earthwatch expeditions
by Nat Hab

Explore with Purpose



Following Jaguars in Brazil's Pantanal

Track the Largest Cat in the Americas in the World's Greatest Wildlife Wetland

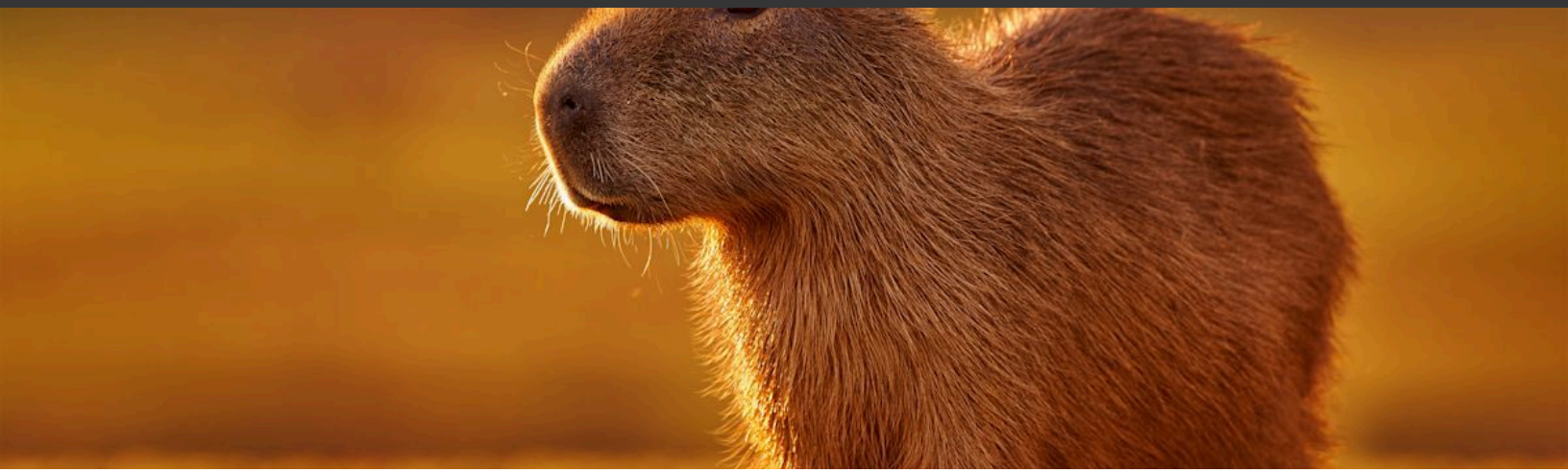
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Trip Details:

Days
10 Days / Jun–Oct

Price
From $14276 (+Air)

Following Jaguars in Brazil's Pantanal

Track the Largest Cat in the Americas in the World's Greatest Wildlife Wetland

Seeing a wild jaguar at close range was once an elusive ambition. But in Brazil's Pantanal, years of conservation efforts have been so successful that sightings are now common. Go beyond sheer observation on this intimate research expedition, offering a rare window into the lives of these powerful cats. Join field scientists studying individuals and the greater population to better understand what these apex predators need to thrive—and how to combat escalating threats from fire, habitat loss and human conflicts.

Protecting jaguars has a wide-ranging ripple effect on the prey and connected habitats that sustain a much larger community of wildlife here in the Pantanal, one of the most biodiverse realms in the world. Explore northern grasslands and forest islands, navigate Porto Jofre's rivers by open skiff and spend days with the research team in the southern Pantanal. Giant otters, anteaters, tapirs and hyacinth macaws enrich an expedition that combines the thrill of wild jaguar encounters with access to the scientific work behind its protection.

Expedition Highlights

Search the Rivers for Wild Jaguars

Explore Porto Jofre's waterways by open skiff, where riverbanks offer opportunities for sustained encounters with cats resting, traveling or hunting. Spend time watching and photographing jaguars in a landscape that supports extraordinary wildlife.

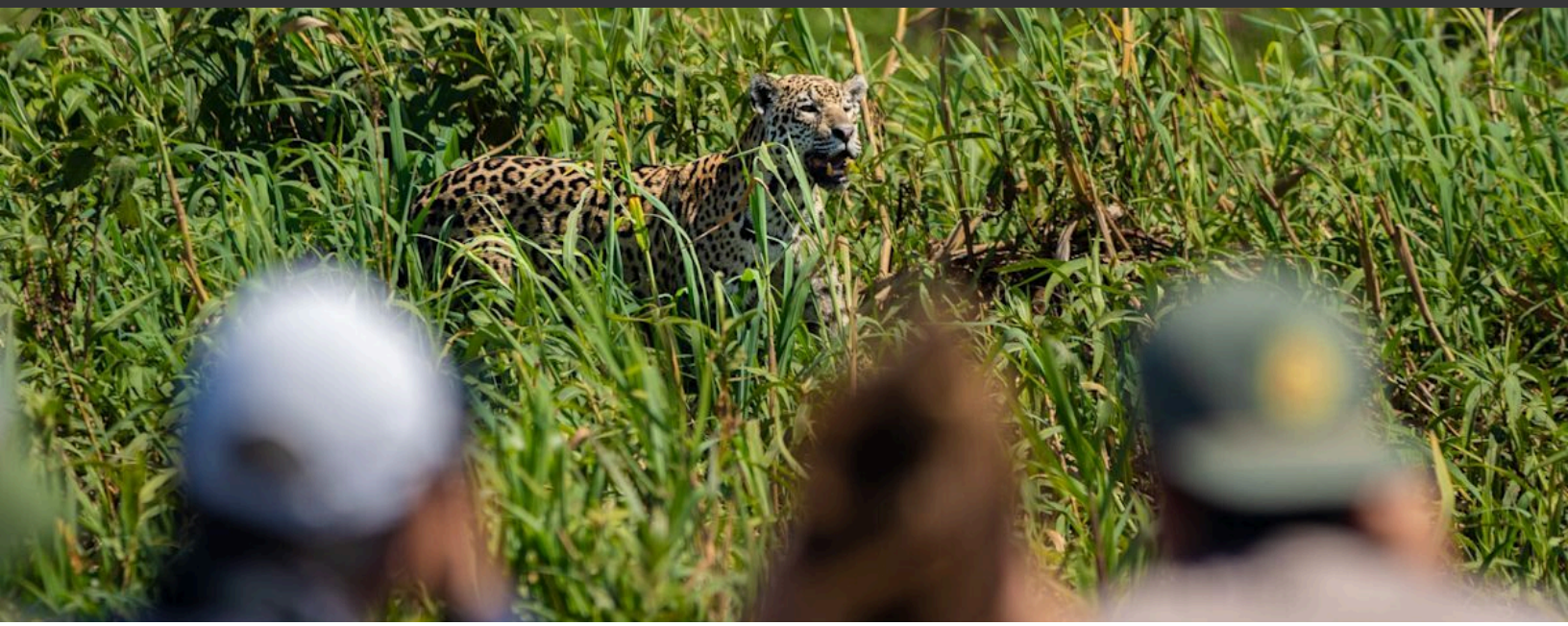
Follow Jaguars with Researchers Who Know Them

A sighting becomes more compelling when the cat has a known history. Search with scientists who recognize individuals, document their relationships and can explain what your observations add to years of research.

Discover the Pantanal's Full Abundance

Seek giant otters among river channels, anteaters in grassland and hyacinth macaws in the trees. Walk, boat and drive through contrasting habitats, extending your searches after dark for animals rarely encountered by day.

Ready to Book? Call an Adventure Specialist at 800-548-7555



Following Jaguars in Brazil's Pantanal Itinerary

Track the Largest Cat in the Americas in the World's Greatest Wildlife Wetland

Itinerary at a Glance

Day 1	SAO PAULO
Day 2	SAO PAULO / CUIABA / NORTHERN PANTANAL
Day 3	NORTHERN PANTANAL
Day 4	NORTHERN PANTANAL / PORTO JOFRE
Day 5	PORTO JOFRE
Day 6	PORTO JOFRE / SOUTHERN PANTANAL
Days 7–8	SOUTHERN PANTANAL
Day 9	SOUTHERN PANTANAL
Day 10	SOUTHERN PANTANAL / CAMPO GRANDE



Day 1

SAO PAULO

Meet Your Fellow Explorers in Sao Paulo

- Arrive at your hotel in the leafy Jardins district
- Gather for a welcome dinner with your Expedition Leader and fellow travelers
- Preview the route from northern waterways to southern jaguar research country

Arrive in Sao Paulo and transfer to Tivoli Mofarrej in Jardins, a leafy neighborhood in the heart of the city.

Meet your Expedition Leader and fellow travelers over a welcome dinner. Ahead lie ten days exploring the Pantanal's wildlife, from searches for jaguars along riverbanks to field outings with scientists who follow individual cats over years.

Your route connects three distinct settings: northern lodge country, the waterways around Porto Jofre and a southern research area. Each offers a different way to experience the wetland—and to understand what makes it such important jaguar habitat.

Day 2

SAO PAULO / CUIABA / NORTHERN PANTANAL

Enter Brazil's Great Wildlife Floodplain

- Fly to Cuiaba and continue by road into northern Pantanal lodge country
- Look for wildlife where marshes, open grassland and woodland meet
- Take a first nature walk near the lodge if arrival timing allow

Fly to Cuiaba, then travel overland into the northern Pantanal. Beyond the city, grasslands, marshes and forest islands introduce a landscape whose wildlife is unusually accessible across varied habitats. Seasonal flooding is the force behind this abundance. Water spreads across the lowlands during the rains, then retreats into pools, channels and marshes. Animals gather around the food, water and shelter that remain.

If arrival timing allows, explore nearby trails on foot. Walking gives you time to follow a bird call, examine a track or stay with an animal feeding beside the vegetation. Local guides help bring the surroundings into focus, beginning your acquaintance with the wetland before tomorrow's wider exploration.

Day 3

NORTHERN PANTANAL

Explore from Woodland Trails to Nighttime Savanna

- Walk with local guides for capybaras, birdlife and animal tracks
- Search grasslands and woodland by safari vehicle for anteaters, tapirs and other mammals
- Return to the field after dinner to look for nocturnal wildlife

Begin on foot with your Expedition Leader and local guides. Along woodland and wetland trails, the slower pace allows time to listen, watch and investigate. A call overhead or movement beside the water may draw attention to wildlife you would pass by in a vehicle. Later, explore farther across savanna and woodland by safari vehicle. Giant anteaters, tapirs and other mammals inhabit this varied country, while macaws, parrots and wetland birds add activity in the trees and shallows.

After dinner, head out again for a night drive. Darkness brings a different search, with opportunities to find animals emerging to feed or travel. These outings expand your understanding of a landscape whose wildlife changes with both habitat and hour.

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Day 4

NORTHERN PANTANAL / PORTO JOFRE

Reach the Rivers of Jaguar Country

- Enjoy a dawn walk among bird calls and possible monkey sightings
- Search wildlife-rich wetlands on the drive to Porto Jofre
- Begin your first boat-based jaguar search on the Cuiaba River

An early walk offers time to listen for birds and monkeys before breakfast. Then follow the Transpantaneira, the road through the northern Pantanal that ends at Porto Jofre. Wetlands and forest edges make the drive a wildlife excursion, with opportunities to spot caiman, capybaras, jabiru storks and macaws along the way.

At Porto Jofre, exploration shifts to the water. Rivers and channels wind through jaguar habitat, allowing boats to approach stretches of bank otherwise difficult to reach. After lunch, board an open skiff on the Cuiaba River for your first search. Local guides scan shaded vegetation and exposed banks for cats, while giant otters add another compelling possibility. When a jaguar is found, the boat offers a vantage for watching and photographing its activity along the river.

Day 5

PORTO JOFRE

Search the Waterways for Wild Cats

- Take morning and afternoon boat excursions through rivers, channels and lagoons
- Spend time observing and photographing jaguars when encountered
- Examine identifying markings and behavior with your Expedition Leader

Spend the day exploring Porto Jofre's waterways by open skiff. Morning and afternoon excursions provide repeated opportunities to search for jaguars and giant otters, with routes chosen according to conditions and recent sightings. From the river, stretches of bank and forest edge become visible that would be difficult to approach overland. Patient scanning can lead to an encounter with a cat resting in shade, traveling beside the water or hunting. When wildlife is found, there's time to watch and photograph its activity.

Your Expedition Leader introduces the details that give a jaguar encounter scientific value. Distinctive markings can establish which animal you're seeing, while its behavior and location add to the record. These conversations prepare you for your time with the research team in the south. Caiman, capybaras, monkeys and waterbirds occupy the surrounding banks and forest. Their abundance helps explain why these waterways support such powerful predators.

Day 6

PORTO JOFRE / SOUTHERN PANTANAL

Join the Researchers Who Know These Jaguars

- Travel into southern jaguar country, where wetlands and woodland meet working ranches
- Meet scientists who can connect a cat's distinctive markings with years of encounters
- Discover your role in the research, with a first field outing if timing allows

The expedition continues into the southern Pantanal, where your next days bring access to wild jaguars through the people who study them. Grasslands, woodland and wetlands extend across a landscape shared with cattle ranches—a place where the future of these predators depends on both protected habitat and human tolerance. Meet the researchers whose field records hold years of discoveries. A photograph may identify a female they have watched raise cubs or a young cat now ranging independently. These histories give the searches ahead a compelling dimension: the possibility of encountering an animal well-known to the research team, so you can learn about the individual *and* the species.

Over an introduction to field methods, discover how you'll recognize individuals and contribute approved observations. The researchers also explain how they gradually accustom jaguars to vehicles, opening opportunities to observe behavior that a fleeting sighting would never reveal. If timing and conditions allow, head out with the team for your first search in this southern research landscape.

Days 7–8

SOUTHERN PANTANAL

Search for Wild Jaguars & Contribute to Their Conservation

- Search with researchers using tracks, recent sightings and knowledge of individual cats
- Observe jaguars resting, traveling, hunting or interacting when encounters allow
- Help document behavior and habitat use, adding to the project's long-term records

Spend two days searching for wild jaguars with scientists who have followed individual cats over years. Their knowledge brings purpose to each outing, combining tracks and recent sightings with an understanding of where particular animals spend time. When a jaguar is located, conditions may allow an extended period of observation. There's time to appreciate the animal's presence and notice details beyond the photograph: how it chooses a resting place, responds to another cat or moves through its surroundings. Researchers explain what they recognize and what warrants closer attention.

Under the team's direction, contribute approved observations of behavior, location and associations. Connected with earlier records, these details can help document a young cat's growing independence, a female's relationships or an animal's use of habitat. Longer observations are possible partly because researchers have gradually accustomed some jaguars to vehicles. The cats remain wild, and their responses determine the vehicle's position, viewing distance and duration of each encounter. These days offer the excitement of searching for an elusive predator and the satisfaction of helping investigate its life. The questions are active, the outcomes uncertain, and every reliable observation has the potential to add to what the team knows.

Day 9

SOUTHERN PANTANAL

Search for Jaguars & Help Safeguard Their Future

- Head out with researchers for a final day of jaguar searches and field observations
- Explore how protecting jaguar territory benefits the Pantanal's wider wildlife
- Hear how living cats can become an economic asset for people sharing their habitat

Spend a final day searching for jaguars with the research team and recording observations as directed. Along the way, explore how the cats find food, reach water and move between habitats. Protecting the large areas they need also preserves space for the Pantanal's many other animals, from giant anteaters and tapirs to macaws and river otters.

On working ranches, that protection depends on people as well as habitat. A jaguar may threaten livestock yet attract travelers willing to come across the world to see it. Researchers share how tourism can help turn that interest into an incentive for conservation—and why benefits for local residents are essential. These conversations draw on the animals and places you've come to know, offering an inside perspective on the choices that will determine their future.

Day 10

SOUTHERN PANTANAL / CAMPO GRANDE

Say Farewell to the Pantanal

- Travel from the southern research area to Campo Grande
- Connect with your onward flight

Leave with memories of jaguars along riverbanks, wildlife-filled wetlands and days spent in the field with scientists. Your contribution to their work adds something lasting to the experience: observations that become part of the continuing record of wild jaguar lives. Transfer to Campo Grande for your onward flight.

Discovery in the Field

Following Jaguars in Brazil's Pantanal

1 **Recognize the Jaguar Behind the Photograph**

A distinctive pattern of rosettes can identify the cat in front of you. With researchers, examine the markings used to distinguish individuals and discover how photographs connect sightings across years, revealing family relationships, cub development and movements.

2 **Join Researchers as They Study Jaguars Up Close**

Researchers gradually accustom wild jaguars to vehicles through a process called habituation. As cats become less wary, scientists can spend longer observing them resting, hunting and interacting—gathering details about their lives that fleeting sightings rarely reveal.

3 **Explore a Conservation Model with Real Stakes**

On ranching lands, jaguars can threaten livestock; wildlife tourism can make living cats economically valuable. Discover how conservationists work with these competing realities, and why local benefits and responsible viewing matter to lasting protection.

4 **Experience the Wetland at Walking Pace**

Follow trails through woodland and wetland margins, with time to listen for birds, examine tracks and watch movement in the vegetation. Local guides help you find the smaller discoveries that give this immense landscape its texture.

5 **Seek the Pantanal's Most Striking Birds**

Look for hyacinth macaws, toucans, parrots and jabiru storks across forest, grassland and marsh. Exploring several habitats offers opportunities to encounter different species and watch how they feed, travel and use the surrounding landscape.

6 **Venture Out After Dark**

Night drives reveal activity concealed during daylight hours. Search with local guides for mammals emerging to feed or travel, adding another set of possibilities to habitats you've already explored on foot and by safari vehicle.

7 **Travel in a Small, Curious Group**

Share field days with travelers who want to stay with a sighting and understand what they're seeing. A small group allows direct conversation with researchers, time for questions and opportunities to compare discoveries throughout the expedition.

8 **Explore with Purpose**

Contribute approved observations to ongoing jaguar research. Each reliable record can extend what scientists know about an individual animal, helping connect the excitement of your encounter with the evidence needed to understand and protect a population.



Dates & Pricing Summary:

Price
From $14276 (+Air)

Group Size
Limited to 14 Travelers

Following Jaguars in Brazil's Pantanal Dates, Pricing & Info

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2028 Departures

Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Prices and dates not confirmed for 2028		
Sep 8 - Sep 17, 2028	**From $14276** +internal air	
Sep 21 - Sep 30, 2028	**From $14276** +internal air	
Oct 6 - Oct 15, 2028	**From $14276** +internal air	
Oct 13 - Oct 22, 2028	**From $14276** +internal air	
Oct 20 - Oct 29, 2028	**From $14276** +internal air	

2029 Departures

Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Prices and dates not confirmed for 2029		
Jun 22 - Jul 1, 2029	**From $14276** +internal air	
Jun 29 - Jul 8, 2029	**From $14276** +internal air	
Jul 13 - Jul 22, 2029	**From $14276** +internal air	
Jul 27 - Aug 5, 2029	**From $14276** +internal air	
Aug 10 - Aug 19, 2029	**From $14276** +internal air	
Aug 24 - Sep 2, 2029	**From $14276** +internal air	
Sep 7 - Sep 16, 2029	**From $14276** +internal air	
Sep 21 - Sep 30, 2029	**From $14276** +internal air	
Oct 5 - Oct 14, 2029	**From $14276** +internal air	
Oct 19 - Oct 28, 2029	**From $14276** +internal air	

See https://www.nathab.com/earthwatch-expeditions/brazil-pantanal-jaguar-conservation-research-trip/dates-fees for the latest pricing details.

Included

Trip price includes: Accommodations, services of Earthwatch Expedition's professional Expedition Leader(s), local guides and lodge staff, all meals from dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on Day 11, some gratuities, airport transfers on Day 1 and final day, all activities and entrance fees, all taxes, permits and service fees.

Not Included

Travel to and from the start and end point of your trip, alcoholic beverages, some gratuities, passports and visa fees, optional activities, items of a personal nature (phone calls, laundry, etc.), airline baggage fees, airport and departure taxes (if any), required medical evacuation insurance, optional travel protection insurance.

Internal air: All scheduled and private charter flights within the itinerary (this will be listed separately on our invoicing).

Mandatory Insurance

Since the areas we travel to are remote and wild (that's why we go there!), we require that all guests have, at minimum, medical evacuation insurance for this program. This is for the safety of all guests. We require that your chosen independent insurance plan includes at least $250,000 in medical evacuation coverage. To protect your investment and to provide peace of mind while you travel, we also strongly recommend purchasing comprehensive travel insurance. Plans may cover everything from medical treatment to trip cancellations and delays and lost luggage. Please contact our office if you would like more information about the medical evacuation and comprehensive travel insurance policies we offer by calling 800-548-7555.

Getting There & Getting Home

This trip begins and ends in Sao Paulo. Because this is a long international journey, we recommend that you arrive the night before Day 1 to rest from your travels and begin the trip refreshed. For guests who come in early, recommended hotels will be included in your pre-departure materials.

If you plan to arrive on Day 1, you must arrive in Sao Paulo by 4 pm in order to attend a welcome orientation and dinner beginning at 6 pm.

You may depart Sao Paulo at anytime on Day 10.

Our Earthwatch Expeditions Travel Desk can best assist with your travel reservations, as our staff is familiar with the specific requirements of this program and can help arrange the most efficient itinerary. Please call us at 800-548-7555. While we offer the best available rates to us on airfare and additional nights' accommodations, you may occasionally find special web rates or lower fares online.



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