **Speckled Rail** around Pompeú.

After the crake we went a bit further up the road, where we first flushed a **Least Nighthawk**. Luiz found it back and we got great views of it. Walking back to the car there were 2 **Campo Miners** on the road. The next stop on our way produced **Rufous-winged Antshrike** and **Sooty-fronted Spinetail**, but no **Collared Crescentchest**. The last stop in the area (around [-18.9539, -44.82594](#)), yielded one short call from **Lesser Nothura**. As Luiz figured it wouldn't even call because of the weather, we were already happy with this result. In spring and summer one could even see them, as well as **Dwarf Tinamou**.



Least Nighthawk

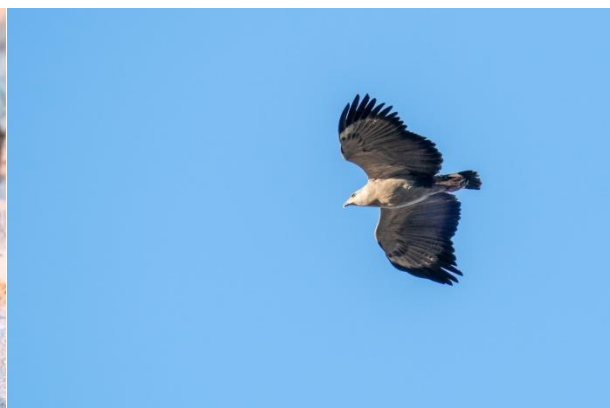


Ocellated Crake

Back in Pompéu we saw **Spot-backed Puffbird**. As it was too hot and we still had 2 targets left, we decided to bird again at the end of the afternoon. Leaving at 16.00 we only arrived half an hour later ([-19.27511, -44.87286](#)), which only left an hour for birding in good light. My advice: leave at 15.00 at latest ☺ Still we managed to see **Pale-breasted Spinetail** and **Collared Crescentchest**. While looking for this last bird we heard an eagle calling, and Romy saw it sitting in the tower: a **Crowned Solitary Eagle/Chaco Eagle!!!** This was only the second time Luiz saw one in the region, so don't count on this one when visiting the region. What an amazing end to a very productive birding day!



Collared Crescentchest



Chaco/Crowned Solitary Eagle

Botumirim

[-16.85739, -43.01258](#)

Visited dates: 23-24 May 2022

Blue-eyed Ground Dove

[-16.85739, -43.01258](#)

Make sure you contact Hugo from the Blue-eyed Ground Dove project in advance (rolinhadoplanalto@savebrasil.org.br). It takes a few days to get a reply, after which you have to pay a fee (41USD p.p.) online. After this you can schedule a date and have to await confirmation. Mostly this is possible every day from Monday-Saturday. You get appointed a local guide, with which you meet in Botumirim and go to the reserve. This guide takes you there for about 3-5 hours, depending on how long it takes to find the BEGD. You have to pay the guide a total fee of 50R\$ for a group up to 4 persons.

With the reservation we send a list of other target birds that were possible in the area, in case the guide knew a good spot for those near the reserve of the BEGD. As it was cold and overcast, the 2 guides (not sure why the other guy joined..) decided to search for some of those targets first, and this is how we saw **Stripe-backed Antbird** and **Silvery-cheeked Antshrike**. Another stop later we got fabulous views of a **White-browed Antpitta**, which surprisingly liked to be high up in the shrubs. Arriving around 08.15 at the BEGD-reserve we heard one dove calling right away when we stepped out of the car. However, in the 3 hours that followed we only heard it calling once shortly. The 2 guides walked around the area with white sand and cacti, combed the shrubs, but found nothing. One of the guides saw 2 **Horned Sungems**, which is supposed to be quite doable in the area, but we missed it. It was getting really hot and our official time of 4 hours was already over. So after 5 hours we decided to pay the guide, and a bit disappointed (understatement of the year) we walked back towards the car. Suddenly something flew across the road between us and the other guide. He saw it landing and not much later we were blue-eye-to-blue-eye with a female **Blue-eyed Ground Dove!** What an amazing species!

To celebrate the guides took us to another spot about 8km down the tarmac road, after which we drove part of a dirt road ([-16.7907, -42.9981](#)). Walking the trail from there for about 100m we quickly heard and later observed **Narrow-billed Antwren**. While the guide was taping for **Ochre-cheeked Spinetail**, a **Minas Gerais Tyrannulet** foraged its way through the canopy, the rusty lores clearly visible!

Campina do Bananal

[-16.8623, -43.02316](#)

Driving up a gravel road from Botumirim, one can park at the beginning of the trail 'Campina do Bananal' ([-16.8623, -43.02316](#)). This is a nice trail, but not essential for any target if you are visiting Serra do Cipo/Lapa Grande as well. Along this trail we found **Silvery-cheeked Antshrike** and **Grey-eyed Greenlet**. At the top of the mountain we heard a **Cipo Canastero**, but didn't get to see it.



White-browed Antpitta



Blue-eyed Ground Dove

Lapa Grande NP

[-16.70228, -43.91594](#)

Visited date: 25 May 2022

General Information: The reserve can be visited without a guide, but a reservation in advance is needed. You can do this by email in English (pelapagrande@meioambiente.mg.gov.br). We reserved 2 days in advance. Two guides in the region are Fausto: a dentist who also guides, speaks English and asks 500R\$ per day (+55 38 9958-0754); and Warley; a birding guide who doesn't speak much English and asks 300R\$ per day (+55 38 8847-8325).

We contacted both guides, but both had other obligations. However, birding without a guide actually went great, but we came here in winter when it was cooler (cold even) and had prolonged bird activity because of this. It can get really hot in summer, and a guide might help getting all the targets during the short time that the birds are more active. We started walking the southern trail (starting here: [-16.70778, -43.94105](#)) and had a flock with amongst them **Scaled Woodcreeper** (ssp. *wagleri*, sometimes split as **Wagler's Woodcreeper**). At a more open area we saw 3 **Rusty-breasted Nunlets** (around [-16.7165, -43.943](#)). Not much later a huge flock of birds passed overhead. While observing the birds a birding group with 2 guides (amongst them Warley) passed by and the guide happily confirmed that the Tyrannulet that was over our head was indeed a **Reiser's Tyrannulet**. The guide spotted an **Olivaceous Woodcreeper** (ssp. *reiseri*, potential split as **Reiser's Woodcreeper**). While the group already left we got nice views of a **Planalto Woodcreeper** (ssp. *intermedius*, possible but unlikely split), and a **Spotted Piculet**. After this we walked further towards the road and turned around again. The birding group was back at the place of the big flock, but this time they had **Saffron-billed Sparrows** in the shrubs next to them. Still along the higher part of the trail we observed **Ochre-cheeked Spinetails** in between the tangled vines.

After this we walked the northern trail (starting here: [-16.70683, -43.94107](#)), and observed a **Caatinga Black Tyrant** at the open area. On the part after the open area we paid extra attention to sparrows, as other birders had the other sparrow here. Some **Silvery-cheeked Antshrikes** and a

Black-bellied Antwren later we finally found our last target, **Sao Francisco Sparrow**, around the same spot as Gallardy ([-16.70189, -43.941](#)). We were happy we already found the **Minas Gerais Tyrannulet** at Botumirim, as we didn't see one here during the whole day, and neither did the birding group yet at 14.30 when we left the park. Multiple groups of **Black-tufted Marmosets** were observed along both trails during the day.

We had multiple **Outcrop Sabrewings/Dry Forest Sabrewings** around the reception area, where they were feeding on a big tree with flowers. If you didn't see the **Outcrop Sabrewing/Dry Forest Sabrewing** yet on your way out; try at the cacti stand ([-16.7058, -43.9204](#)). These were flowering when we were there, and we had at least 3 individuals here.



Outcrop/Dry Forest Sabrewing



Silvery-cheeked Antshrike

PN Cavernas do Peruaçu

[-15.11127, -44.24298](#)

Visited dates: 26-27 May 2022

General information: The reserve can only be visited with a guide. A reservation has to be made with the park (via the guide), so plan in advance to give the guide enough time to arrange this. Birders with a guide can enter the park outside of the official opening hours. Fausto (see Lapa Grand NP) guides here, but as he has to come from Montes Claros, this will make his fee more expensive. We contacted local bird guide Sérgio (+55 31 9782-4788). Sérgio is an enthusiastic man, who knows where to find the targets and we highly recommend him even though he doesn't speak English.

We started the day at 06.00 at the entrance road towards the park. The park itself actually consists of multiple entrances along a main public road (which can be birded without a guide). We drove to the furthers entrance road, and only arrived about 35 minutes later at 'Lapa Do Carlúcio' ([-15.08823, -44.26714](#)), where we walked up to the viewpoint. There we had fabulous views of **Golden-capped Parakeet**. Around the viewpoint were multiple **Rock Cavies**. We walked the rest of the trail, but didn't encounter much bird activity, except for an **Ochre-backed Woodpecker**. We had a **Black**

Mussurana (*Celia celia*) snake swimming in the water. **Yellow-legged Tinamous** can be seen along the stream where it's more flat. Back at the car **Cactus Parakeets** flew out of the grass.

After this we birded around the Janelão Visitor Centre ([-15.11127, -44.24298](#)). We walked up (towards the Gruta Do Janelão) and continued the path below the rocky outcrop. Here we quickly got a response from the park's specialty, the **Moustached Woodcreeper**. After some more walking we eventually got to see 2 of them. Along the trail we also had **Ash-throated Casiornis**, and back at the Visitor Center we had **Scarlet-throated Tanagers**.

We then birded along the main road (public part around [-15.122, -44.2576](#)) and found both **Caatinga Antwren** and **Great Xenops**, although we only had a short glimpse of the last one. Further south the road we tried for **Grey-headed Spinetail**, but got no response at the spot where they regularly hang out according to Sérgio. After a short trip to one of the archaeological sites we went to the home of Sérgio for **Caatinga Cacholote**.



Moustached Woodcreeper



Golden-capped Parakeet

Estrema – Sao Francisco River

[-15.39741, -44.23162](#)

The evening before we went to the Carvernas we made a stop at the Sao Fransisco river (park here: [-15.39651, -44.23111](#)). As we were early we walked the trail parallel to the river and found **Orange-fronted Yellow Finch**, **Rusty-backed Spinetail** and **Barred Antshrike** (sometimes split as **Caatinga Antshrike**). **Large-billed Terns** and **Black Skimmers** flew over the river, and a **Pied Lapwing** stood on one of the sand banks. The main reason to come here, however, was the nighthawks. Around 17.45 the first **Plain-tailed Nighthawks/Bahia Nighthawks** appeared (most around here: [-15.3986, -44.23288](#)). We had around 20 of them. Not the most spectacular nighthawk, but a great endemic!



Caatinga Antshrike



Rusty-backed Spinetail

Gruta Terra Ronca

[-13.73441, -46.35724](#)

Visited dates: 28-29 May 2022

This birding site doesn't require a guide. Only if you want to walk inside the cave 'Terra Ronca' you need to have a guide. The road just in front of the cave is public and can be reached from São Domingos. The road is a good test for the suspension of your car, but is doable. The main target here is the stunning endemic **Pfimer's Parakeet**, which we observed immediately after getting out of our car in the middle of the afternoon. **Red-and-green Macaws** roost in the cave and we saw them leaving the huge cave both in the afternoon and early morning. **Jandaya Parakeets**, besides other species of parakeet, also made a regular appearance during time that we were there. Activity lowered significantly after the sun went behind the mountain with the cave in it around 16.00.

Mammal watchers have another cool target at this site. **Acrobatic Cavy** lives on the outer walls of the cave. And acrobatic they are; running, jumping and sometimes 'parkouring' straight up a crevice. Amazing creatures to see! We also observed **Black-eared Marmosets** and **Bearded Capuchins** in the forest patch along the river. At night we spotlighted around the area, but only had a **Brazilian White-eared Opossum** crossing the bridge near the entrance of the cave.

Caverna da Angelica ([-13.52024, -46.38455](#)) is supposed to hold the same species, but as there was an entrance fee of 30R\$ p.p. we didn't bother to visit this one on our way back. If your car isn't up for the longer drive to Terra Ronca this site might save you some trouble though.



Pfrimer's Parakeet



Jandaya Parakeet

GO-463

[-13.30915, -46.10249](#)

Most likely you will drive the GO-463 when going to or coming from Gruta Terra Ronca. There are at least two stops to make along this route. We stopped around some interesting cerrado habitat ([-13.30915, -46.10249](#)) and walked a bit at the south side of the road. This is where we saw the much hoped for **Horned Sungem**! We also had multiple **Rufous-sided Pygmy-tyrants** here and near our car. Other interesting species were **White-tailed Goldenthrout** and **Coal-crested Finch**.

We made another stop ([-13.3219, -46.1195](#)) and walked along the road towards the bridge. The many palms here are home to the **Point-tailed Palmcreeper**, and we quickly saw 2 of them.



Horned Sungem



Rufous-sided Pygmy-tyrant

Cavalcante – Serra das Araras [-13.81792, -47.45085](#)

Visited date: 30 May 2022

We spend one morning walking the trails of RPPN Serra das Araras, in Cavalcante (an important city for gold mining in the previous Portuguese empire). The entrance to the trails of the RPPN is 25R\$ p.p. and no reservation is needed. **Pectoral Sparrow** was observed multiple times along the (main) red trail. **Band-tailed Manakin** is quite common, although we didn't get to see any males surprisingly

enough. **Pale-bellied Tyrant-manakin**, **Black-fronted Nunbird** and **Brown Jacamar** were other interesting species (last two both on the yellow trail). The best bird of the place however was **Chestnut-capped Foliage-gleaner/Henna-capped Foliage Gleaner**, which we first heard 'clucking' while observing some **Rusty-breasted Nunlets**. We later got some good views of the Foliage Gleaner. Back at the reception we saw an **Azara's Agouti**. Brazilian Tapir is supposed to be regular around the reception when the mangos are ripe (Nov-Jan). It seems like a great place to stay a night as well, and the owner Richard was great company to talk to.



Black-fronted Nunbird



Pectoral Sparrow

Alto Paraíso de Goiás

[-14.13793, -47.53751](#)

Visited date: 30 May 2022

The road from Cavalcante towards Alto Paraíso de Goiás is quite scenic and goes through some beautiful habitat for Giant Anteaters and Maned Wolves. Just when we thought about that Romy spotted a **Maned Wolf** in the field, about 8km before the city! This one felt a lot better than the ones at Santuário do Caraça.

We made a stop in an urban area in Alto Paraíso ([-14.14383, -47.51126](#)) and walked around some shrubs on a vacant lot. Cinereous Warbling-finch had been observed here a bit regularly, but we couldn't find it there. We walked some of the streets and within an hour of searching we had 2 **Cinereous Warbling-finches** in a shrub next to us. **Blue-and-yellow Macaws** were feeding in the palm trees a bit down the road.

We tried to access the riverine forest west of town ([-14.13737, -47.53928](#)). It was hard to get anywhere near the forest, but eventually we found a trail going around the 'Saneago facility' (solid yellow line in figure below) and managed to hear a **Russet-mantled Foliage-gleaner/Planalto Foliage-gleaner** (around [-14.13837, -47.53934](#)). The next morning we walked a 'trail' going along the border of the forest (dotted red line in figure below). There is a part where you can enter the forest (-

[14.13793, -47.53751](#)) (short blue lines in figure below), which is where we eventually observed one individual.



Driving around the cerrado to search for some more birds, like **Black-throated Saltator** and **Yellow-faced Parrot**, we suddenly had a **Dwarf Tinamou** standing on the road close to the vegetation!



Cinereous Warbling-finch



Russet-mantled/Planalto Foliage-gleaner

Trilhas dos Tucanos Lodge

[-24.00413, -47.56187](#)

A place we do want to mention but unfortunately didn't visit because there were heavy rains for days when we passed by, is the Trilhas dos Tucanos Lodge. Looking back on our trip this is the only place

we wish we would have visited as well, as we didn't encounter many feeding stations, and the ones we did only attracted few bird species. We follow them on Instagram, and even in the period of the year we visited they had constant good birding activity at the bird feeders. Birds that we never saw during this time like **Saffron Toucanets**, but also **Spot-billed Toucanets** and many more birds visited regularly. They also broadcasted the daily visits of **Brazilian Tapir** on Instagram every night. **Tayra** made a regular appearance as well, which is normally a more difficult species to see too. The area is supposed to be good for **Helmeted Woodpecker**, **Robust Woodpecker**, **White-bearded Antshrike** and even **Southern Muriquis** are observed by some here. Seems like a great place to visit.

You made it! Thank you for reading 😊

For all photos of our Brazil trip, comments, compliments, any specific questions, visit and/or contact us via our website. We would like to hear from you!

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All observations made by us in this part of Brazil can be found on Observation.org. We observed a total of about 597 bird species and 35 mammal species in the Atlantic Coast & Central Cerrado of Brazil. Click here for the: [total bird list](#), [total mammal list](#) or [the total species list](#).

Our Top 10	Birds	Mammals
1	Blue-eyed Ground Dove	Golden Lion Tamarin
2	Buff-fronted Owl	Giant Anteater
3	Horned Sungem	Maned Wolf
4	Black-fronted Piping-guan	Northern Muriqui
5	Brazilian Merganser	Oncilla
6	Frilled Coquette	Buffy-headed Marmoset
7	Giant Snipe	Buffy-tufted Marmoset
8	Helmeted Manakin	Masked Titi
9	Ocellated Crake	Brown Howler
10	Black-capped Piprites	Crested Capuchin

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Hyacinth Visorbearer



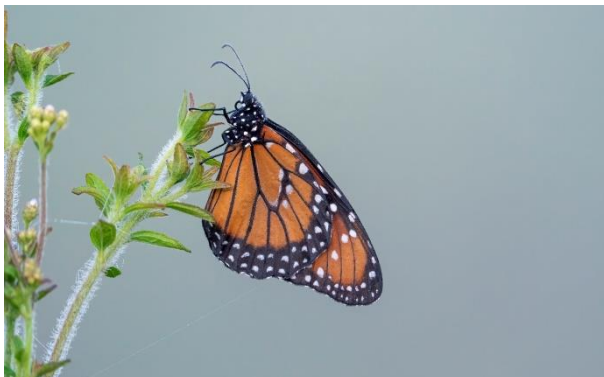
Golden Lion Tamarin



Atlantic/Masked Titi



Blue Finch



Queen Butterfly - *Danaus gilippus*



Moonrise at Serra da Canastra



Festive Coquette



Northern Muriqui