

**Trip Report: Brazil (Mata Atlântica)**  
**(Guapi Assu Bird Lodge, Rio de Janeiro State)**  
**April 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> 2013**

This report captures highlights from a weekend visit to the fabulous REGUA reserve / Guapi Assu Lodge in the Guapiaçu valley of the Atlantic Forest (Mata Atlântica), Rio de Janeiro state. The reserve is a conservation project that now protects some 7,500 hectares of Mata Atlântica less than two hours drive north-east from the iconic city. I first visited back in late-2006 and since then the ongoing reforestation efforts have delivered tangible results, with the transformation of the wetlands and reforested areas being a real testament to the hard work put in by Nicholas, Raquel, and the REGUA staff and volunteers. The lodge has also been further developed. It now possess a canopy tower (providing stunning views across to the surrounding Serra dos Órgãos mountain range) and a swimming pool, but retains the same small scale, friendly vibe, good food, clean rooms, and reference library. Of course, the main attraction remains the onsite access to an extensive network of trails packed with Mata Atlântica specialities. See [www.guapiassubirdlodge.com](http://www.guapiassubirdlodge.com)



*Black-cheeked Gnateater [Waterfall Trail]*

Two local guides work from the lodge and during two morning hikes I was guided by Leonardo Pimentel, a vet with an exceptional ear for bird calls. We invested our first morning on trails near to the lodge, birding around the wetlands and along parts of the Brown and São José Trails through largely secondary forest at less than 100m ASL. On our second morning we ventured further afield, walking one of the trails that ascend into primary forest. This required a 15 minute drive to another part of the property where the fantastic Waterfall ('Green') Trail commences. We ascended this easy trail for 2.5 km through largely primary forest, reaching some 350m ASL where a spectacular waterfall flows over a sheer rock cliff. The more challenging Elfin Forest ('Red') Trail progresses upwards from nearby, providing access to upper-elevation endemics, but requires a full day walk - something to certainly look forward to on a future visit, along with participating in some of the off-site day-trips that are available to nearby Mata Atlântica hot-spots. During the afternoons I birded in more relaxed style in and around the lodge grounds and from the canopy tower.



*White-throated Spadebill [Waterfall Trail]*

This was my first foray into the field with my new gear, including D7100 camera and second-generation VR 80-400 lens combination plus more stable tripod/head and an external flash mount. I experimented with some different techniques, predominantly making use of the tripod to stabilise the camera whilst relying on the enhanced lens VR performance, rather than my historical preference of using a remote release in Mirror-Up mode with the VR switched off and the camera ‘locked down’ on the tripod. This certainly had the advantage of quicker setup on fast-moving subjects and with the enhanced VR and high ISO performance I was able to capture some pleasing images at moderate shutter speeds. Only occasionally did I make use of fill flash.

Trip highlights included seeing lifers such as a male Shrike-like Cotinga (the lodge’s signature bird that showed well, albeit high in the canopy), a Crescent-chested Puffbird (again well seen, but high in the canopy), a Southern Antpipit (that showed fabulously but proved impossible to photograph as it walked too-and-fro between sallies onto frustratingly obscured perches), glimpses of a White-necked Hawk (that we flushed twice) and a pair of Rufous-sided Crakes (seen feeding at dawn along the edge of the wetlands). From a photographic perspective, the excellent views we enjoyed of male Pin-tailed and Swallow-winged Manakins, frequent encounters with co-operative Black-cheeked Gnateaters, White-throated Spadebills, White-barred Piculets and various ant-bird skulkers were particularly enjoyable and successful. This brief report includes some of those images, along with an annotated list of the species encountered during the two days. My overall trip total was 153 species, including 20 Brazilian endemics and 23 ‘lifers’.



*Pin-tailed Manakin; Swallow-tailed Manakin (immature male) [both Waterfall Trail]*



*Chestnut-backed Antshrike [Wetlands Trail]; Sooretama Slaty-Antshrike [Brown Trail]*



*White-barred Piculet [Wetlands Trail]*



*Masked Water-Tyrant [Wetlands Trail]*



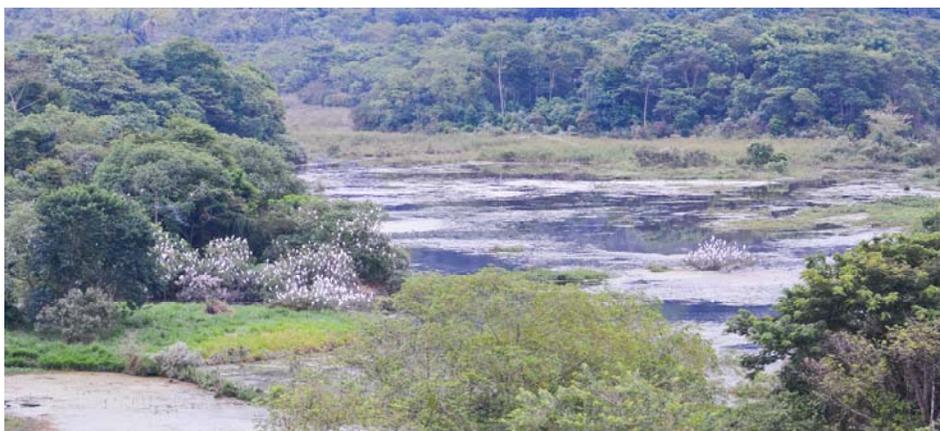
*Greenish Elaenia; Rufous-tailed Jacamar [both Wetlands Trail]*



*Swallow-tailed Hummingbird [Guapi Assu Lodge gardens]; Blue Dacnis [canopy tower]*



*View from Wetlands towards canopy tower and lodge; View from canopy tower towards a Serra dos Órgãos peak*



*Dusk view from the canopy tower of Cattle Egret roosts in the wetlands area*

## 1. Bird Trip List<sup>1</sup>

Confirmed personal sightings only for DJS – excludes birds heard only unless otherwise indicated. As field guide I used [‘A Field Guide to The Birds of Brazil’ by Ben van Perlo \(Oxford University Press, 2009\)](#) - which contained all of the species encountered. Some names have been updated since this guide was published, so birds in the trip list are identified as per ‘The Clements Checklist of Birds of the World’, Cornell, 2007 with updates through December 2010 (online version 6.5).

**Neotropic Cormorant** (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*)  
**Black-crowned Night-Heron** (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)  
**Striated Heron** (*Butorides striata*)  
**Rufescent Tiger-Heron** (*Tigrisoma lineatum*)  
**Whistling Heron** (*Syrigma sibilatrix*)  
**Snowy Egret** (*Egretta thula*)  
**Great Egret** (*Ardea alba*)  
**Cattle Egret** (*Bubulcus ibis*) \*  
**Capped Heron** (*Pilherodius pileatus*)  
**Cocoi Heron** (*Ardea cocoi*)  
**Black-bellied Whistling-Duck** (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*)  
**Muscovy Duck** (*Cairina moschata*)  
**Black Vulture** (*Coragyps atratus*)  
**Turkey Vulture** (*Cathartes aura*)  
**White-necked Hawk** (*Leucopternis lacernulatus*) **E**  
**Roadside Hawk** (*Buteo magnirostris*)  
**Southern Caracara** (*Caracara plancus*)  
**Yellow-headed Caracara** (*Milvago chimachima*)  
**Rusty-margined Guan** (*Penelope superciliaris*)  
**Rufous-sided Crake** (*Laterallus melanophaius*)  
**Wattled Jacana** (*Jacana jacana*)  
**Slaty-breasted Wood-Rail** (*Aramides saracura*)  
**Common Gallinule (Moorhen)** (*Gallinula chloropus*)  
**Purple Gallinule** (*Porphyrio martinica*)  
**Southern Lapwing** (*Vanellus chilensis*)  
**Ruddy Ground-Dove** (*Columbina talpacoti*)  
**White-tipped Dove** (*Leptotila verreauxi*)  
**Picazuro Pigeon** (*Patagioenas picazuro*)  
**Maroon-bellied Parakeet** (*Pyrrhura frontalis*)  
**Blue-winged Parrotlet** (*Forpus xanthopterygius*)  
**Plain Parakeet** (*Brotogeris tirica*) **E**  
**Scaly-headed Parrot** (*Pionus maximiliani*) **heard only**  
**Greater Ani** (*Crotophaga major*)  
**Smooth-billed Ani** (*Crotophaga ani*)  
**Squirrel Cuckoo** (*Piaya cayana*)  
**Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl** (*Glaucidium brasilianum*) **heard only**  
**Burrowing Owl** (*Athene cunicularia*)  
**Common Pauraque** (*Nyctidromus albicollis*)  
**Gray-rumped Swift** (*Chaetura cinereiventris*)  
**Scale-throated Hermit** (*Phaethornis eurynome*)  
**Reddish Hermit** (*Phaethornis ruber*)  
**Rufous-breasted Hermit** (*Glaucis hirsutus*)  
**Saw-billed Hermit** (*Ramphodon naevius*) **E**  
**Violet-capped Woodnymph** (*Thalurania glaucopis*)  
**Glittering-throated Emerald** (*Amazilia fimbriata*)  
**Brazilian Ruby** (*Clytolaema rubricauda*) **E**  
**Swallow-tailed Hummingbird** (*Eupetomena macroura*) \*  
**Green-backed Trogon** (*Trogon viridis*)  
**Surucua Trogon** (*Trogon surrucura*)

<sup>1</sup> First sighting ever for DJS; **E** = Brazil endemic species; \* = photo available

**Ringed Kingfisher** (*Megaceryle torquata*)  
**Rufous-tailed Jacamar** (*Galbula ruficauda*) \*  
**Crescent-chested Puffbird** (*Malacoptila striata*) **E** \*  
**Spot-billed Toucanet** (*Selenidera maculirostris*)  
**Channel-billed Toucan** (*Ramphastos vitellinus*)  
**White-barred Piculet** (*Picumnus cirratus*) \*  
**Yellow-throated Woodpecker** (*Piculus flavigula*)  
**Yellow-eared Woodpecker** (*Veniliornis maculifrons*) **E**  
**Yellow-fronted Woodpecker** (*Melanerpes flavifrons*)  
**Blond-crested Woodpecker** (*Celeus flavescens*)  
**Plain-brown (Thrush-like or Plain-winged) Woodcreeper** (*Dendrocincla fuliginosa turdina*)  
**Olivaceous Woodcreeper** (*Sittasomus griseicapillus*)  
**White-throated Woodcreeper** (*Xiphocolaptes albicollis*)  
**Lesser Woodcreeper** (*Xiphorhynchus fuscus*)  
**Scaled Woodcreeper** (*Lepidocolaptes squamatus*) **E**  
**Wing-banded Hornero** (*Furnarius figulus*) **E**  
**Spix's Spinetail** (*Synallaxis spixi*)  
**Yellow-chinned Spinetail** (*Certhiaxis cinnamomeus*)  
**Rufous-fronted Thornbird** (*Phacellodomus rufifrons*)  
**Ochre-breasted Foliage-Gleaner** (*Philydor lichtensteini*)  
**Black-capped Foliage-Gleaner** (*Philydor atricapillus*)  
**White-eyed Foliage-Gleaner** (*Automolus leucophthalmus*) \*  
**Plain Xenops** (*Xenops minutus*)  
**Streaked Xenops** (*Xenops rutilans*)  
**Chestnut-backed Antshrike** (*Thamnophilus palliatus*) \*  
**Sooretama Slaty-Antshrike** (*Thamnophilus ambiguus*) **E** \*  
**Spot-breasted Antvireo** (*Dysithamnus stictothorax*) **beard only**  
**Star-throated Antwren** (*Myrmotherula gularis*) **E** \*  
**White-flanked Antwren** (*Myrmotherula axillaris luctuosa*) \*  
**Unicolored Antwren** (*Myrmotherula unicolor*) **E**  
**Scaled Antbird** (*Drymophila squamata*) **E**  
**White-shouldered Fire-Eye** (*Pyriglena leucoptera*) **beard only**  
**Rufous-capped Antthrush** (*Formicarius colma*)  
**Black-cheeked Gnateater** (*Conopophaga melanops*) **E** \*  
**Pin-tailed Manakin** (*Ilicura militaris*) **E** \*  
**White-bearded Manakin** (*Manacus manacus*)  
**Swallow-tailed (Blue) Manakin** (*Chiroxiphia caudata*) \*  
**Southern Antpipit** (*Corythopis delalandi*)  
**Sharpbill** (*Oxyruncus cristatus*) **beard only**  
**Shrike-like Cotinga (Elegant Mourner)** (*Laniisoma elegans*) \*  
**Green-backed Becard** (*Pachyramphus viridis*) \*  
**Chestnut-crowned Becard** (*Pachyramphus castaneus*)  
**Gray-capped Tyrannulet** (*Phyllomyias griseocapilla*) **E**  
**Greenish Elaenia** (*Myiopagis viridicata*) \*  
**Yellow-bellied Elaenia** (*Elaenia flavogaster*) \*  
**Yellow Tyrannulet** (*Capsiempis flaveola*)  
**Ochre-bellied Flycatcher** (*Mionectes oleagineus*)  
**Gray-hooded Flycatcher** (*Mionectes rufiventris*)  
**Sepia-caped Flycatcher** (*Leptopogon amaurocephalus*)  
**Eye-ringed Tody-Tyrant** (*Hemitriccus orbitatus*) **E**  
**Gray-headed (Yellow-lored) Tody-Flycatcher** (*Todirostrum poliocephalum*) **E**  
**Whiskered Flycatcher** (*Myiobius barbatus mastacalis*)  
**Euler's Flycatcher** (*Lathrotriccus euleri*)  
**Yellow-olive Flycatcher** (*Tolmomyias sulphurescens*)  
**White-throated Spadebill** (*Platyrrinchus mystaceus*)  
**Yellow-browed Tyrant** (*Satrapa icterophrys*)  
**Masked Water-Tyrant** (*Fluvicola nengeta*) \*  
**White-headed Marsh-Tyrant** (*Arundinicola leucocephala*) \*  
**Social Flycatcher** (*Myiozetetes similis*)

**Great Kiskadee** (*Pitangus sulphuratus*)  
**Boat-billed Flycatcher** (*Megarhynchus pitangua*)  
**Streaked Flycatcher** (*Myiodynastes maculatus*)  
**Tropical Kingbird** (*Tyrannus melancholicus*)  
**Grayish Mourner** (*Rhytipterna simplex*)  
**Short-crested Flycatcher** (*Myiarchus ferox*)  
**Tropical Parula** (*Parula pitiayumi*)  
**Rufous-browed Peppershrike** (*Cyclarhis gujanensis*)  
**Red-eyed Vireo** (*Vireo olivaceus*)  
**Lemon-chested Greenlet** (*Hylophilus thoracicus*) \*  
**Blue-and-white Swallow** (*Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*)  
**Gray-breasted Martin** (*Progne chalybea*)  
**White-thighed Swallow** (*Atticora tibialis*)  
**Southern Rough-winged Swallow** (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*)  
**Black-capped Donacobius** (*Donacobius atricapilla*)  
**Moustached Wren** (*Pheugopedius genibarbis*)  
**Long-billed Wren** (*Cantorchilus longirostris*) E  
**Yellow-legged Thrush** (*Turdus flavipes*)  
**White-necked Thrush** (*Turdus albicollis*)  
**Red-rumped Cacique** (*Cacicus haemorrhous*)  
**Chestnut-capped Blackbird** (*Chrysomus ruficapillus*)  
**Black-goggled Tanager** (*Trichothraupis melanops*)  
**Yellow-backed Tanager** (*Hemithraupis flavicollis*)  
**Brazilian Tanager** (*Ramphocelus bresilius*)  
**Sayaca Tanager** (*Thraupis sayaca*)  
**Azure-shouldered Tanager** (*Thraupis cyanopectera*) E  
**Palm Tanager** (*Thraupis palmarum*)  
**Flame-crested Tanager** (*Tachyphonus cristatus*)  
**Ruby-crowned Tanager** (*Tachyphonus coronatus*)  
**Swallow Tanager** (*Tersina viridis*)  
**Bananaquit** (*Coereba flaveola*)  
**Red-crowned Ant-Tanager** (*Habia rubica*)  
**Black-legged Dacnis** (*Dacnis nigripes*) E  
**Blue Dacnis** (*Dacnis cayana*) \*  
**Violaceous Euphonia** (*Euphonia violacea*)  
**Orange-bellied Euphonia** (*Euphonia xanthogaster*)  
**Chestnut-bellied Euphonia** (*Euphonia pectoralis*)  
**Chestnut-vented Conebill** (*Conirostrum speciosum*)  
**Saffron Finch** (*Sicalis flaveola*)  
**Curly-crested Jay** (*Cyanocorax cristatellus*)  
**White-bellied Seedeater** (*Sporophila leucopectera*)  
**Blue-black Grassquit** (*Volatinia jacarina*)  
**Uniform Finch** (*Haplospiza unicolor*)  
**Wedge-tailed Grass-Finch** (*Emberizoides herbicola*)  
**Grassland Sparrow** (*Ammodramus humeralis*)

Total 153 confirmed species for trip, of which 23 were 'lifers' for me...