

Form and Pattern in the Amazon: A River Adventure

June 1 – June 12, 2015

We are now fully booked and are no longer accepting applications.

Join Prescott College environmental studies professor and naturalist **Mark Riegner**, Ph.D., and Nature Institute director **Craig Holdrege** on a 12-day expedition on the Amazon River. We will apply methods of observation grounded in the view of nature developed by the influential poet and scientist Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. This trip will be especially valuable for educators and anyone interested in experiencing firsthand the power of holistic science to reveal ecological wonders.



Mark and Craig, long-time colleagues, are teaming up to co-lead this exciting nature tour, which will be tailored to those holistic approaches to science and the exploration of patterns in nature. Mark teaches ecology field courses in Mexico and Costa Rica. He is also author of *Long-legged Wading Birds of the North American Wetlands* and numerous articles that explore form and pattern in animals as well as the philosophical basis and practical application of Goethe's way of pursuing science. He has previously led a tour with this itinerary.

We will focus on plant morphology and metamorphosis, as well as on form and pattern in mammals and birds. In preparation, and during the trip, we will read and discuss articles and book excerpts by Craig on doing Goethean science, plant metamorphosis, and the nature of the sloth (of which we hope to see many), and by Mark on the nature of Goethe's way of science, form and pattern in mammals, and bird form and color pattern. We will train ourselves to observe nature carefully, using various tools such as clear description, discussion, sketching and other artistic activities, and daily reviews.



And we'll be seeking patterns of relationships among the many natural history observations we make. We will practice the skill of precise observation essential to Goethe's holistic way of science and thus try to imagine, and even emulate, how the great poet and scientist would have experienced nature in the Amazon Basin.

Throughout our time, we will integrate workshops, conversation, and thoughtful observation with our field excursions. Each day we will have an onboard class meeting to synthesize our observations with guiding questions inspired from our readings and discussions, such as:

- What is life? How can we grasp the threefold organizing principle through “reading” the forms of plants and animals?
- How can we formulate questions in such a way that will lead us into the hidden dimensions of nature?
- How can we become sensitive to the “act of becoming” in nature and in ourselves?
- What is meant by “archetypes” and how can we practice a way of seeing that leads us to a cognitive experience of archetypes in nature?
- What did Goethe mean by “metamorphosis” and how can we develop a faculty of cognition to experience metamorphosis in natural phenomena?
- What life principles are responsible for the greater degree of biodiversity in the tropics compared to the temperate zone? How has evolution influenced this pattern?
- How do we change when we strive to become an “organ of perception” focused on the natural world?

On this tour, we will spend 12 days cruising the Amazon, Solimoes, and Negro rivers and their tributaries aboard our private chartered ship, the *Iracema*. Each day, we will explore river tributaries, oxbow lakes, and other channels in small, motorized canoes. Highly skilled boatmen will take us out early in the morning for birding and wildlife viewing. In the evening we will explore wildlife with spotlights from the canoes. June is high-water and this allows us the greatest opportunity to enter deep into the forest by boat and possibly glimpse animals of the canopy.

Although we will have a full schedule, this is a relaxing trip in that we can settle in to our rooms, unpack just once, and allow the boat to move us every night to a new locale. The seven-person crew are extremely hardworking and very friendly, and will do everything they can to make this trip the best it can be for all on board. We enjoy a huge array of fresh foods, local produce and freshly caught fish, all prepared in a tiny kitchen. We can eat in a comfortable dining room furnished with local hardwoods, or enjoy the breezes of the open-air upper deck. Mark and Craig will always be available to provide us with insights into the flora, fauna, and ecological relationships that we'll be encountering along the river. Our English-speaking captain, Moacir Junior, and some of the crew are experts at locating wildlife, especially reptiles and amphibians, and can tell us about the local culture and life along these great rivers.

Moacir has lived on the river all his life. He is an expert on the reptiles and amphibians, a very knowledgeable birder, and an all-round naturalist. He is sure to entertain us with amazing (and often hilarious) stories and will help us find the best that the Amazon has to offer.

Please note that the following is a typical itinerary, and subject to change at any time.



Daily Itinerary

May 31

We travel independently to Manaus and arrive in the late afternoon or evening; we will be met by our English-speaking hosts from Amazonia Expeditions and transferred (about a 10-minute drive) to the *Iracema*, our newest boat and our home for the next 11 days.

June 1 — Day 1

After a hearty breakfast and getting settled in, we will set off, traveling past Manaus' floating harbor. We will arrive at the "Wedding of the Waters," where the black water of the Rio Negro meets the café-au-lait waters of the Amazon. We will be on the lookout for two species of river dolphin that are commonly seen at this area of rich upwelling. We take our first excursion by canoe in the late afternoon, exploring narrow waterways in search of waterbirds and other

subjects of interest. We continue after dark, spotlighting for wildlife such as Great Potoo and Spectacled Caiman from the comfort of the canoes. We'll continue on to Lake Jutai, a blackwater region that is mosquito-free and a good place to overnight.

June 2 – Day 2

We wake early, have a coffee, and board the canoes for a trip up the Igarapé do Ipixuna to look for birds and monkeys. This canoe trip is quite long but very productive for birds, including many hawks and a variety of passerines as well as waterbirds. Later in the day we may choose to fish for piranha, swim in a clear lake, or take a siesta on the upper deck. In the afternoon we will visit the village of Jutai and then photograph thousands of egrets and cormorants coming to roost at sunset. After dark we take a night canoe trip to look for sloths, tarantulas, and night-herons. Many birds can be very closely approached at night for photography, and our captain will no doubt bring a caiman or two on board for close inspection! We also have a good chance of seeing tree boas, fishing bats, and possibly large bamboo rats.

June 3 – Day 3

We continue on toward the Solimoes River until we reach Janauaca Lake. We wake up in Furo do Mamori and, after coffee and a light snack, set off before dawn in our canoes. This time the boatmen paddle us and do not use the motors, so we can appreciate the sounds of the forest waking at dawn. Drifting through a maze of channels and small lakes, we may see Brown Capuchins and Squirrel Monkeys, kingfishers and nunbirds, and many other bird species. We will also be looking out for large boas in the trees. After breakfast a group may go fishing with drop lines. We travel on at lunchtime following the Solimoes River where we explore small tributaries by canoe, and visit the clear waters of Santana Lake.

June 4 – Day 4

We take an early morning canoe trip to Barroso Island, where we will find numerous Giant Water Lilies. We stop to photograph and examine these plants and learn about their pollinators. After breakfast we walk through a forest of rubber trees, cacao trees, and other indigenous food plants, where we hope to see a variety of forest birds. This trail leads us to Igarape Preto, a very attractive village where we continue birding in a more open habitat. Later we travel by canoe to Enchanted Lake, whose waters are covered by floating vegetation including palm trees and an endemic orchid. These mats of vegetation “dance” as we pass along the narrow channels. We may also visit the “Farm of 4 Virgins” (so named by our captain), where we will see some open-country birds and typical vegetation. At night we venture out in Piranha Lake, a very rich area for nocturnal life. We should see several snakes, Tropical



Screech Owl, and many frogs, bats, and other animals. We may also bait trees with a sticky, fermented mixture to attract moths and other insects.

June 5 – Day 5

We travel overnight back to Manaus, arriving early in the morning. We disembark and visit the fish market as it opens, and bustles with activity. We do not stop to shop in the craft market, but board vehicles for a short ride across the city to Mindu Park, a small but very important reserve. This park is home to the Pied Tamarin, a tiny primate with the most restricted range of all the Neotropical monkeys. We hope to see a group of these striking little monkeys, and we also will enjoy examining labelled palms and other trees as we stroll down forested trails. We should see Red-rumped Agouti and possibly a sloth. We will return to Manaus in the late morning and visit the famed Opera House. We return to our boat and travel up the Rio Negro. At sunset we canoe in the Pagadao River, continuing on until after dark. In this area we may see uncommon mammals such as two-toed sloth or dwarf hairy porcupine, and numerous frogs.

June 6 – Day 6

We explore the Pagadao River and a small tributary by canoe and on foot, as this area contains tall upland forest with a number of interesting trees and associated fauna. We can expect to see new species of parrots and toucans. To cool off after our forest hike we swim in the blackwaters of the Rio Negro, in an area often frequented by both the Pink River Dolphin and the small Tucuxi Dolphin. We travel on into the Cuieiras River and enter another Amazonian ecosystem known as Campina, where scrubby trees are festooned with bromeliads and orchids growing at eye-level. Stopping at a camp belonging to our captain's family, we can explore numerous trails in a variety of forest types. Pre-Columbian pottery shards have been found in this area. We have ample time to explore on foot, and we will enjoy a barbecue on land tonight.

June 7 – Day 7



We enter an uninhabited tributary of the Cuieiras River called Igarape Cachoeira, where we may see some of the more elusive Amazonian creatures as there is little or no hunting pressure in this region. Horned Screamer, Hoatzin, toucans, and macaws are possible here. We also search for bats on trees overhanging the water, and look out for Black Caiman. At night we may find the Bamboo Rat or a Tree Boa out hunting its prey. If we are very lucky, we may see the beautiful Emerald Boa here.

June 8 – Day 8

We wake in Tres Bocas to the sound of Blue and Gold Macaws and Festive Amazon Parrots, and we enjoy the incredibly reflective blackwaters found in this region. In the afternoon we may fish

for Black Piranha, the largest of the three species of piranha found in this region. We will visit Caboclo families and learn about their life in the forest and their dependence on the river. Our evening may be spent spotlighting from the canoes or just relaxing on board.

June 9 – Day 9

Red Howler Monkeys serenade the dawn in this part of the Rio Negro, and we set out early in hopes of finding a troupe near the water. We move into the four-hundred-island district of Anavilhanas. This is one of the largest fluvial archipelagos in the world and it is known for its abundance of birds such as toucans, parrots, and macaws. Later in the day we travel by canoe into a very acidic tributary of the Parana Jacaré, ideal for swimming. Tonight we will look for the Southern Cross and other southern hemisphere constellations when we venture out in search of wildlife.

June 10 – Day 10

We will enjoy a special outing in our canoes, traveling silently through a maze of small channels as the forest awakes around us. We look for special birds such as Wire-tailed Manakin, Umbrella-bird, and Scarlet Macaw. In the afternoon we visit a small town, Novo Airao, famed for its wooden boat-building and handcrafted furniture. We have a chance to learn about the hardwoods used and village life in this area. Along the shore, Pink River Dolphins are habituated to humans and we can see them close-up. Later we take the canoes out on a nature exploration to a small waterfall while a farewell barbecue is prepared on the upper deck.

June 11 – Day 11

Today we will have a final early morning outing by canoe in the Tumbira River area. In the past we have seen the rare and elusive Black Uakari Monkey here. We return for lunch on board. We will spend the afternoon fishing, swimming or searching for new birds, and finally packing our belongings. We will enjoy a farewell dinner on board, with fond goodbyes to our excellent crew. We travel to the port in Manaus.

June 12 – Day 12

Today we enjoy our final breakfast. We will transfer to the airport for our flights home.

AMAZON ADVENTURE

Please Note New Discounted Price

Cost/person (from Manaus):

- **US \$2,700/person (traveling singly)**
- **US \$2,400/person (for couples traveling and paying together)**

Flights are not included in the cost of the tour. A deposit of US \$500 per person is required to reserve a space on this tour. Please request a reservation form from Mark Riegner (mriegner@prescott.edu).

Tour Cost Includes:

- Accommodation based on double occupancy
- Ground transportation and group airport transfers
- All meals from breakfast June 1 to breakfast June 12
- Park entrance fees
- Activities listed in the itinerary
- Services of tour leaders Mark Riegner and Craig Holdrege
- Services of ship’s crew
- Pre-tour preparation materials (e.g., articles and papers)

Tour Cost Does Not Include:

- Roundtrip airfare from your home to Manaus
- Internal flights within Brazil (if required)
- Airport departure taxes and Brazilian Visa
- Alcoholic beverages, bottled water, and other bar drinks
- Phone calls and items of a personal nature
- Tips to the crew at the end of the tour
- Optional activities and travel insurance
- Additional transportation required due to any emergency situation

This Tour Is Limited to 16 Participants

The Tour Will Operate with a Minimum of 10 Participants

Cancellation Policy

In the event of a cancellation, you must notify Mark Riegner immediately and in writing. The tour price is quoted as a package. No partial refunds or credits will be given for services not used.

Cancellation fees will be charged per person as follows:

<u>Prior to Departure</u>	<u>Amount</u>
More than 120 days	\$100 administration fee
90 – 120 days	100% of deposit (\$500.00)
Less than 90 days	Full tour cost, unless we can resell your space

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Level of Difficulty – Easy

On board you will need to climb one or two short flights of stairs. Boarding the flat-bottomed canoes is easy and the boatmen will be on hand to assist you, but some degree of balance is helpful. All land trips are optional and most of the wildlife can be viewed from the boat or canoes. On land we will be walking at a leisurely pace, with frequent stops, on ground that is sometimes rough or uneven. Some trails may be wet and will have to be traversed carefully but are accessible to anyone who has normal walking ability and stamina.

Travel Insurance

We strongly recommend that you purchase insurance to cover both trip cancellation and medical emergencies. It is important to get coverage for flight cancellation on medical grounds. We can suggest a suitable insurance company upon registration. If you have your own coverage, please be sure it includes a provision for emergency evacuation.

Flight Information for your Trip to Brazil

International and domestic flights are not included in the tour cost. We do not work with any travel agency and we suggest you shop around for fares and schedules. It is important to pay for air travel by credit card. In the unlikely event that your travel agency or airline should go bankrupt, you will be able to get a refund from your credit card company.

Please do not book your tickets until the trip has been confirmed as operating.

Travel Documents

You will require a passport for your trip to Brazil. Please make sure that it is valid for six months after the date of your tour. It is advisable to take a photocopy of the information page of your passport and your air tickets, keep them in a separate part of your luggage, and leave a copy with your contact person at home. In case of loss, this will make it easier to replace.

A visa is required for U.S. and Canadian citizens entering Brazil. When you sign up for this tour we will send you the pre-departure information detailing how to apply for and obtain your visa. Please be advised that visas cannot be processed earlier than three months prior to date of entry. The visa is attached directly to your passport so it will be necessary to send your valid passport to the Brazilian Consulate.

Meals

Food in Brazil is very good, with plenty of fresh fruit, salads, and vegetables, excellent barbecued meats, and interesting cheeses and desserts. On board the boat please use the purified water for drinking, in plentiful supply; do not drink from the tap water in your bathroom. Please note: on this tour, all meals and non-alcoholic beverages are included from breakfast on June 1 to breakfast on June 12. The food on board ship is delicious, featuring local and international cuisine, fresh fish, meats, fruits and vegetables, and sumptuous desserts and cakes, prepared in a

tiny kitchen by our dedicated staff. Vegetarians can be easily accommodated. If you have other dietary restrictions, please make them known to Mark at time of planning your trip.

Accommodations on the Tour

Iracema

Our newest ship is comfortable, safe, and well appointed. It is beautifully finished in the interior with local hardwoods. The top deck is open, and provides panoramic views of passing river life as we cruise up the Amazon. Each essentially identical two-person cabin has a bunk bed and is well equipped with storage closets, hooks and shelves, plus a private bathroom. Each cabin is air conditioned, though this is usually only turned on at night for sleeping. The private bathrooms have a sink, toilet, and cool-water shower (the water is not heated but is lukewarm and refreshing). Electricity is provided (110V in most cabins, some also have 220V) via a generator, which runs most of the night and on request during the day. Power outlets are two-holed and accept both American-style square pins and European rounded pins. Batteries can be charged at night while the boat generator is on. Laundry service is provided free of charge.

Currency and Currency Exchange

Since most tour costs are included in the tour fee, you will need money only for personal expenses such as bottled water, bar drinks (sodas and alcoholic beverages), postcards and souvenirs. Tips to the crew are optional and at your discretion.

The currency in Brazil is the Real (BRL). At the time of writing, \$1.00 US = 2.2 BRL. You should be able to convert some US\$ into Reals at the airport upon arrival. Your bar bill on board the boat can be settled in US or Brazilian cash, but not by credit card. Souvenirs and crafts from the Manaus market can be paid for in dollars or Reais.

At the end of the trip you may want to have a small amount of money for shopping at the Manaus Airport. You can generally use small denominations of US currency here.

Airport Departure Tax

When leaving Manaus, a US \$18 departure tax is currently levied on all tourists at the international airport. This fee is often included in the cost of your plane ticket. Within Brazil, domestic departure tax is usually included in the ticket cost but can be separate and ranges from US \$4 to \$9 depending on the airport. These taxes are subject to change at any time.

Health Requirements

For your protection, in the unlikely event of exposure to a tropical disease or health problem, please consult your physician for recommendations. We cannot prescribe specific medical precautions to be taken. The decision regarding which precautions to take must be made according to your judgment and on the advice of your physician and on information posted on the CDC website. There will be some mosquitoes, and we sometimes encounter large emergences of non-biting insects.

Tipping

On this trip we spend most of the tour with the same crew, and many of our passengers choose to contribute to a group tip in appreciation for all the help they have received on board. We recommend about \$50 to \$100 per passenger (\$5 to \$10 per day), to be divided equally among the crew.

Smoking

Tour participants are not permitted to smoke in close quarters with the rest of the group. Smoking is also not permitted on small boat excursions or on the trails. All the rooms are designated as non-smoking.

Electricity

There is electricity (2-prong outlets that accept both North American plugs and rounded European plugs) at all our hotels. Power in Brazil can be 110-volt or 220-volt service, so you should check at each facility before using, and you may need a power adapter.

Climate

The climate will be warm to very warm by day and slightly cooler at night, with some humidity. According to our captain, there are two seasons in the Amazon: the wet season and the very wet season. Our trip takes place in the “dry” season, but it is important to be prepared for showers or heavy rain at all times.

Participation in Amazon River Adventure

For this trip to Amazonian Brazil, our age criteria are as follows:

1. You must be over 11 years of age, and if under 18 you must be accompanied by an adult.
2. If you are 80 or over, we require written assurance from your medical doctor that you are physically capable of fully participating in the trip activities as outlined in the detailed itinerary. In addition, we also require that a travel companion accompany you on this trip.

Although our tours are active, they do not normally include strenuous activities; if they do they will be fully described in the tour's detailed itinerary. The minimal requirements would be to walk at an easy pace, with frequent stops, for up to two hours in hot weather, and over uneven trails. You should also be able to climb two flights of stairs and meet the schedule as outlined in the itinerary.

If, while on tour, any personal limitations prevent you from fully participating in the advertised activities impeding the progress of the trip or the enjoyment of others, we reserve the right to make the decision to withdraw you from the tour. In this case, you will be returned to a hotel or to your home at your own expense.

We are now fully booked and are no longer accepting applications.

Please Note:

1. The itinerary described in these notes is intended as an example only. In the event of weather changes, changes in airline schedules, logistical arrangements, or other problems, our leaders may make changes in the published itinerary.
2. The tour cost does not include extra expenses incurred because of weather and logistical delays, or delayed departures of chartered or scheduled aircraft.
3. This tour requires a minimum of 10 paying passengers. If the trip has fewer than 10 passengers, we may apply a small-group fee of up to 20% of the trip cost, with the permission of the participants, or cancel the tour. Anyone not wishing to pay an extra fee can withdraw from the tour at no cost.
4. Since most of our International tours travel into remote areas, we strongly urge you to purchase travel insurance that will cover you for any emergency medical evacuation.