



Field Guides Tour Report

SE Brazil: South of the Capricorn 2012: Iguassu Falls Extension

Dec 2, 2012 to Dec 6, 2012

Marcelo Padua

For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, [please VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE.](#)

Iguazu Falls belongs to the very exclusive club of the biggest waterfalls in the world, being the longest of them all and probably the most spectacular, too. These alone are good enough reasons to come visit this site, one of the greatest natural wonders on Earth. The falls are also surrounded by 868 square miles of preserved forest both on the Brazilian side and the Argentine side, making this a wonderful birding destination -- and one we explored extremely well this trip, spending two nights in each country that claims a piece of the falls.

We started our tour on the Brazilian side, where we stayed at the luxurious Hotel das Cataratas, although the real luxury was our proximity to the falls (I could hear the roar of the falls from my room!). It was also fun to use an electrical cart-and-trailer to visit the Pouco Preto Trail, and this allowed us to cover 10 miles of forest and dig up a lot of special birds such as the colorful Band-tailed Manakin, the rare Russet-winged Spadebill, the minute Southern Bristle-Tyrant, and several Atlantic forest endemics including Spot-billed Toucanet, Robust Woodpecker, Rufous-capped Motmot, and Rusty-breasted Nunlet.

We then moved on to Argentina, where we had the privilege of access to Argentina's most popular tourist attraction, the Devil's Throat, before the general public's arrival. This allowed us to bird at our own pace as we looked for rarities such as the endangered Black-fronted Piping-Guan before the masses arrived and scared all the birds away. We continued to enjoy some world-class birding with great looks at Creamy-bellied Gnatcatchers, Short-tailed Anthrush, Chestnut-headed Tanager, Pearly-breasted Cuckoo, and many more.

This was truly a fantastic experience, and I hope you all enjoyed it as much as I did. Till we meet again!

--Marcelo



This one's flashy enough to distract anyone from the falls: Plush-crested Jay! (Photo by participant Ken Havard)

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Cracidae (Guans, Chachalacas, and Curassows)

DUSKY-LEGGED GUAN (Penelope obscura)

BLACK-FRONTED PIPING-GUAN (Pipile jacutinga) – Seeing these endangered Cracids is always a treat, but seeing an adult with chicks drinking water from the river was one of the greatest highlights of the trip for me.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (Phalacrocorax brasilianus)

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

ANHINGA (Anhinga anhinga)

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

COCOI HERON (Ardea cocoi)

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – Even a Great Egret can be exciting when you have the Iguazu Falls as a background.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*)

STRIATED HERON (*Butorides striata*)

WHISTLING HERON (*Syrigma sibilatrix*)

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

GREEN IBIS (*Mesembrinibis cayennensis*)

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*) – Hundreds of Black Vultures roost on San Martin Island. An impressive sight!

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*)

KING VULTURE (*Sarcoramphus papa*)

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

SNAIL KITE (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*)

PLUMBEOUS KITE (*Ictinia plumbea*)

ROADSIDE HAWK (*Rupornis magnirostris*)

Aramidae (Limpkin)

LIMPKIN (*Aramus guarauna*)

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

SOUTHERN LAPWING (*Vanellus chilensis*)

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*) – Seen from the walkway to the Devil's Throat on the Argentine side!

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*)

PALE-VENTED PIGEON (*Patagioenas cayennensis*)

PLUMBEOUS PIGEON (*Patagioenas plumbea*)

EARED DOVE (*Zenaida auriculata*)

RUDDY GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina talpacoti*)

BLUE GROUND-DOVE (*Claravis pretiosa*) [*****]

WHITE-TIPPED DOVE (*Leptotila verreauxi*)

GRAY-FRONTED DOVE (*Leptotila rufaxilla*) [*****]

VIOLACEOUS QUAIL-DOVE (*Geotrygon violacea*) [*****]

RUDDY QUAIL-DOVE (*Geotrygon montana*)

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

SQUIRREL CUCKOO (*Piaya cayana*)

PEARLY-BREASTED CUCKOO (*Coccyzus euleri*) – Always a hard one to get, but we have had luck with it on our recent visits to Iguazu!

GUIRA CUCKOO (*Guira guira*)

GREATER ANI (*Crotophaga major*)

SMOOTH-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga ani*)

Strigidae (Owls)

LONG-TUFTED SCREECH-OWL (*Megascops sanctaecatarinae*) [**E***]

FERRUGINOUS PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium brasilianum*)

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

COMMON PAURAUQUE (*Nyctidromus albigollis*)

Apodidae (Swifts)

GREAT DUSKY SWIFT (*Cypseloides senex*) – There were just thousands of them around this year. My favorite memory is from the ones hanging behind the falls at the view point on the Brazilian side, where you could feel the spray from the waterfall and almost feel like one of them!

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

BLACK JACOBIN (*Florisuga fusca*) [**E**]

PLANALTO HERMIT (*Phaethornis pretrei*) – We saw this handsome Hummer at the feeders on the Argentine side. This is one of the least common birds around the feeders!

BLACK-THROATED MANGO (*Anthracothorax nigricollis*)

GLITTERING-BELLIED EMERALD (*Chlorostilbon lucidus*)

SWALLOW-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD (*Eupetomena macroura*)

VIOLET-CAPPED WOODNYMPH (*Thalurania glaucopis*) [**E**]

VERSICOLORED EMERALD (*Amazilia versicolor*)

GLITTERING-THROATED EMERALD (*Amazilia fimbriata*)

GILDED HUMMINGBIRD (*Hylocharis chrysura*)

Trogonidae (Trogons)

GREEN-BACKED TROGON (*Trogon viridis*) [*****]

BLACK-THROATED TROGON (*Trogon rufus chrysocloros*) [**E**]

Momotidae (Motmots)

RUFIOUS-CAPPED MOTMOT (*Baryphthengus ruficapillus*) – We had excellent looks at this Amazingly beautiful bird right at the start of the Poco Preto Trail on the Brazilian side. [**E**]

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

RINGED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle torquata*)

AMAZON KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle amazona*)

Bucconidae (Puffbirds)

RUSTY-BREASTED NUNLET (*Nonnula rubecula*) – Nunlets are very small puffbirds that live in the understory and are very shy, making them very difficult to find, but with a little patience we managed to pull up one of these on the Argentine Side.

Ramphastidae (Toucans)

CHESTNUT-EARED ARACARI (*Pteroglossus castanotis*) – This is one of the species that is not seen on the route of the main tour, and we had great looks at them!

SPOT-BILLED TOUCANET (*Selenidera maculirostris*) – What great looks we had at these colorful Atlantic Forest Endemics. [**E**]

TOCO TOUCAN (*Ramphastos toco*) – Iguazu has to be one of the best places in the world to see them. At one point we had several of them feeding on a fruiting tree!

RED-BREASTED TOUCAN (*Ramphastos dicolorus*) [**E**]

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

OCHRE-COLLARED PICULET (*Picumnus temminckii*) [**E**]

GREEN-BARRED WOODPECKER (*Colaptes melanochloros melanochloros*)

BLOND-CRESTED WOODPECKER (*Celeus flavescens*) [**E**]

ROBUST WOODPECKER (*Campephilus robustus*) – Great looks at this huge woodpecker! [**E**]

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

SOUTHERN CARACARA (*Caracara plancus*)

YELLOW-HEADED CARACARA (*Milvago chimachima*)

BAT FALCON (*Falco rufigularis*)

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – One bird flying around the falls on the Argentine side. They are not common in the area!

Psittacidae (Parrots)

MAROON-BELLIED PARAKEET (*Pyrrhura frontalis*) [*****]

WHITE-EYED PARAKEET (*Aratinga leucophthalma*)

BLUE-WINGED PARROTLET (*Forpus xanthopterygius*)

PLAIN PARAKEET (*Brotogeris tirica*) [**E***]

SCALY-HEADED PARROT (*Pionus maximiliani*)

Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)

SPOT-BACKED ANTSHRIKE (*Hypoedaleus guttatus*) [**E**]

VARIABLE ANTSHRIKE (*Thamnophilus caerulescens caerulescens*)

PLAIN ANTIVIREO (*Dysithamnus mentalis*)

RUFIOUS-WINGED ANTWREN (*Herpsilochmus rufimarginatus rufimarginatus*) [**E**]

STREAK-CAPPED ANTWREN (*Terenura maculata*) [**E**]

WHITE-SHOULDERED FIRE-EYE (*Pyriglena leucoptera*) [**E**]

Conopophagidae (Gnateaters)

RUFIOUS GNATEATER (*Conopophaga lineata*)

Formicariidae (Antthrushes)

SHORT-TAILED ANTTHRUSH (*Chamaeza campanisona campanisona*) – This is always a hard one to find, but we managed to pull one into view!

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)

OLIVACEOUS WOODCREEPER (OLIVACEOUS) (*Sittasomus griseicapillus sylviiellus*) [**E**]

PLAIN-BROWN WOODCREEPER (PLAIN-WINGED) (*Dendrocincla fuliginosa turdina*) [**E**]

STREAKED XENOPS (*Xenops rutilans*)

RUFIOUS HORNERO (*Furnarius rufus*)

OCHRE-BREASTED FOLIAGE-GLEANER (*Philydor lichtensteini*) – This is the most common Foliage-gleaner around Iguazu and we had very good looks at them! [**E**]

BLACK-CAPPED FOLIAGE-GLEANER (*Philydor atricapillus*) [**E***]

WHITE-EYED FOLIAGE-GLEANER (*Automolus leucophthalmus*) [**E**]

OLIVE SPINETAIL (*Cranioleuca obsoleta*) [*****]

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

SOUTHERN BEARDLESS-TYRANNULET (Camptostoma obsoletum)

YELLOW-BELLIED ELAENIA (Elaenia flavogaster)

SEPIA-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (Leptopogon amaurocephalus)

SOUTHERN BRISTLE-TYRANT (Phylloscartes eximius) – One of the big targets for the extension as it is not common on the main tour route. We had great looks at the Poco Preto trail!

SOUTHERN ANTIPIPI (Corythopis delalandi) – This is one of very few flycatchers that specializes on feeding on the forest floor, making it hard to see most of the times. But We enjoyed great looks at this handsome species!

YELLOW-OLIVE FLYCATCHER (SOORETAMA) (Tolmomyias sulphurescens sulphurescens) [E]

RUSSET-WINGED SPADEBILL (Platyrinchus leucoryphus) – By far the best bird on this extension for me. This large Spadebill is rare everywhere it occurs and seeing it so well was a real treat!

EULER'S FLYCATCHER (Lathrotriccus eulerei) [*]

FUSCOUS FLYCATCHER (FUSCOUS) (Cnemotriccus fuscatus fuscatus) [E]

LONG-TAILED TYRANT (Colonia colonus)

CATTLE TYRANT (Machetornis rixosa)

SIRYSTES (EASTERN) (Sirystes sibilator sibilator)

SHORT-CRESTED FLYCATCHER (Myiarchus ferox)

GREAT KISKADEE (Pitangus sulphuratus)

BOAT-BILLED FLYCATCHER (Megarynchus pitangua)

SOCIAL FLYCATCHER (Myiozetetes similis)

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (Tyrannus melancholicus)

FORK-TAILED FLYCATCHER (Tyrannus savana)

Pipridae (Manakins)

WHITE-BEARDED MANAKIN (Manacus manacus)

SWALLOW-TAILED MANAKIN (Chiroxiphia caudata) [E]

BAND-TAILED MANAKIN (Pipra fasciicauda) – The genus Pipra is responsible for the name of the family and therefore is one of just three true Pipra Manakins.

WING-BARRED PIPRITES (Piprites chloris) [*]

Vireonidae (Vireos)

RED-EYED VIREO (MIGRATORY CHIVI) (Vireo olivaceus chivi)

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

PLUSH-CRESTED JAY (Cyanocorax chrysops) – It is a privilege to have these handsome jays right around our hotel grounds, but watch out for your food or they will take it away!

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

SOUTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (Stelgidopteryx ruficollis)

GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN (Progne chalybea)

WHITE-WINGED SWALLOW (Tachycineta albiventer)

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

HOUSE WREN (Troglodytes aedon)

Poliophtilidae (Gnatcatchers)

CREAMY-BELLIED GNATCATCHER (Poliophtila lactea) – Another top priority for the extension as this bird is not found on the main tour route and has a pretty limited distribution. We managed to see them well on the Argentine side!

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

PALE-BREASTED THRUSH (Turdus leucomelas)

RUFIOUS-BELLIED THRUSH (Turdus rufiventris)

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

CHALK-BROWED MOCKINGBIRD (Mimus saturninus)

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

TROPICAL PARULA (Setophaga pitiaiyumi) – Common around Iguazu!

GOLDEN-CROWNED WARBLER (Basileuterus culicivorus)

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

CHESTNUT-HEADED TANAGER (Pyrrhocomma ruficeps)

BLACK-GOGGLED TANAGER (Trichothraupis melanops)

RUBY-CROWNED TANAGER (Tachyphonus coronatus) – This is one of those bird names that drives me crazy, because the bird is named after a feature that you rarely see. [E]

SAYACA TANAGER (Thraupis sayaca)

GREEN-HEADED TANAGER (Tangara seledon) [E]

SWALLOW TANAGER (*Tersina viridis*) – What a fancy bird, I just cannot get enough of it!
BLUE DACNIS (*Dacnis cayana*)
GUIRA TANAGER (*Hemithraupis guira*)
CHESTNUT-VENTED CONEBILL (*Conirostrum speciosum*)
SAFFRON FINCH (*Sicalis flaveola*)
BLUE-BLACK GRASSQUIT (*Volatinia jacarina*)
RUSTY-COLLARED SEEDEATER (*Sporophila collaris*)
CHESTNUT-BELLIED SEED-FINCH (*Oryzoborus angolensis*) – We had a nice looking adult male!
RED-CRESTED FINCH (*Coryphospingus cucullatus*)
BANANAQUIT (*Coereba flaveola*)
BUFF-THROATED SALTATOR (*Saltator maximus*)

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

RUFIOUS-COLLARED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia capensis*)

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

RED-CROWNED ANT-TANAGER (*Habia rubica*)

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

WHITE-BROWED BLACKBIRD (*Sturnella superciliaris*)

SHINY COWBIRD (*Molothrus bonariensis*)

GIANT COWBIRD (*Molothrus oryzivorus*)

EPAULET ORIOLE (*Icterus cayanensis*)

RED-RUMPED CACIQUE (*Cacicus haemorrhous*)

Fringillidae (Siskins, Crossbills, and Allies)

PURPLE-THROATED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia chlorotica*)

VIOLACEOUS EUPHONIA (*Euphonia violacea*)

CHESTNUT-BELLIED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia pectoralis*) **[E]**

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*)

MAMMALS

BROWN CAPUCHIN (*Cebus apella*)

AZARA'S AGOUTI (*Dasyprocta azarae*)

SOUTH AMERICAN COATI (*Nasua nasua*)

BRAZILIAN TAPIR (*Tapirus terrestris*) – We saw one early in the morning on the Brazilian side as we headed to the Poco Preto trail!

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 147 bird taxa and 4 mammal taxa