

## Trip Report: Brazil (Mata Atlântica)

### January 2007 (David Southall)

This report illustrates some of my photographic highlights from two weekends of birding at locations in the Mata Atlântica of Rio de Janeiro state, Brazil. The first weekend was spent at the Serra dos Tucanos lodge near to the Tres Picos State Park (ca. 2 hours north of Rio) and the second at the Hotel do Ype in Itatiaia National Park (ca. 2 hours west of Rio).



*Surucua Trogon; Long-tailed Potoo; Gray-headed Attila*

Unfortunately my day and a half at Serra dos Tucanos coincided with a period of wet weather that largely prevented use of my camera, although the rain was generally light enough to allow for otherwise normal birding. I spent time during my stay at three locations: A morning walking the trails on the property (guided by owner Andy); a short afternoon braving persistent rain on the Theodoro trail (courtesy of guests Bud and Margaret who gave me a lift up the road); and a full morning on the approaches to the Bamboo trail (with other guests who arranged transport for us). In between trips I enjoyed the garden and feeders at dos Tucanos that were continually active with tanagers, hummingbirds etc.



*Black-cheeked Gnatcatcher; Slaty-breasted Wood-Rail; Red-eyed Thornbird*

Personal highlights on the dos Tucanos trails were Spot-billed Toucanet, Long-tailed Potoo, Black-cheeked Gnateater, Gray-headed Attila and several antbirds / antwrens / antvireos / antshrikes that Andy was able to locate. Although we only saw a small numbers of birds that morning, almost all were new species to me.



*Blue Manakin (female and male)*

Our short and wet trip to the Theodoro trail encountered one very active mixed flock with a large number of different furnarids - something that I found to be a quite common in Brasil. Clearly this trail would be excellent in better weather. Although we never actually reached the Bamboo trail (turning back at a 'No Entry' sign that we should have ignored!) the approach road and trail were excellent and we found many becards, antshrikes, antvireos, spinetails and thornbirds. A brief return visit to a misty Theodoro trail delivered good views of a singing Scaly-throated Hummingbird.

The accommodation and food at dos Tucanos were good and the atmosphere was friendly - Andy, fellow guests and Andy's library of books proved invaluable in helping me identify many of the species seen and photographed!



*Plain Xenops; Streaked Xenops; Olivaceous Woodcreeper*



*Plain Antvireo; White-shouldered Fire-Eye (f)*

Itatiaia is a wonderful park and - although it caters mainly to families enjoying the views, food and hotel pool (very refreshing after a day of hiking around the park's trails) - the Hotel do Ype proved to be a great base. In addition to the attraction of excellent buffet foods, the hotel's location - some 10+ km inside the park - offered panoramic views from ca. 1100m and grounds full of bird activity. After two weeks of rain in Rio, the change to good weather on arrival in the park was also a big plus. There was even the benefit (?) of ending every hike with a short but exhausting race up the very steep hair-pin bends through the grounds to the hotel. Making this climb four times a day - loaded with tripod, camera and gear - was excellent training!



*White-barred Piculet (f); Scaly-throated Hermit*



*Golden-crowned Warbler; White-browed Warbler*

Although there are not many trails through the park, they were more than sufficient to keep me fully occupied from dawn to dusk for two days. The ca. 1km trail to the Hotel Simon was fantastic (at least until an over-enthusiastic maintenance crew heavily macheted the sides, converting it from single track cloaked in vegetation into a 3m wide highway cut through the forest!). I have never before encountered as many mixed flocks with woodcreepers, antbirds, antvireos, foliage-gleaners, woodpeckers, xenops, piculets, tyrants and the like as I found along these trails and roads between 1000 and 1300m altitude. The action was very confusing at times - especially since *de la Pena* does not include many (any?) of the Atlantic Forest endemics! Fortunately, a copy of *Souza's 'Todas as Aves do Brasil'* was available at the hotel for evening consultation.



*Sepia-capped Flycatcher; Chestnut-capped Becard; Velvety Black-Tyrant (f)*



*Masked Water-Tyrant; Brassy-breasted Tanager; Yellow-fronted Woodpecker*

Visiting the Hotel Simon proved worthwhile for birds in the grounds and at the feeders, whilst the bar served welcome drinks during the heat of the day. Good flocks (similar species to the inter-hotel trail) continued up the Tres Picos trail and I was lucky enough to see a Masked Titi monkey there.



*Unspec. Tree Snake; Unspec. Rodent eating bamboo*



*Cliff Flycatcher; Bamboo Flatbill (= Large-headed Flatbill)*



*Ochre-rumped Antbird; Variable Antshrike*



*Saffron Toucanet; Red-breasted Toucan*



*Violaceous Euphonia; Pale-breasted Thrush (imm.)*



*Brazilian Ruby; Black Jacobin*

On my second day I arranged a taxi to take me up the Aghulas Negras road to the upper elevations of the park, birding as we climbed. This proved to be enjoyable, if somewhat confusing - almost all of the birds at these higher elevations (up to ca. 2100m) were new, with very few appearing in *de la Pena*. The vegetation and views were fantastic, becoming almost *paramo* like at the upper elevations.



*Violet-capped Woodnymph; Frilled Coquette (f)*



*Dusky-legged Guan; Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl*



*Picazuro Pigeon; Masked Titi Monkey*



*Tres Picos Trail; Velvety Black-Tyrant*



*Black-tailed Tityra (juv.)*

Overall, during these two weekends I saw some 69 new species and would undoubtedly have added many more if only I had been able to identify them!

## Bird List: Brazilian Mata Atlântica<sup>1</sup>

(Confirmed personal sightings only – excludes birds heard only; In order of appearance (if included) of de la Pena and Rumboll's Birds of Southern South America and Antarctica)

First location where species seen: DT = Serra dos Tucanos; R=Rio de Janeiro; I=Itatiaia National Park

Neotropic (Olivaceous) Cormorant (R)	Planalto Woodcreeper (I) *
Magnificent Frigatebird (R)	Lesser Woodcreeper (DT) *
Snowy Egret (R)	Scaled Woodcreeper (I)
	Scalloped Woodcreeper (I) *
Black Vulture (R)	Black-billed Scythebill (I)
Dusky-legged Guan (I) *	Buff-browed Foliage-Gleaner (I)
Slaty-breasted Wood-Rail (DT) *	White-browed Foliage-Gleaner (I) *
	Ochre-breasted Foliage-Gleaner (I)
Picazuro Pigeon (I) *	Buff-fronted Foliage-Gleaner (I)
Ruddy Ground-Dove (R)	White-eyed Foliage-Gleaner (DT)
	White-collared Foliage-Gleaner (I) *
Maroon(Reddish)-bellied Parakeet (DT) *	Sharp-billed Treehunter (DT)
Plain Parakeet (DT)	Streaked Xenops (DT) *
	Plain Xenops (DT) *
Squirrel Cuckoo (DT)	Tawny-throated Leaf-tosser (DT)
Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl (I) *	Spix's Spinetail (DT)
	Itatiaia Spinetail (I) *
Long-tailed Potoo (DT) *	Red-eyed Thornbird (DT) *
Gray-rumped Swift (DT)	
Scale-throated Hermit (DT) *	Large-tailed Antshrike (I)
Reddish Hermit (GA)	Variable Antshrike (DT)
Saw-billed Hermit (DT)	Spot-breasted Antwreio (DT) *
Long-tailed Hermit (I) *	Plain Antwreio (DT) *
Swallow-tailed Hummingbird (DT)	Rufous-backed Antwreio (I) *
Black Jacobin (DT) *	Star-throated Antwren (DT)
(Black-breasted) Plovercrest (I)	Ferruginous Antbird (DT)
Violet-capped Woodnymph (DT) *	Bertoni's Antbird (I) *
White-throated Hummingbird (DT) *	Scaled Antbird (DT) *
Versicoloured Emerald (DT)	Rufous-tailed Antbird (I) *
Sombre Hummingbird (DT)	Ochre-rumped Antbird (I) *
Brazilian Ruby (I) *	White-shouldered Fire-Eye (I) *
Frilled Coquette (I) *	Black-cheeked Gnatcatcher (DT) *
Surucua Trogon (DT) *	Planalto Tyrannulet (DT) *
Rufous-capped Motmot (I)	Sepia-caped Flycatcher (I) *
Spot-billed Toucanet (DT) *	Southern Bristle-Tyrant (I)
Saffron Toucanet (I) *	Eared Pygmy-Tyrant (I)
Red-breasted Toucan (I) *	Eye-ringed Tody-Tyrant (DT)
	Yellow-olive Flatbill (I) *
White-barred Piculet (I) *	White-throated Spadebill (DT)
Yellow-fronted Woodpecker (I) *	Bamboo Flatbill (Large-headed Flatbill) (I) *
Yellow-eared Woodpecker (DT)	Tropical Pewee (I) *
White-spotted Woodpecker (I) *	Long-tailed Tyrant (I) *
White-browed Woodpecker (I) *	Masked Water-Tyrant (DT) *
Olivaceous Woodcreeper (DT) *	Oustalet's Tyrant (I)
White-throated Woodcreeper (DT) *	Gray-hooded(headed) Attila (DT) *
	Short-crested Flycatcher (DT) *
	Great Kiskadee (DT)
	Social Flycatcher (DT)

<sup>1</sup> First sighting ever for DJS; \* = photo available from trip

Streaked Flycatcher (DT)  
 Tropical Kingbird (DT)  
 Chestnut-crowned Becard (DT) \*  
 White-winged Becard (I) \*  
 Crested Becard (DT) \*  
 Black-tailed Tityra (DT) \*  
 Velvety Black-Tyrant (I) \*  
 Cliff Flycatcher (I) \*  
  
 Swallow-tailed (Blue) Manakin (DT) \*  
  
 House Wren (DT)  
 Rufous-bellied Thrush (DT) \*  
 Pale-breasted Thrush (DT) \*  
  
 Rufous-crowned Greenlet (I)  
 Rufous-browed Peppershrike (DT) \*  
 Golden-crowned Warbler (DT) \*  
 White-browed Warbler (I) \*  
 Bananaquit (DT)  
 Golden-chevroned Tanager (DT)  
 Green-headed Tanager (DT) \*  
 Red-necked Tanager (DT)  
 Burnished-buff Tanager (DT)

Brassy-breasted Tanager (DT) \*  
 Blue Dacnis (DT)  
 Violaceous Euphonia (DT) \*  
 Chestnut-bellied Euphonia (DT)  
 Diademed Tanager (I) \*  
 Sayaca Tanager (DT)  
 Palm Tanager (DT)  
 Brazilian Tanager (DT)  
 Ruby-crowned Tanager (DT) \*  
 Black-goggled Tanager (DT) \*  
 Magpie Tanager (I) \*  
 Buff-throated Saltator (DT)  
 Black-throated Grosbeak (DT)  
  
 Double-collared Seedeater (DT)  
 Saffron Finch (DT)  
 Bay-chested Warbling-Finch (I) \*  
 Uniform Finch (I) \*  
 Rufous-collared Sparrow (DT)  
 Red-rumped Cacique (I)  
 Crested Oropendola (DT)  
  
 House Sparrow (DT)

Total 127 confirmed species for trip, of which 69 new for me...



*Dawn at Itatiaia National Park*