

Oral Reading Test

- Only the most daring surfers travel to Brazil to ride a wave known as the Pororoca (poh-ruh-roh-ka). They must wait for the perfect moment. Once they get there, they describe it as an incredible experience that's the longest wave of their lives.

The Pororoca forms when the incoming Atlantic tide collides with and overpowers the out-flow of the Amazon River; this type of wave is called a tidal bore. In the local language, "pororoca" roughly translates as "great destructive roar." The noise describes the sound of the sea meeting the flow of the river in the opposite direction that causes coastal birds to take flight when they hear it. A wave can be heard up to a half hour in advance. One surfer compared its enormous sound to the rumble of an oncoming train.

Surfers put themselves at a high risk for the thrill of surfing the aggressively powerful Pororoca, and they must wear wetsuits to protect themselves from a number of hidden dangers in the murky, turbulent water. The Amazon is home to alligators, piranha, and poisonous snakes. The waves also carry debris from the shoreline, including entire trees, houses, and rocks.

To some surfers, the thrill outweighs the risks. The Pororoca can travel more than 20 miles an hour, and it has reached heights of up to 30 feet. The waves are at their highest in the dry months of February and March. One wave can last for more than a half hour, whereas the typical ocean wave rarely lasts for more than a minute. The current record for riding a single wave is 37 minutes and 12.5 kilometers, or 7.77 miles. This makes Brazil the perfect destination for thrill-seeking surfers from around the world, who compete in the country's annual surfing championship every year.