



# BRAZIL BIRDING

E X P E R T S

## SOUTHEAST BRAZIL POPULAR TOUR

17 DAYS



*Welcome to the Popular Southeast! In this tour, we will visit São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro States where we can find great part of the Atlantic Forest endemics in the most traditional sites for birdwatching in Southeast Brazil. This itinerary includes two very special places: Itatiaia National Park and REGUA (Guapiaçu Ecological Reserve), where we will have the opportunity to see Itatiaia Spinetail and search for enigmatic Shrike-like Cotinga, respectively. As we are in the southeast the show of colorful tanagers, toucans and toucanets, parrots, woodpeckers and hummingbirds will be part of our days. Moreover, we cannot forget about the incredible antbirds, antpittas, woodcreepers, tapaculos and ovenbirds that live in this spectacular tropical forest.*

*We wish you a great trip ahead. Have fun!*

# SOUTHEAST BRAZIL POPULAR TOUR

(Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo states)

Guide: Carlos Gussoni

## SUMMARIZED ITINERARY

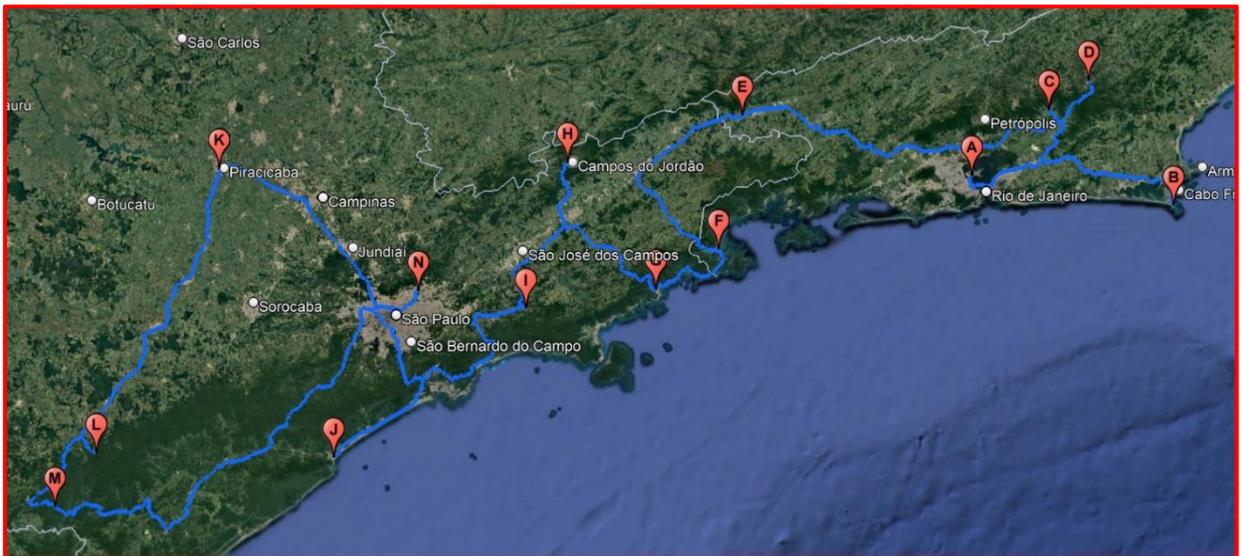
Day	Location	Comments
0	Rio de Janeiro	Arrivals.
1	Rio de Janeiro - Arraial do Cabo (160km) – REGUA (160km)	Transfer with birding on route. PM Birding
2	REGUA - Nova Friburgo (65km)	AM Birding. Transfer. PM Birding
3	Nova Friburgo	AM and PM Birding
4	Nova Friburgo - Itatiaia National Park (285km)	Transfer. PM Birding
5	Itatiaia National Park	AM and PM Birding
6	Itatiaia National Park – Paraty (175km)	Transfer. PM Birding
7	Paraty – Ubatuba (75km)	AM Birding. Transfer. PM Birding
8	Ubatuba	AM and PM Birding
9	Ubatuba - Campos do Jordão (150km)	AM Birding. Transfer. PM Birding
10	Campos do Jordão – Salesópolis (130km)	AM Birding. Transfer. PM Birding
11	Salesópolis – Peruíbe (230km)	AM Birding. Transfer. PM Birding
12	Peruíbe – Piracicaba (300km)	AM Birding. Transfer
13	Piracicaba - Intervales State Park (230km)	AM Birding. Transfer
14	Intervales State Park	AM and PM Birding
15	Intervales State Park	AM and PM Birding
16	Intervales State Park – PETAR (110km)	AM Birding. Transfer. PM Birding
17	PETAR - São Paulo (350km)	AM Birding. Transfer. Departures

**Date:** October 27<sup>th</sup> to November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023.



## OVERVIEW OF THE COMPLETE ITINERARY

Rio de Janeiro (A), Arraial do Cabo (B), REGUA (C), Nova Friburgo (D), Itatiaia National Park (E), Paraty (F), Ubatuba (G), Campos do Jordão (H), Salesópolis (I), Peruíbe (J), Piracicaba (K), Intervales (L), PETAR (M), São Paulo/GRU Airport (N).



## DETAILED ITINERARY

**Day 1:** Early departure to Arraial do Cabo (+/-3hrs [170Km]) specifically for the Restinga Antwren (*Formicivora littoralis*), where we will be birding at sea-level in restinga environment. Other birds we might see around are Brazilian Tanager (*Ramphocelus bresilius*), Hangnest Tody-Tyrant (*Hemitriccus nidipendulus*) and Sooretama Slaty-Antshrike (*Thamnophilus ambiguus*). Some world lists treat the Restinga Antwren as being part of the Serra Antwren complex. However, several ornithologists (including the Brazilian Classification Committee - CBRO) believe that this isolated population, which is also quite different in morphology is indeed a valid species and sadly endangered of extinction due to habitat loss.

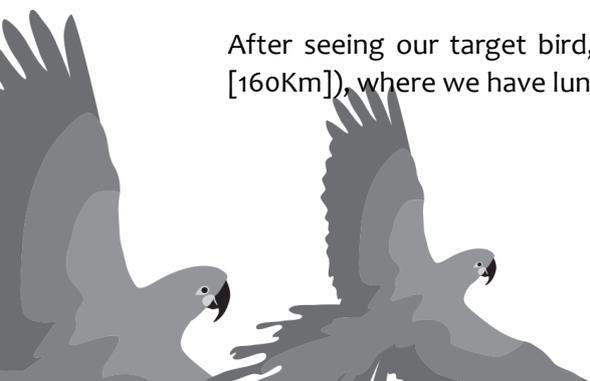


Brazilian Tanager



Restinga Antwren

After seeing our target bird, we move on to **REGUA** (Cachoeiras de Macacu-RJ) (+/-3hrs [160Km]), where we have lunch. PM Birding.



**Area description:** REGUA (Ecological Reserve of Guapiaçu) is a Private Reserve with more than 9,000 hectares of protected forest. Nicholas Locke and his family dedicate their lives to protect and conserve this region purchasing areas to protect and restore the Atlantic Forest. The area comprises exuberant patches of Atlantic Forest and good lodging; overall a great place to go birding (to see more <https://vimeo.com/129346540>).



**Targets:** maybe the most desired bird here is also one of the rarest and most difficult birds of the southeast; the Shrike-like Cotinga (*Laniisoma elegans*). Let us hope to be in the right place at the right time so that we could see this amazing species. Other specialties also include: Yellow-eared Woodpecker (*Veniliornis maculifrons*), [Silvery] White-flanked Antwren (*Myrmotherula axillaris luctuosa*), Chestnut-backed Antshrike (*Thamnophilus palliatus*), Unicolored Antwren (*Myrmotherula unicolor*), Green-headed Tanager (*Tangara seledon*), Rufous-capped Motmot (*Baryphthengus ruficapillus*), Scaled Antbird (*Drymophila squamata*), Southern Antpipit (*Corythopis delalandi*), White-bibbed Antbird (*Myrmoderus loricatus*) and many other Atlantic Forest species. Here, we will also try to see some crepuscular and night birds, like the Giant Snipe (*Gallinago undulata*), Tawny-browed Owl (*Pulsatrix koeniswaldiana*) and the rare Long-tailed Potoo (*Nyctibius aethereus*).



Shrike-like Cotinga





Yellow-Eared Woodpecker

**Day 2:** AM Birding in the lowlands of REGUA and transfer to **NOVA FRIBURGO**. PM Birding.

**Area description:** located in the mountainous region of Rio de Janeiro State, the main location for us here will be the Pico da Caledônia, in Serra dos Órgãos, 2255 meters in altitude, one of the highest mountains in Rio de Janeiro. To reach an altitude where it is possible to see the Grey-winged Cotinga, we must park the car in a determined spot and we will have to do a moderate hike along the road, from 1800m to 2000m to reach the ideal spot to scan for our main target.

**Targets:** the main target here is the rare and range-restricted Grey-winged Cotinga (*Tijuca condita*). Another big target will be the Black-and-gold Cotinga (*Tijuca atra*), of course. The combination of their songs will produce a soundscape you will never forget. We will also search for some Atlantic Forest Highland-loving birds such as the colorful Diademed Tanager (*Stephanophorus diadematus*), Large-tailed Antshrike (*Mackenziaena leachii*), Rufous-tailed Antbird (*Drymophila genei*), Serra do Mar Tyrannulet (*Phylloscartes difficilis*), Rufous-backed Antwreio (*Dysithamnus xanthopterus*), Bay-chested Warbling-Finch (*Poospiza thoracica*), Green-crowned Plovercrest (*Stephanoxis lalandi*), White-browed Woodpecker (*Piculus aurulentus*) and many others.



Grey-winged Cotinga





Black-and-gold Cotinga

**Day 3:** AM and PM Birding in Nova Friburgo. We will start the day birding in the Elfin Forest looking for mountain birds, especially the Grey-winged Cotinga. Cross your fingers, this is not an easy target.

**Day 4:** Transfer to **ITATIAIA** (+/-6hrs [350Km]). PM Birding.

**Area description:** one of the most famous destinations for birding in southeast Brazil. Itatiaia National Park, comprising 28,000 hectares ranging from 600 to 2800 meters of altitude, was the first NP of the country, created in 1937. This altitudinal gradient provides a variety of environments, from humid Atlantic Forest in lower elevations to Mountaintop Grasslands in higher elevations, ensuring a rich avifauna. We will be exploring different altitudinal gradients ensuring great endemics of the Atlantic Forest and many bamboo specialists.

**Targets:** one of the most special birds here has the National Park name; the Itatiaia Spinetail (*Asthenes moreirae*), a typical mountaintop bird. On the way to the mountaintops we will have the chance to see other highland birds such as Rufous-tailed Antbird (*Drymophila genei*), the magnificent Black-and-gold Cotinga (*Lipaugus ater*) with its remarkable voice, Green-crowned Plovercrest (*Stephanoxis lalandi*), Bay-chested Warbling-Finch (*Poospiza thoracica*), Buff-throated Warbling-Finch (*Microspingus lateralis*), Mouse-colored Tapaculo (*Scytalopus speluncae*), Araucaria Tit-Spinetail (*Leptasthenura setaria*), Great Pampa Finch (*Embernagra platensis*), Velvety Black-Tyrant (*Knipolegus nigerrimus*), Blue-billed Black-Tyrant (*Knipolegus cyanirostris*), Serra do Mar Tyrant-Manakin (*Neopelma chrysolophum*), Thick-billed Saltator (*Saltator maxillosus*), Rufous-tailed Antthrush (*Chamaeza ruficauda*) and more. In the lower elevations some of the targets include Gilt-edged Tanager (*Tangara cyanoventris*), Brassy-breasted Tanager (*Tangara desmaresti*), Ochre-rumped Antbird (*Drymophila ochropyga*), Ferruginous Antbird (*Drymophila ferruginea*), White-collared Foliage-gleaner (*Anabazenops fuscus*), Frilled Coquette (*Lophornis magnificus*), Surucua Trogon (*Trogon surrucura*), Spot-breasted Antwren (*Dysithamnus stictothorax*), Eared Pygmy-Tyrant (*Myiornis auricularis*) and many more.



SOUTHEAST BRAZIL POPULAR TOUR – 17 DAYS



Itatiaia Spinetail



Green-crowned Plovercrest



**Day 5:** AM and PM Birding in Itatiaia National Park.

**Day 6:** AM Birding in the lowlands of Itatiaia NP and transfer to **PARATY** (+/-4hrs [200Km]). On this day we go from approximately 2000m, in Itatiaia, to sea-level in Paraty.

**Area description:** the coastal southernmost municipality of Rio de Janeiro State, Paraty is one of the most famous touristic destinations of the state and is well known for its preserved colonial architecture and beautiful beaches. The city's cultural vibes blend in well with the lush green forest corridor of the Serra do Mar (direct translation: mountains of the sea). We will stay in a hotel in downtown Paraty.

**Targets:** our main target here is of course the Black-hooded Antwren (*Formicivora erythronotos*) but we could also name many other great birds we could encounter here: Fork-tailed Pygmy-Tyrant (*Hemitriccus furcatus*), Yellow-throated Woodpecker (*Piculus flavigula*), Scaled Antbird (*Drymophila squamata*), Chestnut-backed Antshrike (*Thamnophilus palliatus*), Orange-eyed Thornbird (*Phacellodomus erythrophthalmus*), Riverbank Warbler (*Myiothlypis rivularis*) and Green-headed Tanager (*Tangara seledon*) to name a few.



Black-hooded Antwren



**Day 7:** AM Birding in Paraty and transfer to **UBATUBA** (+/-1½hrs [70Km]). PM Birding.

**Area description:** the coastal northernmost municipality of São Paulo is almost totally covered by Atlantic Forest, with many kinds of environments, going from the sea to the mountains. The variety of environments contributes to the rich biodiversity in the area, where it is possible to find more than 450 bird species. Most of the forest is protected by the Serra do Mar State Park, which comprises almost the entire São Paulo State Coast with 332,000 hectares. We will stay at a family-owned lodge called “Ninho da Cambacica”, where they have some nice feeders.

**Targets:** Fork-tailed Pygmy-Tyrant (*Hemitriccus furcatus*), Sao Paulo Tyrannulet (*Phylloscartes paulista*), Ochre-breasted Foliage-gleaner (*Philydor lichtensteini*), Black-cheeked Gnateater (*Conopophaga melanops*), Chestnut-bellied Euphonia (*Euphonia pectoralis*), Red-necked Tanager (*Tangara cyanocephala*), Green Honeycreeper (*Chlorophanes spiza*), Slaty Bristlefront (*Merulaxis ater*), Rufous-capped Antthrush (*Formicarius colma*). At Ninho da Cambacica, here are some of the hummingbirds we could see: Saw-billed Hermit (*Ramphodon naevius*), Black-throated Mango (*Anthracothorax nigricollis*), Brazilian Ruby (*Heliodoxa rubricauda*), Sombre Hummingbird (*Aphantochroa cirrochloris*), Glittering-throated Emerald (*Amazilia fimbriata*), Versicolored Emerald (*Amazilia versicolor*), Black Jacobin (*Florisuga fusca*), Scale-throated Hermit (*Phaethornis eurynome*), Festive Coquette (*Lophornis chalybeus*), White-chinned Sapphire (*Hylocharis cyanus*) and more.



Brazilian Ruby



Festive Coquette



**Day 8:** AM and PM Birding in Ubatuba.

**Day 9:** Transfer to **CAMPOS DO JORDÃO** (+/-3hrs [150Km]).

**Area description:** situated in the Serra da Mantiqueira mountain range, Campos do Jordão is the highest Brazilian city with an altitude of 1628m. A famous touristic destination, especially in the winter, due to its low temperatures and European architecture. There are a lot of forest patches nearby with significant remnants of araucaria forest. We will be birding in a few of these patches so there will be quite some driving.



**Targets:** we will have to keep an eye out for the threatened Vinaceous-breasted Parrot (*Amazona vinacea*) and the Black-capped Piprites (*Piprites pileata*), our main targets in this location. Other targets are Serra do Mar Tyrannulet (*Phylloscartes difficilis*), Thick-billed Saltator (*Saltator maxillosus*), Sharp-billed Treehunter (*Heliobletus contaminatus*), Rusty-barred Owl (*Strix hylophila*), Brown-breasted Pygmy-Tyrant (*Hemitriccus obsoletus*), Diademed Tanager (*Stephanophorus diadematus*) and Araucaria Tit-Spinetail (*Leptasthenura setaria*). Other interesting birds that occur here are the Black Hawk-Eagle (*Spizaetus tyrannus*), White-spotted Woodpecker (*Veniliornis spilogaster*), Greenish Tyrannulet (*Phyllomyias virescens*), Plush-crested Jay (*Cyanocorax chrysops*), Hellmayr's Pipit (*Anthus hellmayri*), Rufous-backed Antvireo (*Dysithamnus xanthopterus*), Brassy-breasted Tanager (*Tangara desmaresti*), Hooded Siskin (*Spinus magellanicus*) and many more. We also have chances for Rufous-tailed Antthrush (*Chamaeza ruficauda*), always a difficult bird to see and Swallow-tailed Cotinga (*Phibalura flavirostris*) (in certain times of the year).



Vinaceous-breasted Parrot



Black-capped Piprites

**Day 10:** AM Birding and transfer to **SALESÓPOLIS** (+/-2hrs [130Km]). PM Birding.

**Area description:** Salesópolis is one of the very few places in the world you can see this critically endangered species, the Sao Paulo Antwren, only described to science in 2014. The species is restricted to preserved marshes surrounded by Atlantic Forest.

**Targets:** besides the critically endangered and range-restricted Sao Paulo Antwren (*Stymphalornis paludicola*) here are a few other birds that are possible to see: Bertoni's Antbird (*Drymophila rubricollis*), Orange-breasted Thornbird (*Phacellodomus ferrugineigula*), Drab-breasted Pygmy-Tyrant (*Hemitriccus diops*). While looking for the Sao Paulo Antwren in the open swamp, keep an eye out for Pileated Parrots (*Pionopsitta pileata*) that could possibly fly over us. And if we happen to be in the right place at the right time, we have chances of seeing the Blackish-blue Seedeater (*Amaurospiza moesta*).





Sao Paulo Antwren - male

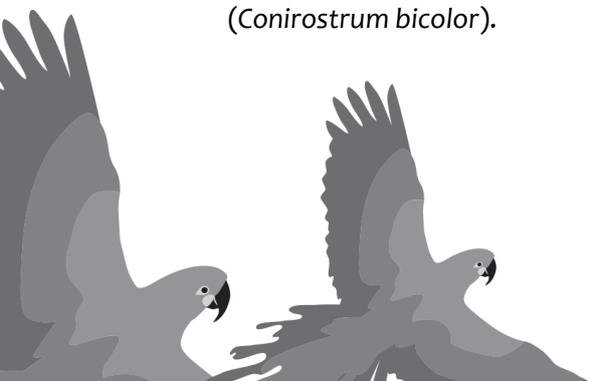
female



**Day 11:** AM Birding and transfer to **PERUÍBE** (+/-4hrs [240Km]). We will be birding in Restinga environment. Restingas are on sandy and nutrient-impoverished soils that are frequently associated with low-elevation plains characterized by the presence of beach ridges and lagoonal systems.

**Area description:** only 150Km away from the capital, this region is known for its touristic beaches and ecologic tourism. This is an interesting region to be on the tour since it is the northern distribution limit of the range-restricted and endemic Red-tailed Parrot (*Amazona brasiliensis*). We go to a neighboring city called Itanhaém to look for the parrot.

**Targets:** besides the Red-tailed Parrot, there are other species worth highlighting, like the Azure Jay (*Cyanocorax caeruleus*), Black-backed Tanager (*Tangara peruviana*), Channel-billed [Ariel] Toucan (*Ramphastos vitellinus ariel*), Buff-bellied Puffbird (*Notharchus swainsoni*), Blond-crested Woodpecker (*Celeus flavescens*), Grey-hooded Attila (*Attila rufus*), [Atlantic] Long-billed Wren (*Cantorchilus longirostris longirostris*), Squamate Antbird (*Myrmoderus squamosus*), Unicolored Antwren (*Myrmotherula unicolor*), Robust Woodpecker (*Campephilus robustus*), Little Wood-Rail (*Aramides mangle*) and Bicolored Conebill (*Conirostrum bicolor*).





Red-tailed Parrot



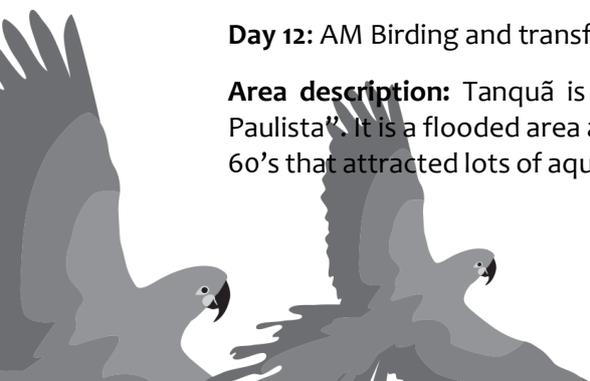
Black-backed Tanager



Azure Jay

**Day 12:** AM Birding and transfer to **TANQUÃ** – Piracicaba (+/-4hrs[300km])

**Area description:** Tanquã is a small village located in an area known as “Mini Pantanal Paulista”. It is a flooded area around the Piracicaba River and a result of a dam created in the 60’s that attracted lots of aquatic birds. In 2014 there was a great movement of birdwatchers



at Tanquã because there was another project of dam in this area that would flood everything, changing the environment for birds, biodiversity and also threatening the local community's livelihood (the village depends on fishing and tourism). After the protests by birdwatchers and other groups, now the area is protected by State law and it became a Birding destination in São Paulo State. In general, a very fun and easy place to go birding.



**Targets:** Our main target in Tanquã is the Yellow-breasted Crake (*Porzana flaviventer*). While looking for the crake by boat we will also have the chance of seeing many other interesting aquatic species such as Fulvous (*Dendrocygna bicolor*), White-faced (*Dendrocygna viduata*) and Black-bellied (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) Whistling-Ducks, Brazilian (*Amazonetta brasiliensis*) and Silver (*Spatula versicolor*) Teals, White-cheeked Pintail (*Anas bahamensis*), Rosy-billed Pochard (*Netta peposaca*), Purple Gallinule (*Porphyrio martinica*), White-backed Stilt (*Himantopus melanurus*), Large-billed Tern (*Phaetusa simplex*), Jabiru (*Jabiru mycteria*), Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*), Cocoi Heron (*Ardea cocoi*), White-faced (*Plegadis chihi*) and Bare-faced (*Phimosus infuscatus*) Ibises, Roseate Spoonbill (*Platalea ajaja*) and many more. Besides the Yellow-breasted Crake, there are other interesting crakes and rails we could find here, such as Rufous-sided Crake (*Laterallus melanophaius*), Ash-throated Crake (*Mustelirallus albicollis*), Spotted Rail (*Pardirallus maculatus*) and Plumbeous Rail (*Pardirallus sanguinolentus*). Depending on time of year, we could also see the Crested Doradito (*Pseudocolopteryx sclateri*).



Yellow-breasted Crake



**Day 13:** AM Birding and transfer to **INTERVALES STATE PARK** (Ribeirão Grande) (+/- 3½hrs[230Km]).

**Area description:** also, a part of the same forest fragment as PETAR, Intervales is one of the most exciting places to bird in the southeast, comprising over 400 bird species! A great place to bird, with many roads and trails to explore inside the park. We will be sleeping and eating practically inside the forest as well, so in “resting hours” anyone can feel free to explore the surroundings.

**Targets:** Intervales has a never-ending list of great birds to see. We will name out a few: Giant Antshrike (*Batara cinerea*), Long-tufted Screech-Owl (*Megascops sanctaecatarinae*), Dusky-throated Hermit (*Phaethornis squalidus*), Violet-crowned Plovercrest (*Stephanoxis loddigesii*), Oustalet’s Tyrannulet (*Phylloscartes oustaleti*), White-bearded Antshrike (*Biatas nigropectus*), Black-fronted Piping-Guan (*Aburria jacutinga*), Slaty Bristlefront (*Merulaxis ater*), Atlantic Royal Flycatcher (*Onychorhynchus swainsoni*), Red-ruffed Fruitcrow (*Pyroderus scutatus*), Red-and-white Crake (*Laterallus leucopyrrhus*), Spot-winged Wood-Quail (*Odontophorus capueira*), Solitary Tinamou (*Tinamus solitarius*), Pileated Parrot (*Pionopsitta pileata*), White-browed Foliage-gleaner (*Anabacerthia amaurotis*), Wing-barred Piprites (*Piprites chloris*), Hooded Berryeater (*Carpornis cucullata*), Brown Tanager (*Orchesticus abeillei*), White-breasted Tapaculo (*Eleoscytalopus indigoticus*), Bertoni's Antbird (*Drymophila rubricollis*), Long-trained Nightjar (*Hydropsalis forcipata*) and many, many others. Two birds people usually ask about are the Russet-winged Spadebill (*Platyrinchus leucoryphus*) and Helmeted Woodpecker (*Celeus galeatus*). Although possible, only 20-30% of the groups are lucky enough to see any of them.



Giant Antshrike

**Day 14:** AM and PM Birding in Intervales State Park.

**Day 15:** AM and PM Birding in Intervales State Park.





Spot-winged Wood-Quail

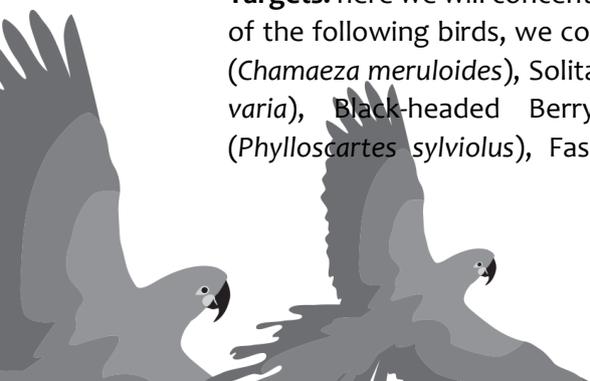


Red-and-white Crake

**Day 16:** AM Birding and transfer to **PETAR** (Iporanga-SP) (+/-2½hrs [110km]). PM Birding.

**Area description:** located in the south of the state, PETAR (Touristic State Park of Alto Ribeira) has one of the highest concentrations of caves (more than 350) in the world. There are also dozens of waterfalls, traditional and quilombola communities, trails, and archaeological/paleontological sites. A true paradise, hidden between valleys and mountains and in the largest preserved Atlantic Forest patch in Brazil (approximately 250.000 hectares). It is from one of these traditional communities that our local guide is from and he will be very worthy in helping us find our targets.

**Targets:** here we will concentrate our efforts on some difficult species. If we see at least half of the following birds, we could consider ourselves at a good advantage: Such's Antthrush (*Chamaeza meruloides*), Solitary Tinamou (*Tinamus solitarius*), Variegated Antpitta (*Grallaria varia*), Black-headed Berryeater (*Carpornis melanocephala*), Bay-ringed Tyrannulet (*Phylloscartes sylviolus*), Fasciated Tiger-Heron (*Tigrisoma fasciatum*), Pavonine Cuckoo



(*Dromococcyx pavoninus*), Bare-throated Bellbird (*Procnias nudicollis*) and Blue-bellied Parrot (*Triclaria malachitacea*). Our local guide is constantly monitoring rare raptors' nests, like the Ornate Hawk-Eagle (*Spizaetus ornatus*) so let's cross our fingers to be there in the right period. Depending on the time of year we also have chances of seeing the Atlantic Royal Flycatcher (*Onychorhynchus swainsoni*), which the local guide also monitors when in the breeding season.



Blue-bellied Parrot

**Day 17:** AM Birding and transfer to São Paulo (Guarulhos Airport) (+/-4½hrs [300Km]) for DEPARTURES.

