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Wildlife Conservation Society Birds Of Brazil: The Atlantic Forest Of Southeast Brazil, Including São Paulo And Rio De Janeiro (WCS Birds Of Brazil Field Guides)





Synopsis

Brazil is the fifth largest country in the world and is one of the planet's richest places for bird diversity, especially when it comes to the number of endemic species. Brazil's Atlantic Forest region is one of the most dazzling of all. Immediately surrounding São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, this area of Brazil is also a relatively accessible area to birders from around the world. In the Birds of Brazil Field Guides, the Wildlife Conservation Society brings together a top international team to do justice to the incredible diversity of Brazilian birds. This second guide presents 927 bird species, 863 illustrated, that occur in just the southeastern Atlantic Forest biome (Mata Atlântica in Portuguese). Of these species, 140 are endemic and 105 near endemic to just this region; 83 of these are threatened. Modern and compact, this field guide provides illustrations of unparalleled quality, key field marks, and regional range maps to facilitate easy recognition of all species normally occurring in this vibrant and critically important area of Brazil.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Beautiful book in the same Wildlife Conservation Society series with the Birds of Brazil: Pantanal and Cerrado of Central Brazil. The series is published by the Cornell University Press. The authors are top notch and the illustrations are outstanding. The species range maps are next to the species description for ease of reference. English, Latin, and Portuguese names are provided and indexed. The main drawback for someone wanting to use this as a field guide is its size: 432 glossy pages, just a bit smaller than the large Sibley Guide to Birds. On the other hand, it is smaller than Ber van

Perlo's excellent and comprehensive Field Guide to the Birds of Brazil (Oxford University Press), and the illustrations are larger. The alternatives include Tomas Sigrist's 2 volume field guide (one volume with illustrations and the other with text), which is a good reference but less handy (it has text in both Portuguese and English, which takes additional space), and the Princeton University Press Illustrated Checklist volumes for South America, which divide the continent by region, which may work for you if you will be in just one region of this very large country. (Brazil is larger than the continental US and there are many different habitat regions.) Also a consideration, the Princeton guides are a handy size, but the range maps are at the back of the book, separated from the species entries and pictures. In addition, there are individual guides for SE Brazil, for example, a very nicely produced book by Honkala and Niiranen *A Birdwatching Guide to South-east Brazil*, which has photos of the species and extensive information on the best birding sites in the states of Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, Espirito Santo, and Sao Paulo (mainly in the Mato Atlantico) and what you might find there. In Brazil you can buy Develey and Endrigo's *Aves da Grande Sao Paulo* that has short species descriptions in Portuguese and covers Sao Paulo state, including Intervales. In short, there are now several excellent references for birders chasing the close to 1900 species in Brazil, but there is still a need for small field guides, or even an app of this series of books. I just purchased the Nature Guides Oxford app for iOS based on van Perlo's Field Guide to the Birds of Brazil. It cost \$14.99, which is very reasonable. Have not used the app much yet, but it has bird songs and photos in addition to the information in the Oxford field guide. One oddity of the app is that you can enlarge the photos only by spreading your fingers and holding--if you take your fingers off the screen the photo shrinks back to normal size. The enlarged photos are sharp, so you can see the ear marks of a hummingbird, for instance. Would be nice to have the option of double-tapping the photo for a static enlargement that reduces when you tap it again, a common app feature. Since my first birding trip to Brazil in 2009 the references have gotten quite a bit better and more diverse. I look forward to the remaining volumes of this 5 volume project.

great book, nice artwork and very good descriptions of birds and habitats in the Atlantic forests

An extraordinary book. Spectacular illustrations and clear, concise text. Very easy to use. A breakthrough book for Brazilian birding.

This was a gift and they loved it!

A marvellous book.

THE GOOD: This is the second volume in a planned five volume series of regional field guides that will, collectively, cover all of Brazil. It is a great solution to the dilemma existing for comprehensive single-country field guides with respect to the many species-rich South American countries: either they are too large and heavy for field use because they have to cover so many species, or they give abbreviated species accounts, often lack range maps, and use small illustrations with twenty or more species crammed together on a single page. With the regional guide approach, you can have the best of both worlds: guides that are light enough to carry in the field and which have fully informative species accounts and large, high-quality illustrations. This guide follows the same format, has the same high-quality text and illustrations, and large range maps, as the first guide in the series, covering the Pantanal and Cerrado. There is also a nice introductory section reviewing the habitats of the region, and highlighting conservation concerns. It is a little heavier since it covers 200 more species (927 in all), but still a nice weight for field use. Once the series is complete, these should be better than any of the existing field guides to the birds of Brazil, both in terms of portability and depth of treatment.

THE BAD: Nevertheless, there is some room for improvement. “First, the guides lack any quick index to the birds; all field guides become much more useful with such indices, and every field guide needs one. Serious birders create their own where they must; but that is a time-consuming task that should be the responsibility of field guide authors.” “Second, the species accounts are admirable in containing a lot of information by field guide standards. However, unlike other guides, there are no bold headings within the species accounts, e.g. habitat, distribution, behavior, voice, etc., that help the reader quickly locate the information he or she is looking for. Given the length of some of the accounts, this would have definitely been helpful.” “Third, illustrations of passerine plumages is unhelpfully sparse in places. Almost no juvenile passerine plumages are illustrated, and only male or female plumages are illustrated in some cases, even when the plumages are quite distinct. In other cases, only the head of the bird is illustrated in a distinct plumage. These limitations are a result of trying to economize by borrowing all the passerine illustrations from Ridgely & Tudor’s “Field Guide to the Songbirds of South America”. That book is similarly limited in terms of plumage illustrations. Hence, serious birders may want to supplement this guide with other books, e.g. the van Perlo guide, which at least has more male and female plumages illustrated.” “Finally, the guide mostly follows IOC nomenclature and taxonomy. SACC/AOU taxonomy is more widely followed among birders in the Western Hemisphere. Given the authors choice to use IOC, they should at least prominently display

alternative SACC names. Instead, if these are mentioned at all, they are buried at the very end of the textual description. ERRORS/OMISSIONS: Long-tufted Screech-Owl, which can be found in southeastern Brazil, e.g. at Intervalles State Park, is not covered in the guide. Festive Coquette is listed as a Brazilian endemic even though it ranges throughout much of western South America, including Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, etc.

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