

# Native trees help burned Pantanal

by **Tony Pittman**



For years, the dedicated work of Neiva Guedes has been a lifeline to the world's most iconic Hyacinth macaws in the Brazilian Pantanal. Recently, she visited the Serra do Amolar, an imposing mountain chain in the centre of the Pantanal where there had been serious fires early last year.

She discovered to her delight that some of the pasture land had been replaced with groves of manduvis, acuris, bocaiuvia and other native trees. The acuris were already producing fruit which was being eaten by the macaws. She comments that manduvi and acuri are key species in the Pantanal as they are both a food source for a wide range of species. ■

The Pantanal is a natural region encompassing the world's largest tropical wetland area, and the world's largest flooded grasslands. It is located mostly within the Brazilian state of Mato Grosso do Sul, but it extends into Mato Grosso and portions of Bolivia and Paraguay. It sprawls over an area estimated at between 140,000 and 195,000 square kilometres (54,000 and 75,000 sq mi). Various subregional ecosystems exist, each with distinct hydrological, geological and ecological characteristics; up to 12 of them have been defined.

Roughly 80% of the Pantanal floodplains are submerged during the rainy seasons, nurturing a biologically diverse collection of aquatic plants and helping to support a dense array of animal species.

The name "Pantanal" comes from the Portuguese word pântano, meaning wetland, bog, swamp, quagmire or marsh. (Wikipedia)