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Avifauna from the São Francisco River Basin

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The São Francisco River Basin (SFRB) includes 8% of Brazil's surface area and drains areas in the states of Minas Gerais, Goiás, Bahia, Pernambuco, Alagoas, Sergipe and part of the Federal District. The São Francisco river is 2,863 km long, starting at the Serra da Canastra in Minas Gerais and flowing northwards until it reaches the Atlantic ocean between the states of Alagoas and Sergipe. The SFRB comprises the biomes Cerrado (savanna), Atlantic Forest and Caatinga (semi-arid forests), these complex vegetation types result in a rich avifauna, including endemic species from each biome as well as its river basin, such as the Minas Gerais tyrannulet *Phylloscartes roquettei* and the Bahian nighthawk *Nyctiprogne vielliardi*. Based on museum specimens, field work and literature a total of 559 species were found to occur in the SFRB. This number is ~30% of the Brazilian avifauna, including the main area of distribution of a number of threatened species, such as the Lear's macaw *Anodorhynchus leari* and the Brazilian merganser, *Mergus octosetaceus*. Despite the large number of species, our knowledge is still insufficient. Few localities in the basin present bird lists with more than 100 species, a minimum number that could give us any accurate information regarding the bird diversity of the area. This low number of localities with adequate bird lists is critical for understanding possible sustainable use. Also, the SFRB is under extreme pressure for land use and management which will lead to drastic alteration of its flora and fauna.