



# Natural Selections

BIRDING, WILDLIFE, AND PHOTO TOURS



Jaguar

# The Brazilian Pantanal

July 17 to 28, 2020

The Brazilian Pantanal is the world's largest tropical wetland at over 60,000 square miles in area. It is also home to the densest and most accessible populations of Jaguar (*Panthera onca*) on earth. The acute spotting skills of our tour leader and local guide will help ensure goals of capturing stunning imagery of the magnificent Jaguars, Giant River Otters, Blue Hyacinth Macaws, Toco Toucans, Ocelots, Red Brocket Deer, Marsh Deer, Yacare Caiman, Capybara and myriad other wildlife and bird species that inhabit the Pantanal.

Travel will be first by vehicle along the Trans-Pantanal Highway, and then by open boat along the Cuiaba, Tres Hermanos, Pixaim, and Piquiri Rivers. Lodging will be land-based (first and last 2 nights) and the rest of the time on a floating hotel in the absolute center of maximum Jaguar activity. On the water, our guides and boat captains will be among the best wildlife spotters Brazil has to offer.

## Tour Overview

Day 1: Arriva Cuiaba Airport (CGB)  
Day 2: Transfer to Southwild Lodge  
Day 3, 4: Southwild Lodge  
Day 5, 6, 7, 8, 9: Jaguar Suites, Pantanal  
Day 10, 11: Southwild Lodge  
Day 12: Depart Cuiaba (CGB)

## 11 Night/12 Day Itinerary

### Day 1, Arrival and transfer to hotel:

Arrive Cuiaba Airport and transfer with English-speaking guide for the 20 min drive to the best hotel in all of Mato Grosso—the Hotel Deville. It is the best hotel for two reasons: the hotel itself is rather nice, but probably more importantly, 80% of the best restaurants and bars in the entire state (which is 2.3 times the size of California!) are within a 5 min walk of the hotel, and it is a pleasant part of the city. Cuiaba is not exactly Paris, mind you, but this is the best hotel in our opinion.

Dinner not included, but we can dine as a group at the hotel or at one of our favorite restaurants that are a short walking distance from the hotel.

*Lodging at Hotel Deville*

### Yacare Caiman



### Day 2, Transfer to Southwild Lodge:

After a substantial buffet breakfast, leave the hotel at 8:00 am sharp with our English-speaking naturalist guide. Drive 3-3.5 h to Southwild Pantanal Lodge, with the last 90 min being on the dirt-and-gravel “Transpantaneira Road” in the Pantanal itself. Check in at the lodge and after buffet lunch, and a short rest, take an afternoon boat ride for 2-3 h on the wildlife-rich, 60-m-wide Pixaim River, which is visible from the lodge. After buffet dinner, we’ll try to see one or the other of the habituated, wild Ocelots at Southwild’s Ocelot viewing blind that lies 500 m walk from the lodge. By 8:30 pm, normally the action is all over and you walk back to the lodge to get to sleep early.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner  
Lodging at Southwild Lodge*

### Day 3, Southwild Lodge and wildlife:

We enjoy two boat outings this day....one at 7:00 am to 9:30 am and another from 3:00 pm until 5:30 pm. Before the morning outing, we’ll enjoy wildlife right around the lodge, as within 250 meters of the lodge one sees an enormous amount of activity just by strolling around. The dawn is a good time to climb the 12-meter-tall staircase tower to view the Jabiru Stork nest from a distance of 16 m at eye level.

Our boat rides on the Pixaim River are notably full of wildlife, particularly Ringed Kingfishers and Black-collared Hawks that love to snatch fresh fish from the water’s surface. Sunbitterns, Caimans, and often Capuchin Monkeys are seen from the boat.

In the evening we’ll either go after the Ocelots again after dinner or do a night safari drive in one of our safari vehicles.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner  
Lodging at Southwild Lodge*

### Day 4, Transpantanal Highway to the Rio Cuiaba:

After breakfast, at 7:30 am, we’ll drive 80 km south on the TP road (about 90-120 min depending on how often we stop for photos of birds and wildlife). At the end of the drive, we reach the north bank of the 200-meter-wide Cuiaba River and then boat in our Jaguar observation boat for 30-45 min to the Jaguar Suites and Flotel, our lodge for the next six nights.



**Toco Toucan**

Lunch at Jaguar Suites and then a four-hour boat outing on the 100 km of river channels that we ply on the Jaguar-rich rivers of Jaguarland.

Dinner at the Jaguar Suites and then an after dinner lecture for 30 min about Jaguars or other important wildlife species of the Pantanal.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner  
Lodging at Jaguar Suites*

### **Day 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Jaguar Suites and Jaguars:**

B,L,D at Jaguar Suites, and two four-hour boat outings per day in search of Jaguars, Giant Otters, the myriad bird species, thousands of Yacare Caiman, and a possible Yellow Anaconda or two. After dinner each night is a 30-min wildlife lecture by our resident Jaguar naturalist, who also is one of the keepers of Southwild's unique Jaguar ID guide, by now in its 16th year—unique on the planet.

Typically, guests see 8-12 different Jaguars during such an itinerary, seen in 14-22 different sightings. These numbers were the running average for the entire 2019 Jaguar season. Simply stated, this is an extraordinary experience.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner  
Lodging at Jaguar Suites*

### **Day 10, Transpantanal Highway to Southwild Lodge:**

After breakfast, we'll have one last short boat ride around the rivers of Jaguarland, and then boat to Porto Jofre and drive back to the SWP lodge for lunch. We'll have an afternoon boat outing at SWP lodge, and another chance at Ocelots (maybe even a Brazilian Tapir) that evening.

**Marsh Deer**



*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner  
Lodging at Southwild Lodge*

### **Day 11, Southwild Lodge:**

We'll do two outings by boat today, morning and afternoon, and have a final chance to see the Ocelot or Ocelots or do a night spotlighting drive.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner  
Lodging at Southwild Lodge*

### **Day 12, Departure:**

Transfer for 3 hours back to the CGB airport in time for the mid-day flights to São Paulo, which allows connecting with almost all flights that leave Sao Paulo for the Northern Hemisphere.

*Meals: Breakfast*

### **Included in this Itinerary**

Accommodations and meals from arrival at Southwild Lodge on the first day of the tour to drop off at the Cuiaba airport on the last day of the tour. Also included; ground transportation, river trips, local guides, photographic support, instruction, and wildlife spotting and identification of tour leader and local guides.

### **Not Included**

Alcohol, additional soft drinks, laundry, souvenirs, or similar items of a personal nature.

### **Travel Insurance**

We highly recommend purchasing travel insurance. In the event that you need to cancel your trip due to medical or other reasons, this insurance will protect you.



Hyacinth Macaw



## **Natural Selections**

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