



THE AMAZON OF BRAZIL

A Journey to the Flooded Forests of Mamiraua Reserve

12 Days from May 19 – 30, 2023

Amazon! The word itself evokes images of adventure, giant rivers and vast forests dripping with moisture and life. The rainforests of the Amazon Basin are the largest on earth covering an astounding 2.5 million square miles in nine countries – Brazil, French Guiana, Surinam, Guyana, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia. Nearly half of the Amazon rainforest occurs in Brazil. The Amazon is home to 20% of the world’s bird species, 20% of the world’s plant species, 10% of its mammal species and between 2000 and 3000 fish species; making this



incredible swath of forest the most biologically diverse ecosystem in the world. EcoQuest Travel is proud partner with the Friends of the North Carolina Maritime Museum, Beaufort on an adventure that will take us to the heart of the Brazilian Amazon and a very special place called Mamiraua Reserve. Mamiraua was the first sustainable development reserve in Brazil which combines nature conservation, scientific research, and ecotourism with improved opportunities for local communities. It also protects Brazil’s last large area of varzea and offers some of the best wildlife viewing in Amazonia. Each year the rains swell the mighty Amazon River, and its tributaries, beyond their banks and out into the forest – varzea is the name of the forests that are seasonally flooded with sediment-rich “white-water” as opposed to igapos which are forests flooded with nutrient poor “black-waters”. We are traveling to Mamiraua in May to take advantage of the floods at their highest. When the water level is at its highest it forces the animals of the forest into the treetops and denizens of the

river into the forest. Canoeing through the treetops will bring us spectacularly close to wildlife. The variety of birds is mindboggling and since we will be in the canopy most species should be at, or near, eyelevel. It is also a great time to look for mammals as the water limits where they can go. Sloths are easy to see as are several species primates including the rare red-faced White Uakari Monkey. Pink River Dolphins swim through the forest in search of fish and caiman bask on sunlit branches. Even the lord of the Amazon, the mighty Jaguar, takes refuge in the trees during this time of year. Mamiraua is truly a magical place especially during this time of the year! EcoQuest Travel and the Friends of the North Carolina Maritime Museum, Beaufort proudly invite you to join us as we explore the extraordinary heart of the Amazon.

ITINERARY

Day 1 – Friday, May 19: Home City to US Gateway and on to Manaus, Brazil

Our adventure begins today as we depart from our home cities to our US gateway city – likely Miami. Once in our gateway city we will transfer to our late afternoon flight to Manaus, Brazil. Please make sure that you arrive at your home airport no later than two hours prior to your scheduled departure time. Once you arrive at our gateway city please go directly to our departure gate for Manaus and Dave Davenport and JoAnne Powell will be there to meet you. Once we arrive in Manaus we will clear immigration and customs before transferring to our overnight accommodations at the Hotel Saint Paul.

Day 2 – Saturday, May 20: Manaus: Botanical Garden’s Canopy Tower & Teatro Amazonas

Today we will arise before dawn so we can spend the early morning hours in the treetops among the birds. Manaus has an incredible botanical garden tucked into a fantastic piece of Amazon rainforest. The gardens themselves attract many birds and other wildlife, but the real draw is the tower which allows access to the canopy and the many species found there. It is magical to sit among the dawn-chorus and watch the dizzying array of colorful birds begin their daily activities as the sun rises over the Amazon. We could see Black-faced Hawk, Caica and Dusky Parrots, Paradise Jacamar, Green and Black-necked Aracaris, Channel-billed and White-throated Toucans and many species of woodpeckers, flycatchers and tanagers. With luck we could spot a



Pompadour Cotinga glistening like a purple jewel atop its favorite perch. Once out of the trees we could see Great Tinamou, other understory birds and we will make a special effort to see a very rare primate – the Pied Bare-faced Tamarin. These small marmosets are endemic to the area near Manaus and are endangered, but despite this we have a great chance to find them.

After a morning at the botanical garden we will return to Manaus for Brazilian Barbeque lunch. After lunch we will tour the famous Teatro Amazonas. This neoclassical designed opera house

was opened in the late-1800s during the height of the rubber boom. After our visit to the opera house we will return to the Hotel Saint Paul for a bit of downtime before dinner. (B,L,D)



Day 3 – Sunday, May 21: Manaus and The Meeting of the Waters

This morning, after breakfast, we will depart on our full day boat cruise to see the Meeting of the Waters. Just downriver from Manaus the nutrient-poor “black” waters of the Rio Negro and the silt-laden “white” waters of the Rio Solimoes come together to form the Amazon. Because of differences in temperature, water density and speed the waters of these two great rivers don’t immediately mix and instead flow side by side for several miles before finally blending together. This phenomenon is easily observed from our boat. During the remainder of the day we will look for wildlife among the many islands and channels. We will have lunch at Januari Floating Restaurant which also has a boardwalk through the forest. Once we are back in Manaus we will transfer back to the Hotel Saint Paul for dinner and overnight. (B,L,D)

Day 4 – Monday, May 22: Fly to Tefe and boat to Mamiraua

After breakfast we will transfer to the Manaus airport for our flight to Tefe. Our flight will take us west along the Rio Solimoes (Amazon) and the view out the windows of the unbroken canopy stretching as far as you can see is incredible. Once we arrive in Tefe we will transfer to our boats for the journey to Mamiraua Reserve and our accommodations at Uakari Floating Lodge. Uakari Lodge is an award-winning, community-operated lodge that floats up and down with the water levels. This unique lodge will be our home for the next seven days as we explore the Mamiraua Reserve in search of wildlife. The staff is very friendly, the food is great and the rooms are clean and comfortable. The lodge has a central floating building that contains the kitchen and dining areas, a small observation deck, a bar, a library and a video room. Our accommodations are located in separate floating bungalows which are connected to the main lodge with floating boardwalks. The energy provided is solar generated and the lodge works hard to be as green and sustainable as possible. (B,L,D)



Days 5 – 10, Tuesday - Sunday, May 23 – 28: The Flooded Forests of Mamiraua Reserve

We will have six full days to explore the flooded forests of Mamiraua Reserve. Mamiraua



Sustainable Development Reserve is a state protected area that covers an area of 1.24 million hectares between the Solimões, Japurá and Auri-Paraná rivers. It's the biggest protected flooded forest in the world. Only 4% of Brazilian Amazon consists of freshwater swamp forest and Mamirauá Reserve plays an important role to protect this ecosystem. Every year the reserve goes through high and low water levels. During the flood the waters can crest between 33 and 40 feet above non-flood levels – which is why we will be able to canoe through the treetops!

This cycle of flooding, combined with the geology and geography of the place, gives Mamirauá high levels of endemism and a chance to observe unique species. One of the most emblematic species found in Mamiraua is the White Uakari Monkey – this species gives our lodge its name.

This monkey, with dense white fur and a completely bald face and head adorned with scarlet skin, is found only in Mamiraua Reserve and we will work hard to see this rare and spectacular primate. There are other primates as well including another endemic species – the Black Squirrel Monkey. The dawn chorus from Red Howler Monkeys may wake us up and we will also be on the lookout for Black Spider Monkey, Brown Capuchin and Common Squirrel Monkey. Tamandua (or Lesser Anteater), Coati, Amazonian Red Squirrels and Brown-throated Three-toed Sloths are commonly seen in the trees. Both Pink River Dolphins (Boto) and Gray River Dolphins (Tucuxi) are regularly seen in rivers, lakes and even swimming through the flooded forest in search of fish. Mamiraua is one of the last strongholds for Amazonian Manatees and if we are lucky we might spot one. We also may see Capybara, Fishing Bats and with extraordinary luck an Ocelot! Jaguars are certainly present, but are phantoms even in the high water season when they are “easier” to see.

The birdlife in Mamiraua is fantastic with over 400 species recorded. The floods will bring us closer to the birds as we canoe through or just below the canopy. The floods also bring many trees into fruit which attract many bird and fish species – yes, I said fish – there are fish in the Amazon that eat fruit and are important seed dispersers! The very rare Wattled Curassow is sometimes found eating the fruit as are the more common Scarlet Macaws, White-throated Toucans, Festive and Short-tailed Parrots and Scarlet-crowned Barbets. Clumsy, prehistoric-looking Hoatzins flop around



in the vegetation and waterbirds like Green Ibis, Wattled Jacanas, Rufescent Tiger-Herons, Agami Herons and Boat-billed Herons stalk the overhanging tree branches in search of a meal.

Black-collared Hawks, Osprey and a host of kingfisher species dive for fish. Horned Screamers cry from the treetops and Long-billed Woodcreepers and Cream-colored Woodpeckers search for insects on the tree trunks. If we are incredibly lucky we could see a Harpy Eagle, but just like the



Jaguar this apex predator is very difficult to observe.

Reptiles and Amphibians are generally more difficult to see during the floods, but rare and huge Black Caiman patrol the waters and snakes, lizards and treefrogs all take refuge in the trees.

Invertebrates are also found in the trees and tarantulas, beetles, ants, centipedes and a host of other insects and arthropods normally associated with the forest floor may be seen among the leaves. The water is murky with silt and seeing fish can be tricky, but there is an incredible diversity of

species below the surface including the largest freshwater fish - the Arapaima. If we are lucky we could catch a glimpse of this giant at the surface. We also might see Pacu as they forage for fruit or an Arowana as it leaps after insect prey.

Our program each day will vary, but we will access Mamiraua using boats. We will canoe through the forest close to lodge using the trail system that you can walk on during the dry season. For longer excursions to Mamiraua Lake and other more remote areas we will use a motor boat. Though the majority of time will be spent searching for wildlife we will take the opportunity to visit one of the local communities one afternoon. These communities run and staff Mamiraua and directly benefit from the ecotourism revenues the lodge generates. One of the other unique aspects of Mamiraua is its commitment to scientific research. Many researchers from around the world stay at Mamiraua in order to study the flooded forest. We may have opportunities to interact with the scientists while we are there, learn about their research and perhaps even help with some data collection.

There will be plenty to keep us busy, our week will go by fast and when it's time to leave we may feel like we just scratched the surface of this awe inspiring place. (B,L,D)

Day 11 – Monday, May 29: Mamiraua to Tefe and Fly to Manaus and the Journey Home

This morning, after breakfast, we will depart Uakari Lodge and travel by boat back to Tefe. Once we arrive in Tefe we will transfer to the airport for our flight back to Manaus. We should arrive in Manaus in the late afternoon and will transfer to the Hotel Saint Paul, check in and have dinner before having a chance to freshen up and repack prior to transferring to the airport for our overnight flight back to the US. (B,L,D)

Day 12 – Tuesday, May 30: Arrival in the US and Transfer to Our Flights Home

We will arrive at our US gateway city early this morning and, after clearing immigration and customs, we will transfer to our flights home.

* Please note that EcoQuest Travel will make every effort to adhere to this itinerary, but dates, times, activities and prices are subject to change depending on scheduling and availability.

Cost:

\$5,132.00/person all-inclusive tour package

Airline Ticketing:

International airline tickets are not included in the above costs. EcoQuest Travel is a full service tour operator and we will gladly assist you with your flights for this tour. We do not charge a service fee for this assistance to clients who book a tour with us. We are aware, however, that clients often prefer to use frequent flyer miles, or points, to purchase tickets or to shop online. Regardless of which method you choose EcoQuest Travel will be happy to help you with ticket prices, scheduling and ticket purchase. If you decide to obtain airline tickets on your own please make sure to check with EcoQuest Travel prior to purchasing your ticket to make sure the flights you have chosen will work with the tour itinerary and that the tour has sufficient participation to operate. Please be aware that once purchased, most airline tickets are non-refundable and carry a financial penalty for any changes. Also, it is essential that we receive a copy of your flight itinerary so that we may track you in case of missed connections, flight delays or other mishaps that might impact your arrival. To help you plan, over the past few years airline tickets from the US to Manaus, Brazil have ranged in cost from \$1000.00 - \$1100.00.

Your domestic airline tickets from Manaus to Tefe and return are also not included in the trip pricing, but EcoQuest Travel will help you purchase these tickets as well. It is best to include these domestic tickets with your international ticketing as a package as this often helps reduce the overall cost. Currently the airfare from Manaus to Tefe and return is running around \$328.00 (or \$164.00 each way), but this is just an estimate.

What's Included:

- All ground and boat transportation within Brazil
- All accommodations – based upon double occupancy (single supplement is available for an additional cost of \$230.00/person – please note that our accommodations at Uakari Lodge is limited and singles are not guaranteed)
- All tours within the scheduled itinerary
- Meals (excluding beverages) – meals while in transit are not included (see the trip itinerary for specifics)
- Permits, entrance fees and guides
- The leadership services of EcoQuest Travel professionals

**What's Not Included:**

- International Airfare from your home city to Manaus, Brazil and our domestic airline tickets from Manaus to Tefe and return – please see the Airline Ticketing information above
- Drinks during some meals (bottled water will be available throughout the trip, and coffee, tea and juices are normally included at breakfast)
- Gifts and items of a personal nature
- Gratuities (for our local guides – further information on tipping will be included within the final trip information packet)
- Fees associated with obtaining a passport

- Travel insurance (please see the Travel Insurance Section below)
- Costs associated with pre-trip medical planning (such as vaccines)

Travel Documents:

A passport valid for at least 6 months after our arrival is required for travel in Brazil. US citizens are not required to obtain a visa to visit Brazil.

Group Size:

The trip cost is based on a minimum number of participants – eight people. Although eight people are required to make this trip a reality, we are able to accommodate up to a maximum of twelve participants.

Health Requirements:

The Government of Brazil does not require any vaccinations, however, there are several vaccines that would be prudent to consider prior to traveling to tropical South America. These include: Yellow Fever; Hepatitis A; and Typhoid. One should also check to make sure that vaccines against Tetanus/Diphtheria and Polio are up to date. Malaria is present in Brazil, particularly in the Amazon region, and the use of anti-malarial drugs should be considered



mandatory for this trip. Information on travel-related diseases and vaccines to prevent them can be found on the Centers for Disease Control website at: www.cdc.gov/travel

We highly recommend discussing all medical issues related to travel with your doctor as soon as possible - well in advance of the proposed travel date.

Payments and Reservations:

A deposit of \$1,000.00 per person is required along with your reservation form in order to reserve space on the trip. This will help insure necessary early deposits during this busy time in Brazil. The reservation form is available on our website: www.ecoquesttravel.net and can be filled out online and submitted, or downloaded and mailed. We encourage you to send your deposit well in advance of the date the first payment is due as paying the deposit is the only way to secure your spot. Personal checks, money orders and credit cards are accepted. If paying by personal check it should be made payable to EcoQuest Travel, Inc. and on the memo line please indicate: For Brazil Trip 2023. If paying by credit card please go to our website (www.ecoquesttravel.net) and under the reservations menu there is PayPal button. Use the dropdown menu to choose the amount of your deposit (\$1,000.00/person) and click the PayPal button which will direct you to PayPal's secure site. Once there you will enter your credit card details. EcoQuest Travel will send you an invoice for subsequent trip payments according to the schedule listed below:

- A payment of at least \$2,066.00/person is required no later than March 1, 2023
- The remainder of the trip expense (\$2,066.00/person) will be due on or before May 1, 2023

Cancellation:

The initial deposit, as well as subsequent payments, will be used to pay deposits for accommodations, travel arrangements, etc. in Brazil. Therefore, if you must withdraw from the trip, irrespective of reason, a refund will not be possible. We strongly suggest that you protect yourself with the purchase of trip cancellation insurance. We will try to retain a wait list for this trip and it is possible that if you end up not being able to participate we will attempt to find a replacement for you; however, it is your responsibility to find a replacement or to have insurance.



- Please note that in the event EcoQuest Travel, Inc. cancels this trip, due to circumstances beyond our control or low trip participant numbers, a refund of the initial deposit and any payments made will be issued.

Travel Insurance:

EcoQuest Travel, Inc. partners with Allianz Global Assistance (formerly – Access America) to provide the best possible travel insurance for our clients. They offer trip cancellation and worldwide emergency services (such as emergency evacuation and emergency medical services) as well as a host of other benefits. You can find more information on Allianz’s website (www.allianzassistance.com) including how to get quotes and sign up. You do not have to use Allianz Global Assistance and may choose to use another company. In either case, EcoQuest Travel, Inc. strongly suggests the purchase of trip cancellation/medical insurance. If you do decide to purchase travel insurance from Allianz Global Assistance please give them the following EcoQuest Travel vendor (or ACCAM) number: F031120. This number identifies that you are working with an Allianz Global Assistance partner.

Note: Pre-existing conditions will be waived by Allianz Global Assistance if you purchase travel insurance within 14 calendar days of your initial trip deposit.

General Information:

Upon receiving your deposit and reservation form, and after we have arranged our flights, you will be sent an information packet containing flight information, baggage requirements, hints on what to bring and other useful information. The climate will be hot and humid with consistent temperatures and not too much variation between night and day. Although it is the drier time of year, this is the world’s largest rainforest and rain should be expected and prepared for. You will want to bring a camera, film and binoculars. Again, a more exhaustive list will be provided after you are registered for the trip.

Trip Leader:

Dave Davenport: Zoologist and President of EcoQuest Travel

JoAnne Powell: Former Curator of Education for the NC Maritime Museum

