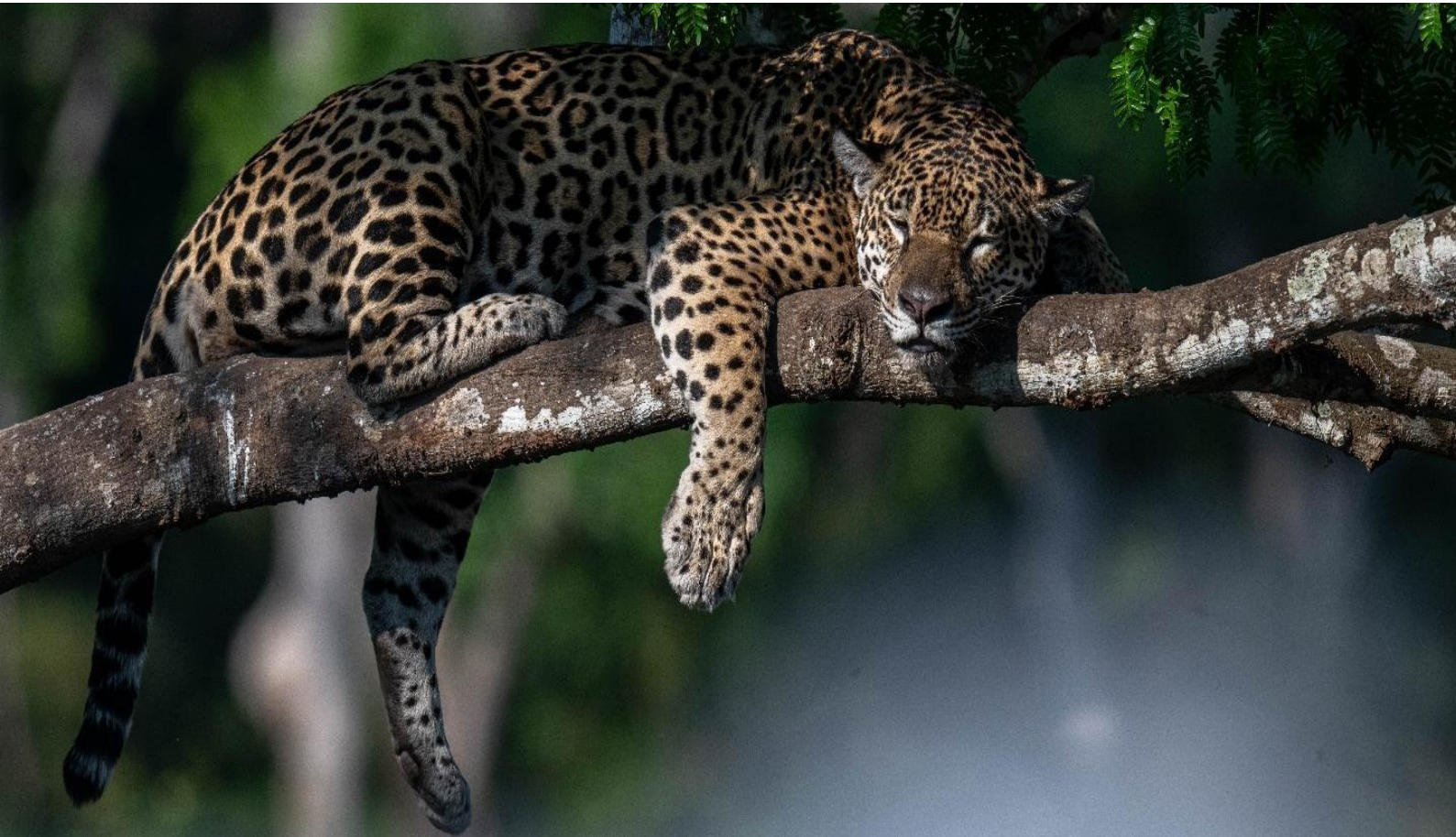


Natuurreis Brazilië

Reisverslag 6 oktober– 21 oktober 2025



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Mammal Watching Tour – Pantanal, Brazil 2025

Our journey began in Campo Grande on October 6th. Full of excitement, we made our first stop at the Biopark, the largest freshwater aquarium in the world. Among arapaimas, golden dorados, caimans, and even anacondas, we got our first real taste of the adventure ahead — the perfect place to start adjusting to the rhythm of the Pantanal wilderness.

We then traveled to Aquidauana, in the heart of the Pantanal, where we stayed at Pousada Aguapé. Almost as soon as we arrived, we were greeted by our first big sighting: a giant anteater — the first on the list of the famous “Big 5 of the Pantanal.” Personally, I prefer to call them the “Big 6,” because the elegant and elusive maned wolf truly deserves a spot among the giants.

The first few days at Aguapé were filled with wildlife. Capybaras along the riverbanks, six-banded armadillos crossing the trails, pampas deer moving gracefully through the fields, and a sky alive with colorful birds — including the iconic hyacinth and blue-and-yellow macaws. But our goal was to find a more secretive species. Late one golden afternoon, there it was — a southern tamandua walking by the forest edge. It didn’t stay for long, but the sight was enough to leave us thrilled. A wonderful start to the expedition!



During our next safaris, we were rewarded again: two more sightings of the southern tamandua and a female giant anteater carrying her baby — a heartwarming scene and a perfect way to close that first chapter of the journey.

After a night in Campo Grande to recharge, we went out for Japanese food. It might sound unusual for the middle of Mato Grosso do Sul, but it's actually part of the local culture! The traditional sobá, a Japanese noodle soup with meat, egg, and scallions, is a culinary symbol of the city — a reminder of its rich cultural blend.

The next morning, we set off for the Emas National Park, where the states of Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul, and Goiás meet. As soon as we arrived, we jumped into our first night safari — and to our surprise, we spotted a maned wolf right away! A quick glimpse, but an unforgettable one.



The following day began with another southern tamandua — a rare sight in that area — showing its defensive posture with open arms and extended claws. Just a few meters ahead, a lowland tapir and her calf tried to hide among the short trees of the cerrado. The landscape there was distinct: open savanna, low vegetation, and a unique set of species. A brand-new world to explore.

That night, nature gave us one of its most magical shows: the bioluminescence of termite mounds. Thousands of glowing green dots lit up the cerrado floor, creating a surreal and enchanting scene. We stood in silence, mesmerized by the sight. And on the way back to the lodge — another maned wolf appeared, as if to bid us goodnight.



On our last day in the park, the scenery stretched endlessly — vast, pristine cerrado as far as the eye could see. Few mammals showed up during the day, but the night had surprises in store. We came across a recently burned area, about 100 square meters of scorched earth. From the ashes emerged two tapirs with a calf, followed by a maned wolf crossing the dark field. Moments later, a rumbling sound caught our attention — a large herd of white-lipped peccaries. They clacked their jaws and grunted loudly, announcing their numbers — around sixty individuals! Before long, the wolf reappeared, and though we tried to follow him in the safari truck, he vanished into the brush. On the way back, a great potoo perched quietly in the dark — a hauntingly beautiful ending to an intense day.

The next morning, we hit the road again, heading to Mato Grosso, our third Brazilian state. We spent the night in Cuiabá, where we celebrated with a classic Brazilian barbecue rodízio, with endless cuts of meat and a buffet bursting with flavors.

Early the next day, we set out along the legendary Transpantaneira Highway, a 140 km wildlife corridor cutting through the Pantanal's heart. Our destination: the Encontro das Águas State Park, along the São Lourenço River. On our very first boat safari, we encountered a pair of jaguars, and — incredibly — we witnessed them mating, a truly rare moment in the wild. What a way to start! By then, we had already seen four of the Big 6.

Over the next two days, we explored the park from sunrise, navigating the river channels in search of wildlife. We spotted twelve different jaguars and three families of giant otters, one of them playfully interacting — a beautiful display of social behavior and family bonding.

On our final morning on the river, we met the legendary Ousado, the world's most famous jaguar. Known for his unique hunting strategy, he dives underwater to ambush caimans — and we got to see him in action. Soon after, we found another giant otter family before heading back along the Transpantaneira to Pousada Aymara, our last stop.

On the way, we spotted the marsh deer, completing our Big 6 checklist — mission accomplished! We still had time for a few more hikes and night safaris, where we caught a brief but exciting glimpse of an ocelot, as well as coatis, agoutis, tapetis, and capybaras. Nature never stops surprising those who pay attention.



After 15 unforgettable days, we had crossed a mosaic of landscapes — from flooded wetlands to open savannas — observing an incredible diversity of mammals and 254 bird species. It was a true immersion into the wild heart of Brazil, where every sunrise brought new colors, sounds, and emotions.



Mammal Species Observed

- Agouti
- Brazilian Rabbit
- Capuchin Monkey
- Coati
- Collared Peccary
- Crab-eating Fox
- Crab-eating Raccoon
- Giant Anteater
- Giant Otter
- Gray Brouket Deer
- Guinea Pig
- Howler Monkey
- Jaguar
- Lowland Tapir
- Maned Wolf
- Marsh Deer
- Neotropical Otter
- Nine-banded Armadillo
- Ocelot
- Pampas Cat
- Pampas Deer
- Red Brouket Deer
- Six-banded Armadillo
- Southern Tamandua
- Tayra
- White-lipped Peccary
- **Total: 254 bird species recorded!**

