



Field Guides Tour Report

Rio Aripuana Mammals 2019 (private group)

Oct 3, 2019 to Oct 17, 2019

Micah Riegner



The blue-green water of the Aripuana seen from Boca do Juma. Photo by Micah Riegner.

In the late 1990s, Dutch primatologist Marc van Roosmalen received a tiny monkey in a milk container at his doorstep in Manaus, Brazil. It was clearly a marmoset, but which one? He immediately realized it belonged to a new species, but didn't know where it came from—the people who brought it to him just said it was up the Rio Madeira. This launched a search that lasted several years until van Roosmalen reached the turquoise waters of the Aripuana. Upon reaching the community of Nova Olinda upriver, he interviewed the local people, and sure enough the Dwarf Marmoset was in their backyard!

So, this is where we started the tour, at Nova Olinda, the type locality of the Dwarf Marmoset. Actually, we started in Manaus and took the speed boat to reach the Aripuana, but we'll skip that part. We walked the trail below the community and within a few minutes heard the high-pitched screams of the marmoset. It took a little while to actually locate them in the trees, since they're not much larger than a rat, but eventually we found them huddled on the side of the trunk. Just awesome! In the afternoon we continued upstream to an area called Prainha where we staged for an afternoon walk on a dirt road. Here we saw Bat Falcon, Red-throated Caracaras and a Linnaeus' Sipo (snake) poking its head out of grass. At night we went back onto the road and saw Bare-tailed Woolly Opossums along the forest edge and a spectacular Spectacled Owl sitting silently above the road.

The next day we walked the road in the early morning and continued up as far as we could until we hit a sand bar that marked the upper limit of our travels on the Tumbira. We canoed up a creek nearby and saw a couple Agami Herons and all 5 American Kingfishers. That night we netted bats and caught Chestnut Sac-winged Bat, a small, chocolate-colored bat that roosts on fallen logs. Fiona saw them roosting and set up a net to catch them.

Our canoe ride to Boca do Juma the next day brought us a Harpy Eagle, the most iconic bird of the neotropics. When we first saw it, an Osprey flushed it from its perch, but we were able to relocate it and get it in the scope. Just fabulous! We continued on to Boca do Juma and spent the day there looking for primates and scanning the creek for any sign of manatees. The local people there said they had seen them there recently. In the afternoon we walked some of the trails around the fishing camp and saw a few Dark-winged Trumpeters, Golden-backed Squirrel Monkeys and a few capuchins.

The next few days we spent around the community of Nova Olinda seeking the remaining primates of the Aripuana. First, we spent a morning on a logging road across from the community where we saw Ashy-gray Titis. These showed much more rufous than the illustrations in the field guide--perhaps an undescribed subspecies. Our final day at Nova Olinda we saw both Prince Bernhard's and Manicore Marmoset, both of them well. An added bonus was the troop of Red-nosed Sakis that zoomed by through the canopy.

The next leg of the trip we worked the great Rio Madeira, stomping grounds of Johann Natterer, one of the great explorers of the Amazon Basin. He spent 18 years collecting specimens and sending them back to Europe to be described by museum scientists. Many of the species he sent ended up being new to science. A few years ago, on another great rivers tour, we stopped at the community of Matamata along the Madeira and asked about birding the sustainable development reserve behind the community. They denied us access because we didn't have the paperwork from Manaus. This year, I managed to get the permits, so they let us in--our goal to see Red-bellied Tamarin. The people at the community said they see it on a regular basis. They

call it “macaco bilhete” because it looks like it has a little white ticket on its mouth. We spent the morning searching, but unfortunately didn’t make contact with the monkeys. We saw a troop run by, but they didn’t stick around for decent views.

We continued on down the Madeira and spent a day around Igarape Luci, where we saw the Baptista Titi, a very localized species found only between the Parana Uruaria, Madeira and Rio Amazonas. We also had great looks at the Gold-and-white Marmosets. Here they seem to be a lot tamer than the ones on the Aripuana. After a mid-morning breakfast and bat show-and-tell, we walked the road where we saw a fabulous ant swarm with Black-spotted Bare-eyes, Common Scale-backed Antbird and Plain-brown Woodcreeper. These birds are often very tough to see, but the swarm being close to the road allowed us to have great views.

The final days of the trip we worked the mighty Rio Amazonas. We spent a morning at Miracaueira on the north bank. We saw Brown Capuchins, heard the howlers and saw lots of birds, including Varzea Piculet, Horned Screamers and Plain Softtails. We also stopped at Ilha Grande, a river island in the Rio Amazonas, and saw the Giant Tree Rats. They’re about the size of a rabbit and have the face of an otter! Before returning to Manaus we spent a day on the Rio Negro. We had a productive night walk and saw several Red-nosed Tree Rats. In fact, Jon squeaked, and one came running down to our feet! I’ve never seen a response to playback from a mammal like that. Before wrapping up the trip, we visited the dolphin platform at Ariau had a remarkable time with these incredible animals. I want to thank Fiona Reid, and Marcelo Marcos, Jon Hall, the boat crew and all of you for making this trip possible. Happy mammal-watching!

Micah

P.S. I’ve included only the highlight birds we saw on the tour and have left out some of the Tyrannulets and Greenlets.

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

Anhimidae (Screamers)

HORNED SCREAMER (*Anhima cornuta*) – We saw a couple out at Miracaueira along the main channel of the Amazon.

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*)

MUSCOVY DUCK (*Cairina moschata*)

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

NACUNDA NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles nacunda*) – It was awesome to see a flock of these swoop in at Nova Olinda. These migrants probably got pushed up from the south.

COMMON PAURAUQUE (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) – We saw a chick on a nest along the Prainha Road.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

REDDISH HERMIT (*Phaethornis ruber*) – Martin spotted this with his heat scope along the Prainha Road.

Opisthocomidae (Hoatzin)

HOATZIN (*Opisthocomus hoazin*) – We saw quite a few along the Rio Aripuana.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

GRAY-COWLED WOOD-RAIL (*Aramides cajaneus*) – A few of us saw this on our day on the Rio Negro.

Heliornithidae (Finfoots)

SUNGREBE (*Heliornis fulica*)

Psophiidae (Trumpeters)

DARK-WINGED TRUMPETER (*Psophia viridis*) – We had outstanding views at the trail behind Boca do Juma. This was the first time I’ve had this species on an Aripuana tour.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER (*Pluvialis dominica*) – It was great to document this long-distance migrant on the Aripuana on its way to southern South America.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*) – These were also on the shore of the Aripuana.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

YELLOW-BILLED TERN (*Sternula superciliaris*) – Common throughout the tour. These were the smaller of the two terns we saw.

LARGE-BILLED TERN (*Phaetusa simplex*) – Also common throughout the tour.

Eurypygidae (Sunbittern)

SUNBITTERN (*Eurypyga helias*) – We had outstanding views of one along the Rio Negro our final day of the tour.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

COCOI HERON (*Ardea cocoi*) – The Great Blue Heron equivalent in South America. These were fairly common throughout the tour.

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*)

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*)

STRIATED HERON (*Butorides striata*)

AGAMI HERON (*Agamia agami*) – We saw a couple along the Igarape near Prainha. These elegant herons are much harder to see during high water when they hide out in the vegetation.

CAPPED HERON (*Pilherodius pileatus*) – There were a few seen along the Aripuana.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

GREEN IBIS (*Mesembrinibis cayennensis*)

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

KING VULTURE (*Sarcorampus papa*) – We had stellar views of a couple along the Prainha Road.

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*)

LESSER YELLOW-HEADED VULTURE (*Cathartes burrovianus*)

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*)

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

GRAY-HEADED KITE (*Leptodon cayanensis*) – It was neat to see one perched on a snag on our way to Boca do Juma.

HARPY EAGLE (*Harpia harpyja*) – Woohoo! I know this was a mammal trip, but come on, it's a Harpy! We saw it along the Rio Aripuana on our way up to Boca do Juma. It was initially mobbed by an osprey, but it stuck around long enough for us to get it in the scope from atop a bluff.

SAVANNA HAWK (*Buteogallus meridionalis*)

GREAT BLACK HAWK (*Buteogallus urubitinga*)

ROADSIDE HAWK (*Rupornis magnirostris*)

WHITE-BROWED HAWK (*Leucopternis kuhli*) – We saw this southern Amazon endemic along the Prainha Road.

Strigidae (Owls)

SPECTACLED OWL (*Pulsatrix perspicillata*) – We had outstanding looks at one along the Prainha Road.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

PAVONINE QUETZAL (*Pharomachrus pavoninus*) – We saw one of these rare quetzals of Amazonian lowlands behind Nova Olinda.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

RINGED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle torquata*)

AMAZON KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle amazona*)

AMERICAN PYGMY KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle aenea*) – Seen along the creek near Prainha.

GREEN KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle americana*) – Common throughout the tour.

GREEN-AND-RUFIOUS KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle inda*) – We had outstanding views of this difficult kingfisher the Prainha creek.

Galbulidae (Jacamars)

GREEN-TAILED JACAMAR (*Galbula galbula*) – The jacamar we saw at Miracaeira.

Capitonidae (New World Barbets)

BLACK-GIRDLED BARBET (*Capito dayi*) – A few of us saw one along the road on the right bank Aripuana across from Nova Olinda.

BROWN-CHESTED BARBET (*Capito brunneipectus*) – Heard along the road near Igarape Luci. [*]

GILDED BARBET (*Capito auratus*) – We had outstanding views of this barbet behind Matamata.

Ramphastidae (Toucans)

CHESTNUT-EARED ARACARI (*Pteroglossus castanotis*)

GOLDEN-COLLARED TOUCANET (*Selenidera reinwardtii*) – This was also behind Matamata. This bird is only found west of the Rio Madeira.

WHITE-THROATED TOUCAN (*Ramphastos tucanus*) – Common throughout the tour.

CHANNEL-BILLED TOUCAN (*Ramphastos vitellinus*)

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

VARZEA PICULET (*Picumnus varzeae*) – These put on a show at Miracaeira. This bird has a tiny world distribution in the Central Amazon.

CRIMSON-CRESTED WOODPECKER (*Campephilus melanoleucos*)

LINEATED WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus lineatus*)

RINGED WOODPECKER (*Celeus torquatus*)

SPOT-BREASTED WOODPECKER (*Colaptes punctigula*) – Fairly common at Miracaeira.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

BLACK CARACARA (*Daptrius ater*)

RED-THROATED CARACARA (*Ibycter americanus*) – We saw these well along the Prainha Road.

YELLOW-HEADED CARACARA (*Milvago chimachima*)

BAT FALCON (*Falco ruficularis*) – Seen along the Prainha Road.

Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots)

BLUE-HEADED PARROT (*Pionus menstruus*)

SHORT-TAILED PARROT (*Graydidascalus brachyurus*)

FESTIVE PARROT (*Amazona festiva*)

KAWALL'S PARROT (*Amazona kawalli*) – The big amazonas parrots we saw on the Prainha Road.

BLUE-AND-YELLOW MACAW (*Ara ararauna*)

SCARLET MACAW (*Ara macao*)

RED-AND-GREEN MACAW (*Ara chloropterus*)

WHITE-EYED PARAKEET (*Psittacara leucophthalmus*)

Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)

BLACKISH ANT BIRD (*Cercomacroides nigrescens*) – We saw these behind Nova Olinda.

COMMON SCALE-BACKED ANT BIRD (*Willisornis poecilinotus*) – We saw both male and female at the ant swarm.

BLACK-SPOTTED BARE-EYE (*Phlegopsis nigromaculata*) – Woohoo! One of my favorite birds in the Amazon. We saw several at the ant swarm near Nova Olinda.

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)

PLAIN-BROWN WOODCREEPER (*Dendrocincla fuliginosa*) – This one was also attending the ant swarm.

STRAIGHT-BILLED WOODCREEPER (*Dendroplex picus*) – We saw one at the ant swarm. I'm not sure if it was actually using the ants or it just happened to be there at the time of the swarm.

ZIMMER'S WOODCREEPER (*Dendroplex kienerii*) – One of the birds I studied for my thesis. We saw a couple along the varzea trail at Nova Olinda.

RUFOUS-RUMPED FOLIAGE-GLEANER (*Philydor erythrocerum*)

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

GREAT KISKADEE (*Pitangus sulphuratus*)

RUSTY-MARGINED FLYCATCHER (*Myiozetetes cayanensis*)

YELLOW-THROATED FLYCATCHER (*Conopias parvus*) – Seen at the Prainha Road.

ISLAND STREAKED FLYCATCHER (*Myiodynastes [maculatus] sp. nov.*) – This bird will be split from the terra firme Streaked Flycatcher. It is much paler, with thinner streaks and it only occurs in white-water habitats.

Cotingidae (Cotingas)

SCREAMING PIHA (*Lipaugus vociferans*) – The voice of the Amazon Basin! We heard them most places we went and saw a few along the trail behind Nova Olinda.

Pipridae (Manakins)

WHITE-BEARDED MANAKIN (*Manacus manacus*)

Poliophtilidae (Gnatcatchers)

TROPICAL GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila plumbea*) – Seen at Miracaueira.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

LAWRENCE'S THRUSH (*Turdus lawrencii*) – We heard this song mimic along the Prainha Road. [*]

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

CHESTNUT-VENTED CONEBILL (*Conirostrum speciosum*)

MAMMALS

Opossums

BARE-TAILED WOOLLY OPOSSUM (*Caluromis philander*) – We saw a couple scampering in the canopy along the Prainha Road.

COMMON OPOSSUM (*Didelphis marsupialis*) – Seen along the Prainha Road and the Rio Madeirinha.

Sloths

BROWN-THROATED THREE-TOED SLOTH (*Bradypus variegatus*) – The most common sloth of the trip.

SOUTHERN TWO-TOED SLOTH (*Choloepus didactylus*) – We had great views of a few at the Hotel Tropical.

Bats

NORTHERN GHOST BAT (*Diclidurus albus*) – We saw one fly over the Rio Madeirinha.

WHITE-WINGED DOGLIKE BAT (*Peropteryx leucoptera*) – Caught in the early morning along the Igarape Luci near Nova Olinda along the Rio Madeira. Two others seen in a fallen hollow tree along the creek.

GREATER DOG-LIKE BAT (*Peropteryx kappleri*) – These were roosting in a hollow tree off the Prainha Road.

PROBOSCIS BAT (*Rhynchonycteris naso*) – Common throughout the tour, often on the underside of trunks near the water.

GREATER WHITE-LINED BAT (*Saccopteryx bilineata*) – We saw one on a tree behind Matamata on the Rio Madeira.

FROSTED WHITE-LINED BAT (*Saccopteryx canescens*) – Fiona spotted these on Ilha Grande. They were roosting on a big trunk.

CHESTNUT SAC-WINGED BAT (*Cormura brevirostris*) – Fiona and Marcelo netted one off the Prainha Creek. They were roosting on the underside of a fallen tree, a typical behavior of this species.

LESSER FISHING BAT (*Noctilio albiventris*) – We saw these a few times on the Aripuana.

GREATER FISHING BAT (*Noctilio leprinus*) – Seen a few times emerging at dusk. We caught one at Igarape Luci along the Rio Madeira. What an awesome bat!

STRIPED HAIRY-NOSED BAT (*Mimon crenulatum*) – We caught this gorgeous bat near Nova Olinda on the Rio Madeira. They are understory foliage gleaners. See Fiona's photo.

WHITE-BELLIED BIG-EARED BAT (*Micronycteris minuta*) – We caught this one near Novo Aripuana.

GREATER SPEAR-NOSED BAT (*Phyllostomus hastatus*) – Caught in a high net at the same site we caught the Striped Hairy-nosed Bat.

PALE SPEAR-NOSED BAT (*Phyllostomus discolor*) – Caught several times on the tour.

COMMISSARIS'S LONG-TONGUED BAT (*Glossophaga commissarisi*)

SILKY SHORT-TAILED BAT (*Carollia brevicauda*) – One of the most common bats in secondary forest.

SEBA'S SHORT-TAILED BAT (*Carollia perspicillata*)
BENKEITH'S SHORT-TAILED BAT (*Carollia benkeithi*)
FISCHER'S LITTLE FRUIT BAT (*Rhinophylla fischeriae*) – We caught one along Igarape Luci.
DWARF LITTLE FRUIT BAT (*Rhinophylla pumilio*) – They don't get much smaller than that! We caught one along Igarape Luci.
DWARF FRUIT-EATING BAT (*Artibeus gnomus*) – Caught along the Rio Madeira below Nova Olinda.
DARK FRUIT-EATING BAT (*Artibeus obscurus*) – What a handsome bat! We caught this species a couple times on the trip.
PLAIN FRUIT-EATING BAT (*Artibeus planirostris*) – Caught several times along the Rio Madeira.
SILVER FRUIT-EATING BAT (*Artibeus glaucus*) – Caught at Igarape Luci.
GREAT FRUIT-EATING BAT (*Artibeus lituratus*)
COMMON TENT-MAKING BAT (*Uroderma bilobatum*) – We saw these in the palm tent on the trail behind Nova Olinda.
BROWN TENT-MAKING BAT (*Uroderma magnirostrum*) – We caught this one near Novo Aripuana.
LITTLE YELLOW-EARED BAT (*Vampyressa pusilla*) – Fiona spotted this adorable bat under a Philodendron tent behind Matamata.
SILVER-TIPPED MYOTIS (*Myotis albescens*) – We caught this tiny little bat at Igarape Luci on the Rio Madeira.
CINNAMON DOG-FACED BAT (*Cynomops abrasus*) – These were in the building at Matamata. This species remains poorly known.

Primates

RED-NOSED BEARDED SAKI (*Chiropotes albinasus*) – We had some brief looks at these behind Nova Olinda on the Rio Aripuana.
GOLDEN-BACKED SQUIRREL MONKEY (*Saimiri ustus*) – Seen a couple times throughout the trip.
BROWN CAPUCHIN MONKEY (*Cebus apella*)
GUIANAN RED HOWLER MONKEY (*Alouatta macconnelli*) – We heard these at Miracaueira. [*]
COMMON WOOLLY MONKEY (*Legothrix cana*) – Seen briefly on the Prainha road.
PRINCE BERNHARD'S TITI (*Callicebus bernhardi*) – After hearing them several times we finally saw them behind Nova Olinda. This species was described fairly recently.
ASHY TITI (*Callicebus cinerascens*) – These took some effort but we managed some decent views on the right bank Aripuana across from Nova Olinda.
BAPTISTA TITI (*Callicebus baptista*) – We had outstanding looks at these along Igarape Luci on the Rio Madeira. This species has a very limited distribution wedged between the Parana Uraria, the Rio Madeira and Rio Amazonas.
DWARF MARMOSET (*Callibella humilis*) – One of the highlights of the trip! We had these our first morning at Nova Olinda, the type locality! There are few other people who can say they've seen Dwarf Marmoset.
MANICORE MARMOSET (*Mico manicorensis*) – These also took some effort but we finally had some great views at Nova Olinda. I played the recording and the whole troop came running in above us!
GOLD-AND-WHITE MARMOSET (*Mico chrysoleuca*) – Seen several times throughout the tour. Our best views were along the Igarape Luci
PIED TAMARIN (*Saguinus bicolor*) – We had outstanding looks at the ones at the Hotel Tropical our first afternoon in Manaus.
BLACK-HEADED NIGHT MONKEY (*Aotus nigriceps*) [*]

Rodentia

BLACK AGOUTI (*Dasyprocta fuliginosa*) – We saw one out on the soccer field at Nova Olinda. When I first glanced it, I assumed it was a house cat, but then realized it was an Agouti, a pleasant realization!
PREHENSILE-TAILED PORCUPINE (*Coendou prehensilis*) – Martin found this with his heat scope behind Matamata.
GIANT TREE RAT (*Toromys grandis*) – One of the cool, cool rats of the Amazon. We saw these at Ilha Grande on the Amazonas.
BRAZILIAN SPINY TREE RAT (*Makalata didelphoides*) – Also known as Red-nosed Tree Rat. We had an outstanding experience with one on our night walk along the Rio Negro. Jon squeaked and it came running down to the ground straight at us! I've never seen a reaction from a rat like that.
NEOTROPICAL PYGMY SQUIRREL (*Sciurillus pusillus*) – Cheryl saw one on the right bank Aripuana across from Nova Olinda.

Cetacea

PINK RIVER DOLPHIN OR BOTO (*Inia geoffrensis*) – Common throughout the tour. We saw them extremely well at the dolphin platform at Ariau.
GRAY RIVER DOLPHIN OR TUCUXI (*Sotalia fluviatilis*) – These were also common throughout the tour. We saw them leaping out of the water along the Rio Madeirinha.

HERPS

GREEN IGUANA (*Iguana iguana*)
AMAZON LAVA LIZARD (*Trepidurus torquatus*) – These were the lizards at the Hotel Tropical.
AMAZON PYGMY GECKO (*Pseudogonatodes guianensis*) – The smallest vertebrate in Amazonia! We encountered these fairly regularly throughout the tour.
TROPIDURINE IGUANID LIZARD (*Uranoscodon superciliosus*) – Also known as "Diving Lizards." We saw one on Ilha Grande on the Rio Amazonas.
AMAZON TREE BOA (*Corallus hortulanus*) – Fiona caught a nice orange individual long the Prainha Road.
ROYAL GROUND SNAKE (*Erythrolamprus reginae*) – We saw one sitting motionless on the Prainha Road. Gorgeous snake.
LINNAEUS' SIPO (*Chironius exoletus*) – It was neat seeing this one at the edge of the Prainha Road, not once but twice!
CANE TOAD (*Rhinella marina*)
SOUTH AMERICAN COMMON TOAD (*Rhinella margaritifera*)
AMAZONIAN HORNED FROG (*Ceratophrys cornuta*) – Fiona caught one while she was out bat netting on the first evening of the tour! After countless nights spent in Amazonia this was the first time that either of us have seen this frog!
GLADIATOR FROG (*Hypsiboas boans*) – We saw these on the Aripuana and our final night on the Rio Negro.

Other Creatures of Interest

IGAPO PLANT HOPPER (Fulgorid sp.) – We saw this strange insect in the floodplain forest behind Matamata.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 80 bird taxa and 53 mammal taxa