



## CHILE TOUR REPORT 2022

24 October - 12 November 2022

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This year's Chile tour was certainly one of the most successful to this fantastic country. That is what you get with Birdquest: grace under pressure plus a great bird list. The tour delivered all the mainland non-pelagic Chilean endemics, including all of the Tapaculos with great views of Chestnut-throated Huet-Huet and White-throated Tapaculo. Spectacular views of Crag Chilia in the company of Moustached Turca will not be forgotten. We also had good views of White-throated and, possibly for the first time, Rufous-tailed Hawk; a very rarely seen raptor!! Seeing 18 Puna Rheas and good numbers of Andean Avocets and Puna Plovers together with thousands of Andean and Puna Flamingos in Lauca National Park was absolutely phenomenal. In all, we recorded 293 species, plus 18 species of mammal, including PUMA, which will always stand out as a highlight.

As we travelled the entire length of Chile, we explored a wide range of habitats; in the Atacama region desert oases and Lluta wetland on the coast and high Puna lakes and bofedales of the spectacular Lauca NP, in central Chile the Matorral and coastal wetlands along with the jagged peaks above Santiago at Farellones and further south spectacular Patagonian forests provided some of our most exciting birding at the Altos de Lircay and Termas de Chillan. In the far south the vast landscapes of the Fuegian steppe with the backdrop of snow-covered peaks at Torres del Paine completed an absolutely unforgettable tour. Possibly unrepeatable highlights, from north to south, included, watching at length, a displaying male Chilean Woodstar (now considered critically endangered) followed by finding a female on a nest! Our 'millpond' pelagic delivered a good haul of tubenoses, including Northern Giant Petrel, Salvin's and the very rarely seen Shy Albatross and good numbers of Peruvian Diving-petrels, along with hundreds of Markham's Storm-Petrels. The Tamarugo Conebill, the now very rare Peruvian Tern north of Arica, White-throated, Buff-breasted and Straight-billed Earthcreepers near Putre, Andean and Puna Flamingos at Lago Chungara, White-throated Sierra Finch and Golden-spotted Ground Dove, Thick-billed Siskin, D'Orbigny's Chat-tyrant, an adult Stripe-backed Bittern, White-throated and Dusky Tapaculos, Burrowing Parrots at a breeding cliff, Spectacled Duck, a splendid male Magellanic Woodpecker, an adult Rufous-legged Owl over our heads, Austral Parakeets and Chilean Pigeon in a fruiting tree, Chilean Flickers displaying, huge numbers of Slender-billed Parakeets, repeated good looks at Chucao, Magellanic and Ochre-flanked Tapaculos, Creamy-rumped, Short-billed and Rufous-banded Miners, Crag Chilia, Band-tailed Earthcreeper, Des Murs' Wiretail and the recently split Patagonian Forest Earthcreeper. The extension delivered the unforgettable experience of seeing King Penguin at South America's only mainland colony, Ruddy-headed Goose, point blank views of Austral Rail with the grey towers of Torres del Paine behind in glorious sunshine, Magellanic Plover at two sites, both Tawny-throated and Rufous-chested

Dotterels, and White-bridled Finches, Band-tailed Earthcreeper and Chocolate-vented Tyrant on the steppe. The stunning scenery in Torres del Paine National Park was a particularly memorable context in which to remember our magical birding in this wonderful country. We enjoyed cloudless conditions from north to south with no rain and barely a breath of wind at any point. As always, the accommodation was there along with great local cuisine, and generally accompanied with a fine national wine all making for yet another hugely successful tour.

The group met up in Arica, where most were staying in the beachfront Diego del Amagro hotel, a monument to functional brutalism and resonant of the dystopian imagery in George Orwell's '1984'. We immediately headed to the Lluta wetlands north of town where we were greeted with the spectacle of hundreds of Grey Gulls and American Oystercatchers on the beach, while maybe thousands of Inca and Elegant Terns were on the sea along with a scattering of Red-legged and Guanay Cormorants. Sat on the beach were also Belcher's and Kelp Gulls along with Hudsonian Whimbrel, hundreds of Sanderling and a pair of Kildeer. The wetland has been dry for some time, with no rain for nearly four years in the region, and so there were few waders or wildfowl to be found. However, we did see our first Snowy and Great Egrets, Little blue Herons and a few Black-crowned Night Herons. Amongst all of this we saw a pair of Puna Ibis; one of several species which descend to the coast during the austral winter. As we were in a La Nina year, spring was delayed, dry and cold, and it was not a surprise to see this species here at this time. Searching the coastal scrub and grasslands we were treated to the scratchy metallic song of Peruvian Meadowlarks, while numerous Slender-billed Finches posed nicely for us. Over the marsh we spotted our first Turkey Vultures and American Kestrels before it was time to head off in search of more important quarry.

Arriving in good time to explore desert oases in the Chaca valley, we were immediately treated to the sight of a displaying male Chilean Woodstar!!! That's right, the now critically endangered Chilean Woodstar on our list within seconds of arrival. It can be hard to find, but if your leader spends time before the tour working out where it is, things are lot easier. Also present were up to 20 Oasis Hummingbirds and a couple of Peruvian Sheartails. All were thrilled but especially Sarah, with her obsession for these delightful creatures. Also present were many more Slender-billed Finches, Chestnut-throated Seedeater and Hooded Siskin along with a pair of Harris's Hawks. After an extended session, mesmerised by hummingbirds, it was, very sadly, time to go.

Next, we stopped at the dusty Camarones valley where we quickly connected with several Pied-crested Tit-tyrants and, quite by chance, a female Chilean Woodstar sat on a nest. Fantastic! Heading up the valley to the alfalfa fields were Raimondi's Yellow-finches have been seen in large flocks in the past. During the last El Nino they had enjoyed a dramatic population explosion with flocks of thousands being seen in southern Peru. They were subsequently recorded in Chile, presumably with the dispersal of those post breeding flocks. However, they had not been seen recently in the Camarones valley and, along with the other groups that day, we did not see any either. It was late and time to move on. Stopping at the old Tamarugal 'plantations' a little further south we quickly connected with several Tamarugo Conebills, although they had not yet arrived in good numbers. It was very hot and, as there is little else to be found in this strange habitat, we continued to Iquique; a huge city on the coast where we were again enjoying the architectural delights of the Hotel Diego del Amagro .

The following day we headed to the port for our first, and as it turned out only, pelagic and speeding out of the harbour quickly connected with good numbers of Peruvian Pelicans and Boobies, South American Terns, Red-legged and Guanay Cormorants, a few Humboldt Penguins and large numbers of Inca Terns. As we left the coast, we began to see Peruvian Diving-petrels, Sooty Shearwaters and both White-chinned and Westland Petrels. It was unusually calm and many birds were sat on the sea, forcing us to cruise back and forth in search of becalmed birds. In the process we saw many Elliott's Storm-petrels, a single Blue-footed Booby, Chilean Skua, Grey Phalarope and, eventually, a Salvin's Albatross followed by a Shy Albatross. The latter a species very rarely seen in the eastern Pacific. We were constantly surrounded by large numbers of Markham's Storm-petrels, perhaps in excess of 500. Not surprising really, given that we could see the nesting areas!

Returning to the port we then headed back to Arica for some birding along the coast and a spot of night birding. In the coastal desert we found five Peruvian Thick-knees hunkered down in a sea of trash while Peruvian Terns fished in the surf. Oddly this had been a write-in on the last tour but in fact they breed just north of Arica! We then headed to Arica airport in search of Tschudi's Nightjar. Unfortunately, its home had been converted to a car park. Although this species is a denizen of barren surfaces it does draw the line at tarmac! We did, distantly, hear a calling bird but it did not come to my repeated invitations.

Next, we were headed up to Putre, our base from which to explore the strikingly beautiful Lauca National Park. On the way, in the lower Lluta valley, we found a large flock of Black-faced Ibis. The expansion of alfalfa production on the coast has allowed this species to increase in southern Peru and it is increasingly recorded in this valley. Also present were our first Spot-winged Pigeons, many more Slender-billed Finches, Chiguanco Thrush, Blue and yellow Tanager, a distant calling Groove-billed Ani and numerous White-crested Elaenias. The form here *modesta* is increasingly regarded as a distinct species; the Peruvian Elaenia. We also saw a number of Andean Swifts and a couple of Variable Hawks before we ran out of birds and time.

The next stop produced the *grisescens* form of Plain-mantled Tit-spinetail and a Steaked Tit-spinetail making for a useful comparison. While the latter is quite common the former is only found in the coastal Lomas of southern Peru and northern Chile and is not common. It may well obtain specific recognition in the near future and could then be named the Loma Tit-spinetail.

Climbing into the high Andes we were briefly detained by monumental roadworks before reaching more 'birdy' gullies just below Putre. Another set of birds quickly presented themselves as we notched up Mourning Sierra-finch, Greenish

Yellow-finch, Ash-breasted and Plumbeous Sierra Finches, and numerous Andean Hillstars. A small herd of Tarucas, a rare Andean deer, provided yet more excitement at another stop. A polylepis grove held a confiding pair of Canyon Canasteros and several Dark-winged Canasteros, along with Yellow-billed Tit-tyrant and several Black-hooded Sierra-finches. We pulled into our splendid lodgings at dusk to hear the metronome-like call of a Peruvian Pygmy Owl and watch the skies turn blood red as the sun went down. It was cold, but dinner in town was excellent, with many of us eating Alpaca for the first time before it was time for sleep.

An early start found us birding the canyon below the lodge. That was, in order that we did not head straight to 4600m from sea level! The canyon was excellent, providing great views of Black-hooded Sierra finch, Greenish Yellow-finch, Chiguanco Thrush, Yellow-billed tit-tyrant and a Black-throated Flowerpiercer. We also found good numbers of Bare-faced and Black-winged Ground Doves, Eared Dove, a small flock of Mountain Parakeets and after a little bit of coaxing a pair of White-throated Earthcreepers. Outstanding! The latter our principal target for this dusty little exercise. Heading back to the lodge we had good looks at Giant Hummingbird, White-winged and Cream-winged Cinclodes and the newly resident Peruvian Pygmy Owl being mobbed by Black-hooded Sierra-finches.

It was time to make for the high elevation bofedales in Lauca National Park. It was very cold and extremely dry with little or no obvious activity. Walking the trails at La Cuevas we did not find Diademed Sandpiper-plover, although during the course of two visits we did find White-fronted Ground-tyrant, Andean Negrito, White-winged and Cream-winged Cinclodes, Glacier Finch, Bright-rumped yellow-finch Yellow-billed Teal, Grey-breasted Seedsnipe, Crested Duck, a pair or two of Andean Geese and a single Mountain Caracara. Also present were good numbers of Vicuña, Viscacha and a few Big-eared Bolivian Mouse and a couple of us saw, what I eventually identified as a Mountain Degu: a greyish mouse with a long black-tipped fluffy tail.

As we lumped our way across the Puna, below the towering snow-capped peak of Parinacota, it was strikingly quiet. No Rheas and no calling Seedsnipe or Tinamous. We did turn up Puna Miner and the much rarer Common Miner. Water levels were low with the only wetland birds present in most lakes being Andean and Puna Flamingos, of which there were huge numbers accompanied by a few Chilean Flamingos. Luckily these were precisely the birds we were looking for. Nearby scrub gave us the berlepschi form of Plain-mantled Tit-spinetail which may well be named the Puna Tit-spinetail in due course. Moving swiftly on, I was beginning to wonder where all the wetland species were.

Not to worry, as when we arrived at the huge Chungara lake, it was heaving with life. Perhaps 800 Silvery Grebes, of the form *juninensis*, carpeted the lake. It was quite a sight. Yellow-billed Pintail, Yellow-billed Teal, Andean Duck, Puna Teal and numerous pairs of Andean Goose were present along with hundreds of Andean Gulls, Giant Coot and a very small number of Slate-coloured Coot. There were 18 Andean Avocets, some of which had young. We also saw good numbers of Puna Plover, Baird's Sandpiper, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs and a few Least Sandpipers but, oddly, no Andean Lapwing. A pleasant lunch by the lake gave us Cordilleran Canastero, two pairs of Buff-breasted Earthcreepers, a Rufous-naped Ground-tyrant and a single, very late, Ochre-naped Ground-tyrant. After working our way through assorted groups of all three Flamingo species better was to come with 18 Puna Rheas quietly feeding on the open bofedales. Totally outstanding and, as the sun was beginning to drop, we headed back to base for a second spectacular sunset. Another great dinner was followed by a quick excursion to see the resident Band-winged Nightjars which obliged with reasonable punctuality before we retreated for a much-needed rest.

A final quick visit to Parinacota produced the rare Golden-spotted Ground-dove, numerous pairs of Andean Flickers, a small group of Puna Ibis and, finally, three White-throated Sierra-finches at the very last moment. It was at the very last possible moment and the group had to quickly get off the bus, having settled in for a snooze on way to Putre. As we retraced our steps, we scanned the bofedales, finding small numbers of Puna, Cinereous and White-fronted Ground-tyrants, Andean Negritos, Yellow-billed Pintail, Yellow-billed Teal, another Puna Teal and a dozens of Andean Geese. Leaving Putre we headed to Chapiquña to explore a large polylepis grove. These twisted, stunted trees held Dark-winged Canastero, Straight-billed Earthcreeper, Yellow-billed Tit-tyrant, a single D'Orbigny's Chat Tyrant, Thick-billed Siskin and our only Andean Condor for this section of the tour. Nearby we found a small group of Mountain Parakeets which we watched as they quietly fed. Our descent to the coast was slowed by heavy traffic and roadworks, but we did manage to arrive at dusk, just before closing time.

The next morning, we took our flight to Santiago. It was a little later than scheduled and on one of the biggest holiday weekends of the year! Santiago appeared empty, and we soon discovered why. The entire population of the city was in the process of decamping to the coast. We joined the exodus in a journey punctuated, firstly with lunch and secondly with our first sightings of Chilean Mockingbird, Austral Thrush, Long-tailed Meadowlark, Chimango Caracara, Southern Lapwing and a few Monk Parakeets.

Birding kicked off at the Estero Maipo reserve, at 16.30, a superb wetland rich in birdlife and mercifully quiet. Although we were told the reserve would close at 17.00, we got to grips with Spectacled Tyrant, our first Rufous-tailed Plantcutters, Austral Blackbird, Yellow-winged Blackbird, numerous Grassland Yellow-finches, Black-chinned Siskin and the pretty Many-coloured Rush-tyrant. We also found our first Chilean Flicker, three White-faced Ibises, a pair of White-tailed Kites and a couple of Snowy Egrets. While walking the trails we heard and then, with some digital assistance, saw a couple of Dusky Tapaculos! Superb. The estuary was a thronging mass of Elegant and South American Terns together with hundreds of Black Skimmers and a couple of Snowy-crowned Terns. Waders present included Sanderling, Semipalmated Sandpipers and Plovers, Great and Lesser Yellowlegs and a single Hudsonian Godwit.

We departed considerably after 17.00 and made for the Cartagena reserve which was closed. A pattern was developing, but it pushed us to another rather better wetland which proved to be excellent. Next to the road we scoped up four Black-headed Ducks, numerous Red Shoveler, several Coscoroba Swans, our first Lake Duck and a good selection of Red-

gartered and Red-fronted Coot. There were also numerous Silvery Grebes, of the form *occipitalis*, along with many of the wetland species we had become familiar with during the course of our first day in the region! It was now very late and time to head to Valparaiso, where we knew, we would have to find a restaurant as the hotel restaurant would be closed. As it happened, we found a Peruvian restaurant (they never close) and enjoyed one of the best meals of the tour.

The following day did not follow the intended schedule as there was a huge storm in progress and our pelagic was postponed a couple of days. This did mean we had to replan the next few days. As a result, we headed to the Quebrada do Cordova which is a neat little reserve south of Valparaiso. On arrival we were greeted by a pair of Spot-flanked Gallinules with young and a small group of Chiloe Wigeon in the stream. Walking the reserve track, we first found the nominate form of the Plain-mantled Tit-spinetail which may be named the 'Matorral' Tit-Spinetail in due course. This was then followed by superb views of the endemic Dusky-tailed Canastero, a few Black-chinned Siskins, our first Common Diuca Finches and a Giant Hummingbird. As we continued along the trail we found a highly cooperative White-throated Tapaculo which performed nicely; first perching up then scuttling along the track like a demented chicken. A little further along the track we found of first Green-backed Firecrown making for a cracking start to our birding in the coastal region!

On to Laguna Peral which was rather dry and somewhat unproductive. The only addition to the list being Black-necked Swan. We did see a number of Red Shoveler, more Chiloe Wigeon, Coscoroba Swans and a pair of White-tailed Kites. We then headed to the coast and while watching huge waves crash on the rocky headland, we enjoyed a spot of sea watching. This gave us a couple of Southern Giant Petrels, a single Salvin's Albatross and a good number of Sooty Shearwaters. On the rocky foreshore we found Chilean Seaside Cinclodes together with Blackish Oystercatcher, Peruvian Pelicans and numerous Guanay Cormorants being blown about in the gale.

In the afternoon we headed inland and, avoiding the endless queues of traffic, made for La Campana National Park. We did not arrive until late in the afternoon and made directly for the upper reaches of the park to explore a narrow track to an old mine above La Dormida. A huge gate with signs inviting us to go away greeted our arrival. What harm could a short walk, so late in the day, along the track do? Apparently, it was a major problem, although we were allowed to stay. We did not see much more than we had already seen that day except for Chilean Elaenia. There more Dusky-tailed Canasteros, Plain-mantled Tit-spinetails and a nice Fire-eyed Diucon. We departed for Olmue.

The next day we departed very early for El Yeso! There was no traffic on the road and literally not a single vehicle in Santiago (as it was all on the coast or in the Andes) and so we made very good time and got to our first stop in perfect time. We did have an excellent long-suffering driver and I had the route planned to the minute. The very first birding stop looked less than great, but in no time, it was hard to know which way to look. We had a pair of Moustached Turcas scuttling about in front of us and a pair of Crag Chilia at our feet. Totally awesome, as the youth of today are wont to say.

As we contemplated heading up the valley, we noticed the traffic had started. We spotted a stunning male Torrent Duck on the river below us and moved on. The next stop was a wet grassy area in an otherwise desiccated landscape. We quickly picked up Greater Yellow-finch, Buff-winged Cinclodes, Ash-breasted and Plumbeous Sierra-finches, Grey-hooded Sierra-finch, several White-browed Ground Tyrants and a single Cinereous Ground Tyrant.

As we sat in the bus ready to move on to the next site, a dull rumble followed by a huge plume of dust appeared in the valley above us. Patricio fired up the van and the radiator blew! We needed assistance. A short while later, while talking to a mine worker coming down the valley, we discovered that the rumble and associated plume of dust, which was now being blown down the valley at high speed, was the result of a landslide that had blocked the road. As a result, we could not get to El Yeso for two reasons: 1) a landslide had blocked the road and 2) a ruptured radiator. It was a holiday weekend and not the best time to breakdown and so we had to wait for roadside assistance.

When we arrived at our hotel, I quickly arranged transport and we headed off to a small reserve near the hotel. Trails were in conditions from stress at the base, to agitation, tranquillity, happiness and, at the summit, bliss. We did end up seeing an Austral Pygmy Owl and a couple of Striped Woodpeckers along with numerous Chilean Elaenias.

So, the next day, our only option was to head to the Farellones ski resort. The lower slopes were 'bone' dry and there was no sign of any Tinamous or indeed anything, except a pair of Moustached Turcas. We headed up to the ski stations where we connected with Grey-flanked and Buff-winged Cinclodes, numerous Rufous-banded Miners, Greater Yellow-finches and Puna Ground-tyrants on a small bofedale. Several pairs of Andean Condors cruised overhead as we climbed higher to find 20 or so Creamy-rumped Miners and White-fronted Ground-tyrants but no Black-fronted Ground-tyrants. I had been watching them in Peru two weeks before the tour and it seemed, that with the cold spring, they had no intention of departing and therefore had not arrived in Chile. Likewise, the White-sided Hillstars were not yet on breeding grounds. Mike and I had seen a hummingbird in the lower Yeso valley the day before that was most likely this species, but not well enough to call. After several more searches for these species, we elected to move on.

Moving on meant heading back to the lowlands and Lago Batauco. We arrived at the Lago Batauco reserve just in time but the reserve was closed! Patricio and I persuaded her to let us in and on we went. We quickly connected with a good selection of wildfowl, along with Cocoi Heron and several Cinereous Harriers. However, although new for the list we had not come to see these species. We worked our way around the reserve until we found a suitable spot and, in no time, a Stripe-backed Bittern called back. I managed to secure another five minutes and in that time the bittern reappeared, giving good views for all. We then departed in a hurry, finding a Burrowing Owl as we headed to the highway.

Next, we were heading south to more humid Patagonian forests at the Altos de Lircay and thereafter the Termas de Chillan. Departing early the following morning we just missed the early morning rush hour traffic and scurried south to the Maule valley where we were treated to some great birding. We firstly found the uncommon Spectacled Duck loafing

about, numerous Upland Geese, Black-necked and Coscoroba Swans and hundreds of Red-gartered, Red-fronted and our first White-winged Coot. As we moved up the valley, ever more flocks of the highly localised Burrowing Parrot passed overhead until we reached the breeding cliffs where we enjoyed great views of these spectacular parrots. I decided we should return to the wetlands where we had another look through the thronging mass of wildfowl. However, it was a loud booming song that redirected our attention to a nearby woodlot. After a bit of work, we all managed reasonable looks at a pair of Chestnut-throated Huet-huets! Outstanding.

Departing the Maule valley, we headed to the Altos de Lircay above Vilches. At our hotel, we enjoyed great views of our first Thorn-tailed Rayaditos and White-throated Treerunners. Dozens of Green-backed Firecrowns buzzed about around the feeders, which was a delight for Sarah.

Off to another equally stunning area of Fuegian forest where we saw a few Austral Parakeets but otherwise the forests were very quiet. Heading to more open areas we connected with large numbers of Austral Parakeets and several Chilean Pigeons in a fruiting tree along with a pair of Chilean Flickers. Although not uncommon, we had not seen this species very well and it was a much-appreciated end to daylight birding.

After a much-needed break, we headed out in search of nocturnal quarry. It took a bit of time but we eventually had phenomenal views of an adult Rufous-legged Owl right above our heads. A great end to a fabulous day of birding.

The following morning, we headed back to taller forest for what was to be another spectacular morning. The Austral Parakeets were much in evidence and the forest was alive with Thorn-Tailed Rayaditos, White-throated Treerunners, Chilean Elaenias and Fire-eyed Diucons. We worked at a Chucao Tapaculo which eventually gave good views. A little later a single note gave away the presence of a Magellanic Woodpecker and very soon we were all looking at a splendid male carefully picking its way up a large tree. This was a much-wanted species and one highly appreciated by all. We then began to retrace our steps. Walking through the tall open forest I first spotted a soaring White-throated Hawk, which was then joined by a larger adult Rufous-tailed Hawk!! These species are both rarely seen raptors, largely restricted to these forests and to see them together was fantastic. That already made the trip but as we walked on a Chestnut-throated Huet-huet started to call and we were then treated to an unforgettable sequence of views of this near mythical denizen of prehistoric Fuegian forests. After watching these engaging creatures, a while, we moved on. A short while later our attention was drawn by the excited chatter of numerous passerines indicating the presence of a raptor. As we all stood looking into the forest a juvenile Chilean Hawk chased across in front of us!! Job done. What a morning and one unlikely to be repeated.

The journey south took us via Temuco to the Termas de Chillan. As we still need to see Chilean Tinamou we made for a good area near Vilches. We heard a Tinamou at our first stop but could not extract it from the dense vegetation. We moved to a more open flowering meadow and again heard a couple very distantly but otherwise it was quiet. Then Hellmayr's Pipit began to display and a Chilean Tinamou appeared in front of us. We worked the area a while longer finding a couple of Screaming Cowbirds and a few more Long-tailed Meadowlarks.

The next morning at Termas de Chillan we drove up the valley to Las Trancas and from there worked our way through yet more magnificent forests with a dense bamboo understorey and tall snow-capped Andean peaks providing a stunning backdrop. We quickly found the Patagonian Forest Earthcreeper and enjoyed great views of this newly described species. We also found the delightful, if timid, Des Mur's Wiretail along with many more Austral Parakeets. A Magellanic Woodpecker drummed distantly and numerous Chilean Elaenias, Thorn-tailed Rayaditos and White-throated Treerunners entertained us a while. We headed a little further up the valley and walked another trail. A quiet call revealed the presence of the often-shy Patagonian Tyrant and in no time, we were looking at this somewhat drab Patagonian endemic. A short while later we taped in a Magellanic Tapaculo which came to our feet, as they are inclined to do. Another cracking morning session and it really was time to drag ourselves away from this magnificent area.

After a longer transfer, we arrived at Puyehue National Park with few stops en route.

The vast, resort-like Hotel Termas de Puyehue is situated in huge grounds and so we quickly set about exploring them. We found Dark-bellied Cinclodes, Patagonian Sierra-finches, more Austral Parakeets and a small group of Slender-billed Parakeets. The Des Mur's Wiretail was again lured into view from its dense bamboo retreat. Patagonian Tyrant was again heard calling but we left it alone in favour of searching for more Parakeets and Chilean Pigeons. There were Rufous-tailed Plantcutters and Austral Blackbirds together with Chimango Caracaras and Southern Lapwings but no more Slender-billed Parakeets. We would have to wait for them.

The following day we headed along a quiet forested road through the National Park towards the Antillanca ski resort. It was overcast all day and very cold with little or no movement, although the forests rang to the songs of Chucao, Ochre-flanked and Magellanic Tapaculos and the occasional Black-throated Huet-huet. We easily saw Chucao Tapaculos and pair of Ochre-flanked Tapaculos but the Black-throated Huet-huets were not interested. We continued to the treeline where all the bamboo was dying back, as it does every ten years or so. The Huet-huets had less scope for concealment here, but, even so, proved unusually hard to see. They were clearly not in breeding condition and merely busied themselves with feeding. It was still winter here with snow on the ground and near freezing conditions. Nevertheless, we did manage to see a pair scratching about in the leaf litter.

The next day we headed to Isla Chiloe after a hearty breakfast and a quick walk around the grounds. Needless to say, it was a glorious day with not a cloud in the sky and not a breath of wind. The crossing provided a marvellous opportunity for a bit of sunbathing after the chilling conditions of the previous day. However, this was of no assistance to us as we were expecting to see a certain Storm Petrel on the crossing. We did see hundreds of Slender-billed Parakeets and numerous Imperial and Rock Shags, along with Magellanic Penguins, and the, as yet undescribed, Chiloe form, of

Flightless Steamer Duck. We did not see Storm Petrels of any sort or Magellanic Diving Petrels and only managed Sooty and Pink-footed Shearwaters in the tubenose department. The reflection of the Andes in the normally choppy waters was quite stunning but provided largely birdless conditions.

Chiloe is always a pleasure to explore. We headed to Caulin where we were treated to the sight of hundreds of Hudsonian Godwits together with American Oystercatchers and a few Red Knot. I thought I might have seen a Magellanic Oystercatcher but it could not be located. In addition, there were hundreds of Black-necked and Coscoroba Swans, more Steamer Ducks, Chiloe Wigeon and a few Black Skimmers and South American Terns.

We continued to Ancud, seeing Dolphin Gulls in the harbour before heading on to Peñuñil for a very pleasant boat trip around the offshore islets, with Oliver Reed as our captain. Our windless trip around the islets provided great views of Kelp Goose, Magellanic Penguin, Rock and Red-legged Shags and Imperial Cormorant and all under clear blue skies. After this spectacular helping of avifaunal delights, we headed back to Ancud, seeing Cinereous Harrier and a good variety of wildfowl and waders en route while adding Grass Wren and Correndera to our trip list. We also managed to see more Ochre-flanked Tapaculos, which are common on Chiloe, and a couple of Magellanic Tapaculos.

The following morning, we made our way along the north coast of Chiloe seeing much the same species as we had the day before, adding only Ringed Kingfisher, of the form *stellata*, to our lists. The sea was like a mirror with even less wind than on our first crossing and despite making the crossing three more times we did not see Pincoya Storm Petrel. Frustrating but not altogether unexpected given the conditions. That was it and time to head to Puerto Montt airport for our flight to Punta Arenas.

Although, for a variety of reasons, we arrived extraordinarily late to our hotel in Punta Arenas we were eager for the next instalment of our epic Chilean adventure. We were in good time for our ferry crossing to Porvenir, which again was flat calm. Nevertheless, we did find the usual cast of seabirds starting with large numbers of Southern Giant Petrels in the harbour! Here there were also a few Magellanic Oystercatchers and thousands of King Cormorants nesting on the various dilapidated piers. Out in the Beagle Channel we saw good numbers of Magellanic Penguins, Magellanic Diving-petrels, Wilson's Storm-petrels, Sooty and Pink-footed Shearwaters, Chilean Skua and many, many Black-browed Albatrosses. We arrived to Porvenir midday and after a bit of shopping for 'en camino' snacking we headed for Bahia Inutil some 105km away along a rough gravel road. We stopped to see huge numbers of South American Terns, Coscoroba Swans and Chiloe Wigeon. On the sea we saw Magellanic Steamer-ducks and Chilean Skuas patrolling the beaches. A wetland produced large numbers of Upland Geese along with a pair of Ashy-headed Geese and pour only pair of Ruddy-headed Geese. Stopping in the steppe we also saw our first Cinnamon-bellied Ground-tyrants, Short-billed and Common Miners and numerous Patagonian Yellow-finches. Once at the reserve we enjoyed watching up to forty adult King Penguins parading about in preparation for another breeding season. Absolutely superb!! Also present on site were numerous pairs of Two-banded Plovers, more Common Miners, Correndera Pipits and Patagonian Yellow-finches. We had a long way to go and so we retraced our steps to Porvenir. We screeched to a halt when Karen spotted a Short-eared Owl by the road but otherwise our journey was not further impeded.

A long day in prospect after an early breakfast, this time haring across the subantarctic Fuegian steppe on Tierra del Fuego to Punta Delgado and thence along the Argentine border to Puerto Natales and on to Torres del Paine! Our first stop, at Laguna Verde, produced a pair of Magellanic Plovers. Absolutely superb views of one of the most wanted birds of the trip. Next up we found a pair of Flying Steamer Ducks right by the road before heading out across the steppe where a short stop produced a small group of the dapper Chocolate-vented Tyrant.

The ferry was not great as passengers are now confined below deck, however, we did see a couple of Commerson's Dolphins before docking on the mainland. We then had a swift lunch while adding Haired Patagonian Armadillo and Dark-faced Ground-tyrant to the trip list.

We took our leave of Bahia Azul and headed across the steppe to the Pali Aike National Park. We stopped at a number of roadside pools seeing more than 20 Rufous-chested Dotterels and White-bridled Finches along with our first Least Seedsnipe and more Short-billed and Common Miners. Further along the road we found groups of the magnificent Tawny-throated Dotterels and many more Least Seedsnipe, Rufous-chested Dotterels and White-bridled Finches. There were birds everywhere and this was another absolutely superb birding session.

Early morning and Torres del Paine. Scenery out of this world and we were in search of a single species, the recently rediscovered Austral Rail. We began at one lake with numerous Cinereous Harriers quartering the marsh. Ian had told of a failed search in Argentina where every time the Rail call was played, Cinereous Harriers would come to investigate and the Rails would go quiet. I am not sure the Harriers present were looking for Rails in the reeds but I decided to move to another lake. No Harriers this time. Everyone focused and very soon a series of clicks and there it was. Right in front of us, eventually giving cracking views. An experience that could not be beaten; an Austral Rail parading back and forth in the reeds just in front of us and the looming towers of Torres del Paine above the marsh. All in windless conditions and glorious sunshine

As we travelled around the park it was very noticeable that many wetlands were dry and the park rather empty. We did see our only Silver Teal amongst many Yellow-billed Pintail, Yellow-billed Teal, Upland Geese and Red-gartered Coot but little else. It was time to move on and so we headed to Sierra de Baguales. We worked the lower valley seeing the pallida form of Plain-mantled Tit-Spinetail which may be named the Patagonian Tit-Spinetail in due course. Except for 25, or so, Andean Condors cruising overhead we saw little else and retreated to our hotel as it began to rain, threatening to upset the following days plans.

Up at dawn and off to Lago Sarmiento in search of our final quarry. This time not a bird but the somewhat elusive Puma. On each of the smaller hills overlooking a cave where a female was known to have a cub a Guanaco sat watching. We then sat and watched them and once a Guanaco alerted us to the presence of a cat we were on the move. We waited and after repositioning ourselves a few times finally found the female heading off to hunt. A spectacular success and a fitting finale to the tour.

Heading back to Punta Arenas across the open steppe we made a few stops, finding another Magellanic Plover and a Flying Steamer Duck at one large lake. An area that also held many Upland Geese, three Ashy-headed Geese and good numbers of Baird's Sandpipers. In the absence of anything else to look for we headed back to Punta Arenas.

As we all had flights much later the following day, we headed out together to the steppe for a final session as a group. Once on site, Band-tailed Earthcreeper immediately put in an appearance. A species that would be better named Scrub Chilia or Steppe Chilia. We also reacquainted ourselves with White-bridled Finch, Rufous-chested Dotterel and Short-billed Miner. The journey out to the site produced a staggering 132 Lesser Rheas, including a good number of males, one with 16 youngsters in tow. Returning to the main highway, we made a brief stop at a suitable spot and found our final new species for the tour; the cryptically patterned Austral Canastero. That was it and so we headed back to Punta Arenas, thereby concluding a long and highly successful tour with a really great group of people. Many thanks to all for making the trip so enjoyable and a big thanks to Mike Galtry for furnishing me with so many great photos for the report.

## BIRDS OF THE TRIP

1st: King Penguin

2nd: Magellanic Woodpecker

3rd: Moustached Turca

4th: Rufous-legged Owl

5th: Chilean Woodstar

6th: Tawny-throated Dotterel

7th: Crag Chilia

8th: Chucao Tapaculo

9th: Magellanic Plover

10th: Chestnut-throated Huet-huet

## SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED

### BIRDS

Lesser Rhea [Puna R] ◇ *Rhea [pennata] tarapacensis* Near threatened. An astonishing 18 seen well in Lauca NP.

Lesser Rhea [Darwin's R] ◇ *Rhea [pennata] pennata* Up 150 seen on one day in the south.

Chilean Tinamou ◇ *Nothoprocta perdicaria* Endemic. 1 seen and several heard near Talca.

California Quail (Introduced) *Callipepla californica* Commonly seen and heard.

Coscoroba Swan ◇ *Coscoroba coscoroba* First seen Estero de Cartagena. Abundant in south.

Black-necked Swan *Cygnus melancorhyphus* Seen at several larger wetland sites.

Flying Steamer Duck ◇ *Tachyeres patachonicus* A pair near Porvenir, 1 near Punta Arenas.

Fuegian Steamer Duck ◇ [Flightless Steamer Duck] *Tachyeres pteneres* (X) Several pairs Tierra del Fuego.

“Chiloe” Steamer Duck ◇ *Tachyeres sp. nov.* Endemic. Very common along the north coast of Chiloe.

Torrent Duck *Merganetta armata* Seen on several rivers.

Andean Goose *Chloephaga melanoptera* Very common in Lauca NP.

Upland Goose *Chloephaga picta* Seen from the Maule valley southwards.

Kelp Goose ◇ *Chloephaga hybrida* Several pairs on Peñahuil.

**Ashy-headed Goose** ◇ *Chloephaga poliocephala* 2 on Tierra del Fuego, 3 near Punta Arenas. Has become rather uncommon in the last few years.

**Ruddy-headed Goose** ◇ *Chloephaga rubidiceps* 2 near Porvenir. A local and very uncommon species now.

**Crested Duck** *Lophonetta specularioides* Small numbers in Lauca NP, abundant in the far south

**Bronze-winged [Spectacled] Duck** *Specularnas specularis* Near threatened. Seen along the Maule river valley.

**Puna Teal** *Anas puna* Small numbers in Lauca NP.

**Silver Teal** *Spatula versicolor* 4 seen in Torres del Paine.

**Red Shoveler** ◇ *Anas platalea* Common in C Chile.

**Cinnamon Teal** *Anas cyanoptera* Fairly common.

**Chiloe Wigeon** ◇ *Anas sibilatrix* Numerous from central Chile southwards.

**White-cheeked Pintail** *Anas bahamensis* One at Estero Maipo

**Yellow-billed Pintail** *Anas georgica* A few in Lauca NP. Regular encounters elsewhere.

**Yellow-billed Teal [Speckled Teal]** *Anas flavirostris* North (*oxyptera*). Elsewhere (*flavirostris*)

**Black-headed Duck** ◇ *Heteronetta atricapilla* 4 seen very well at Estero Cartagena. The only parasitic duck.

**Andean Duck** ◇ (Ruddy) *Oxyura ferruginea* A few seen at Lago Chungara in Lauca NP

**Lake Duck** ◇ [Ruddy Duck] *Oxyura vittata* Fairly common from Santiago southwards.

**Band-winged Nightjar** *Systellura longirostris atripuntatus* A pair seen well at Putre.

**Tschudi's Nightjar** ◇ *Systellura decussata* (Heard) Original site now a car park!

**Andean Swift** *Aeronautes andecolus* Fairly common in the Lluta valley at one the few sites it is recorded in Chile.

**Andean Hillstar** *Oreotrochilus estella* Very common around Putre.

**Giant Hummingbird** *Patagona gigas* Seen at Putre (*peruviana*), and at La Campana NP (*gigas*).

**Green-backed Firecrown** ◇ *Sephanoides sephaniodes* Seen Quebrada de Cordova to Chiloe.

**Oasis Hummingbird** ◇ *Rhodopis vesper* Common at sites around Arica. Endemic subspecies, *atacamensis*.

**Peruvian Sheartail** ◇ *Thaumastura cora* Small numbers at sites around Arica.

**Chilean Woodstar** ◇ *Eulidia yarrellii* Critically endangered. 3 in Chaca valley. A displaying male and two females were a tour highlight. Also, an occupied nest in overhanging branches in a large tree in the Camarones valley.

**Groove-billed Ani** *Crotophaga sulcirostris* Heard.

**Feral Pigeon [Rock Dove]** *Columba livia*

**Spot-winged Pigeon** *Patagioenas maculosa* Seen at sites around Arica and Putre (*albipennis*). Now spreading along the coastal valleys from Tacna.

**Chilean Pigeon** ◇ *Patagioenas araucana* Small numbers from Vilches to Puyehue NP.

**Picui Ground Dove** *Columbina picui* Small numbers central Chile.

**Croaking Ground Dove** *Columbina cruziana* Common at sites around Arica.

**Bare-faced Ground Dove** *Metriopelia ceciliae* Very common around Putre.

**Golden-spotted Ground Dove** *Metriopelia aymara* A pair of this pretty dove in Lauca NP. A very uncommon species, usually found around villages and animal corrals.

**Black-winged Ground Dove** *Metriopelia melanoptera* Seen Putre. 1 at 900m in the Lluta valley.

**Eared Dove** *Zenaida auriculata*

**West Peruvian Dove** ◇ *Zenaida meloda* Common at sites around Arica up to about 1000m.



**Plumbeous Rail *Pardirallus sanguinolentus*** (Heard) Heard Humedal de Lluta, Estero de Maipo and Lago Batuco.

**Austral Rail** ♦ *Rallus antarcticus* Vulnerable. More or less at our feet in Torres del Paine NP. Thought extinct until recently rediscovered in Patagonia.

**Spot-flanked Gallinule *Porphyriops melanops*** A pair with young at Quebrada Cordova.

**Common Gallinule *Gallinula galeata*** Fairly common at the Humedal de Lluta, near Arica.

**Red-gartered Coot *Fulica armillata*** Common in central and southern Chile.

**Red-fronted Coot *Fulica rufifrons*** A few in central Chile.

**Andean Coot [Slate-coloured Coot] *Fulica ardesiaca*** Small numbers in Lauca NP.

**White-winged Coot *Fulica leucoptera*** A few in the Maule valley.

**Giant Coot *Fulica gigantea*** Very common in Lauca, especially Lago Chungara.

**White-tufted Grebe *Rollandia rolland*** Regular encounters from Lauca southwards.

**Great Grebe *Podiceps major*** Seen at several sites.

**Silvery [Northern Silvery] Grebe *Podiceps [occipitalis] juninensis*** Near threatened. Abundant Lauca where up to 800 seen on Laguna Chungara.

**Silvery [Southern Silvery] Grebe *Podiceps [occipitalis] occipitalis*** A few in the south.

**Chilean Flamingo *Phoenicopterus chilensis*** Near threatened. Small numbers in Lauca NP.

**Andean Flamingo** ♦ *Phoenicopterus andinus* Vulnerable. Small numbers in Lauca NP.

**James's Flamingo** ♦ *Phoenicopterus jamesi* Near threatened. Several hundred in Lauca NP.

**Peruvian Thick-knee *Burhinus superciliaris*** 5 hunkered down in a 'sea of trash' near Arica.

**Magellanic Plover** ♦ *Pluvianellus socialis* Near threatened. 2 near Porvenir, 1 near Punta Arenas.

**Magellanic Oystercatcher** ♦ *Haematopus leucopodus* A good number seen daily in the south

**Blackish Oystercatcher *Haematopus ater***

**American Oystercatcher *Haematopus palliatus***

**White-backed Stilt *Himantopus melanurus*** Abundant at the Estero de Maipo.

**Andean Avocet *Recurvirostra andina*** 18 Lauca NP. A pair defending young was a forgotten tour highlight!

**Southern Lapwing *Vanellus chilensis***

**American Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica*** 4 seen Estero de Lluta.

**Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*** 70 on the beach at the Humedal de Lluta. 1 seen Estero Maipo. **Semipalmated Plover *Charadrius semipalmatus*** A few seen LLuta river mouth.

**Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus*** Two pairs noted LLuta river mouth.

**Collared Plover *Charadrius collaris*** Seen very briefly by your leader at Lluta wetland.

**Puna Plover *Charadrius alticola*** Up to 12 recorded at Lago Chungara in Lauca NP.

**Two-banded Plover** ♦ *Charadrius falklandicus* Very common on Tierra del Fuego and a few seen in Torres del Paine National Park.

**Rufous-chested Dotterel** ♦ *Charadrius modestus* At least 30 along roads around Pali Aike NP.

**Tawny-throated Dotterel *Oreopholus ruficollis*** Up to along the Argentina border west of Pali Aike NP.

**Grey-breasted Seedsnipe *Thinocorus orbignyianus*** A few at Las Cueva, Lauca NP.

**Least Seedsnipe *Thinocorus rumicovorus*** Common Pali Aike NP.

**Whimbrel [Hudsonian Whimbrel] *Numenius [phaeopus] hudsonicus***

**Hudsonian Godwit *Limosa haemastica*** 1 Maipo estuary. Up to 1000 on Chiloe Island.

**Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*** A few seen in the Lluta estuary.

**Red Knot *Calidris canutus*** Near threatened. 12 seen Chaulin bay, Chiloe Island.

**Sanderling *Calidris alba*** Large numbers recorded Lluta wetlands foreshore.

**Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii***

**Least Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii***

**White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*** 1 or 2 Lluta wetland, fairly common in the south.

**Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla*** Near threatened. Several Lluta and Maipo estuaries.

**Magellanic Snipe *Gallinago [paraguaiiae] magellanica*** Seen displaying in several locations.

**Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus wilsoni*** First seen Chiloe. Small numbers on Tierra del Fuego.

**Red (Grey P) Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*** Small numbers on Iquique pelagic.

**Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes***

**Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca***

**Willet *Tringa semipalmata*** 1 Lluta. (*inornatus*) This form sometimes known as Western Willet.

**Black Skimmer *Rynchops niger*** Large numbers at Lluta and Maipo estuaries.

**Andean Gull *Chroicocephalus serranus*** Small numbers in Lauca NP.

**Brown-hooded Gull *Chroicocephalus maculipennis***

**Dolphin Gull ◊ *Leucophaeus scoresbii*** A few on Chiloe. Common Tierra del Fuego.

**Franklin's Gull *Leucophaeus pipixcan***

**Grey Gull ◊ *Leucocephalus modestus*** Abundant on the coast in northern Chile.

**Grey-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus*** Several seen at Lluta wetlands.

**Belcher's Gull ◊ (Band-tailed G) *Larus belcheri*** Common on the coast in the north.

**Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus***

**Elegant Tern *Thalasseus elegans*** Near threatened. Huge numbers at Lluta and Maipo estuaries.

**Peruvian Tern ◊ *Sternula lorata*** Endangered. Small numbers on three occasions north of Arica. Now RARE.

**South American Tern *Sterna hirundinacea***

**Inca Tern ◊ *Larosterna inca*** Near threatened. Abundant off coast in the north. Several thousand north of Arica.

**Snowy-crowned Tern *Sterna trudeaui*** 2 Maipo estuary, 3 Chiloe.

**Chilean Skua ◊ *Stercorarius chilensis*** Several on Iquique pelagic. Common in the south.

**Parasitic Jaeger (Arctic Skua) *Stercorarius parasiticus*** 2 on the Iquique pelagic.

**King Penguin ◊ *Aptenodytes patagonicus*** 95+ adults and four chicks at Bahia Inutil.

**Magellanic Penguin ◊ *Spheniscus magellanicus*** Near threatened. 25 Isla Penuhuil. Others on ferry crossings

**Humboldt Penguin ◊ *Spheniscus humboldti*** Vulnerable. A few on the Iquique pelagic.

**Wilson's Storm Petrel ◊ *Oceanites oceanicus***

**Elliot's Storm Petrel ◊ *Oceanites gracilis*** Very common on the Iquique pelagic.

**Markham's Storm Petrel ◊ *Oceanodroma markhami*** Near threatened. High numbers on the Iquique pelagic.

**Black-browed Albatross *Thalassarche melanophris***

**Salvin's Albatross *Thalassarche salvini*** Vulnerable. 1 on the Iquique pelagic and another seen from Tarbo near Valparaiso by Mike.

**Shy Albatross *Thalassarche cauta*** Near threatened. One seen on Iquique pelagic. A species rarely seen in the eastern Pacific. A good record.

**Southern Giant Petrel *Macronectes giganteus***

**Northern Giant Petrel *Macronectes halli*** One during the Iquique pelagic.

**White-chinned Petrel *Procellaria aequinoctialis*** Vulnerable. Common on Iquique pelagic.

**Westland Petrel** ◊ (**Westland Black Petrel**) *Procellaria westlandica* Endangered. At least 1 on Iquique pelagic.

**Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*** Near threatened. Common to abundant on the Iquique pelagic.

**Pink-footed Shearwater *Puffinus creatopus*** Vulnerable. Small numbers on Chiloe crossing.

**Peruvian Diving Petrel** ◊ *Pelecanoides garnotii* Endangered. Remarkably numerous on Iquique pelagic.

**Magellanic Diving Petrel** ◊ *Pelecanoides magellani* Common in the Magellan Straits.

**Blue-footed Booby *Sula nebouxii*** One seen near Iquique

**Peruvian Booby *Sula variegata*** Not as common as usual.

**Red-legged Cormorant *Phalacrocorax gaimardi*** Near threatened. Common Iquique and elsewhere on the coast.

**Neotropic Cormorant *Phalacrocorax brasilianus***

**Guanay Cormorant *Phalacrocorax bougainvillii*** Near threatened. Small numbers Arica and Iquique. Numbers down by up to 80% in the last twenty years.

**Rock Shag** ◊ *Phalacrocorax magellanicus* Seen Chiloe and the Magellan Straits.

**Guanay Cormorant *Phalacrocorax bougainvillii*** Small numbers seen off Lluta and Iquique

**Imperial Shag [Blue-eyed Cormorant]** ◊ *Phalacrocorax [atriceps] atriceps* Common Chiloe.

**Imperial Shag [King Cormorant]** ◊ *Phalacrocorax [atriceps] albiventer* (X) Common Magellan straits.

**Black-faced Ibis** ◊ *Theristicus melanopis* 29 in Lluta valley. Common to abundant in the south.

**Puna Ibis *Plegadis ridgwayi*** A few at Lauca NP.

**White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi*** Wintering birds; 3 Estero Maipo, 1 Laguna Cartagena.

**Stripe-backed Bittern** ◊ *Ixobrychus involucris* Superb looks at an adult at Batuco lake.

**Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax***

**Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis***

**Cocoi Heron *Ardea cocoi*** 3 at Lago Batuco.

**Great Egret *Ardea alba***

**Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea*** Only seen at the Humedal de Lluta.

**Tricoloured Heron *Egretta tricolor*** A juvenile seen by your leader at the Lluta wetlands was a write in.

**Snowy Egret *Egretta thula***

**Peruvian Pelican *Pelecanus thagus*** Near threatened. Common in the north. Smaller numbers on central coast.

**Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura***

**Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus*** Small numbers in central region.

**Andean Condor *Vultur gryphus*** Near threatened. 1 Chapiquiña, 12 Santiago, 1 Vilches, 40+ Torres del Paine.

**White-tailed Kite *Elanus leucurus*** Seen Estero de Maipo and El Peral.

**Chilean Hawk** ◊ *Accipiter chilensis* One juvenile hunting at Altos de Licay.

**Cinereous Harrier *Circus cinereus*** 2 – Lago Batuco. Fairly common in the south.

**Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus*** A displaying pair in Chaca valley.

**Variable Hawk (Red-backed H) *Geranoaetus polyosoma***

**Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle *Geranoaetus melanoleucus***

**White-throated Hawk ◊ *Buteo albigula*** Good views of an adult bird at Alto de Lircay.

**Rufous-tailed Hawk ◊ *Buteo ventralis*** Vulnerable. Great views of an adult dark phase bird at Altos de Lircay. A very poorly known species with widely scattered sites from old growth Fuegian forests.

**Austral Pygmy Owl ◊ *Glaucidium nana*** Seen San Jose de Maipo, heard elsewhere.

**Pacific Pygmy Owl ◊ (Peruvian P O) *Glaucidium peruanum*** 1 Putre. Very high, 1 Lluta valley.

**Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia***

**Rufous-legged Owl ◊ *Strix rufipes*** One superb bird over head at Altos de Lircay. Endemic subspecies *sanborni*.

**Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus***

**Ringed Kingfisher *Megaceryle torquata*** Seen on Chiloe of the endemic subspecies *stellata*.

**Striped Woodpecker ◊ *Veniliornis lignarius*** Seen at several sites.

**Chilean Flicker ◊ *Colaptes pitius*** First seen Estero de Maipo. A pair at Altos de Lircay

**Andean Flicker *Colaptes rupicola*** Common around Parinicota, Lauca NP.

**Magellanic Woodpecker ◊ *Campephilus magellanicus*** A superb male at Altos de Lircay. Heard at Termas de Chillan and Puyehue NP.

**Mountain Caracara *Phalacrocorax magellanicus***

**Southern Crested Caracara *Caracara plancus***

**Chimango Caracara *Milvago chimango***

**American Kestrel *Falco sparverius***

**Aplomado Falcon *Falco femoralis*** A pair seen at Quebrada de Cordova, a single at Lago Batuco.

**Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus***

**Mountain Parakeet *Psilopsiagon aurifrons*** Small flocks seen in Putre and at Zapahuira.

**Monk Parakeet (introduced) *Myiopsitta monachus*** Small numbers around Santiago.

**Austral Parakeet ◊ *Enicognathus ferrugineus*** Large flocks at Altos de Lircay and further south.

**Slender-billed Parakeet ◊ *Enicognathus leptorhynchus*** Endemic. Common in north Chiloe and around Puerto Montt were seen in flocks of hundreds.

**Burrowing Parrot ◊ *Cyanoliseus patagonus*** Over 100 in the Maule valley (*byroni*)

**Common Miner *Geositta cunicularia*** A few in Lauca NP. Common in the south.

**Puna Miner *Geositta punensis*** Common in desert puna in Lauca NP

**Rufous-banded Miner *Geositta rufipennis*** Numerous on upper Farellones road (*fasciata*).

**Short-billed Miner ◊ *Geositta antarctica*** Small numbers Patagonia.

**Creamy-rumped Miner ◊ *Geositta isabellina*** At least 20 on upper Farellones road.

**White-throated Treerunner ◊ *Pygarrhichas albigularis*** Common Chillan and Puyehue.

**Straight-billed Earthcreeper *Ochetorhynchus ruficaudus*** Seen near Zapahuira.

**Crag Chilia ◊ *Ochetorhynchus melanura*** Endemic. A superb pair on our first attempt.

**Band-tailed Earthcreeper** ♦ *Ochetorhynchus phoenicurus* Found quickly. Now placed in *Ochetorhynchus* and therefore would be better called 'Scrub Chilia' as both species have banded tails.

**Wren-like Rushbird** *Phleocryptes melanops*

**White-throated Earthcreeper** ♦ *Upucerthia albigula* A pair below at Putre. A species restricted to the Pacific slope of Peru and Chile.

**Buff-breasted Earthcreeper** *Upucerthia validirostris* A few pairs in Lauca NP.

**Scale-throated Earthcreeper** *Upucerthia dumetaria* One Farellones, common further south.

**Patagonian Forest Earthcreeper** ♦ *Upucerthia saturatior* One seen Termas de Chillan.

**Buff-winged Cinclodes** ♦ *Cinclodes fuscus* Small numbers at Farellones.

**Cream-winged Cinclodes** *Cinclodes albiventris* Fairly common Lauca NP.

**White-winged Cinclodes** *Cinclodes atacamensis* Also common in Lauca NP.

**Grey-flanked Cinclodes** ♦ *Cinclodes oustaleti* First seen at Farellones. (*oustaleti*).

**Dark-bellied Cinclodes** ♦ *Cinclodes patagonicus* Common on Chiloe Island.

**Chilean Seaside Cinclodes** ♦ *Cinclodes nigrofumosus* Endemic. 1 Iquique and another at Tarbo south of Valparaiso.

**Des Murs's Wiretail** ♦ *Sylviorthorhynchus desmursii* Seen Termas de Chillán and Puyehue.

**Thorn-tailed Rayadito** ♦ *Aphrastura spinicauda* Common in all Patagonian forest

**Plain-mantled Tit-Spinetail [Loma Tit-spinetail]** *Leptasthenura [aegithaloides] grisescens* Seen near Arica. This is an isolated population found in the coastal Lomas of southern Peru and northern Chile.

**Plain-mantled Tit-Spinetail [Puna Tit-spinetail]** *Leptasthenura [aegithaloides] berlepschi* Seen Lauca NP. This is the commonly seen form in the high Andes of Peru and Bolivia.

**Plain-mantled Tit-Spinetail [Matorral Tit-spinetail]** *Leptasthenura [aegithaloides] aegithaloides* Common Santiago.

**Plain-mantled Tit-Spinetail [Patagonian Tit-spinetail]** *Leptasthenura [aegithaloides] pallida* Seen very well in the Sierra de Baguales and heard elsewhere in Patagonia.

**Streak-backed Tit-Spinetail** *Leptasthenura striata* Several Lauca NP and Zapahuira.

**Sharp-billed Canastero (Lesser Canastero)** *Asthenes pyrrholeuca* Cajon de Maipo and Torres del Paine.

**Canyon Canastero** ♦ *Asthenes pudibunda* Seen below Putre and heard Zapahuira.

**Cordilleran Canastero** *Asthenes modesta*

**Dark-winged Canastero** (♦?) *Asthenes arequipae* Seen above Zapahuira and in canyon below Putre.

**Austral Canastero** ♦ *Asthenes anthoides* Seen well near Punta Arenas.

**Dusky-tailed Canastero** ♦ *Pseudasthenes humicola* Endemic. Seen well in central Chilean sites.

**Chestnut-throated Huet-huet** ♦ *Pteroptochos castaneus* Fantastic. 2 pairs at Vilches.

**Black-throated Huet-huet** ♦ *Pteroptochos tarnii* 2 Puyehue. This was unusually tricky.

**Moustached Turca** ♦ *Pteroptochos megapodius* Endemic. Superb. A pair chasing about above San Jose de Maipo and another pair along the Farellones road.

**White-throated Tapaculo** ♦ *Scelorchilus albicollis* Endemic. Great views near the coast.

**Chucao Tapaculo** ♦ *Scelorchilus rubecula* Fabulous. 1 Vilches, common Puyehue NP.

**Ochre-flanked Tapaculo** ♦ *Eugralla paradoxa* Seen Puyehue NP and several seen in Chiloe, where common.

**Magellanic Tapaculo** ♦ *Scytalopus magellanicus* Running around our feet at Chillan and on Chiloe. Heard elsewhere.

**Dusky Tapaculo** ♦ *Scytalopus fuscus* Good views at Estero de Maipo on first attempt.

**White-crested Elaenia [Peruvian Elaenia]** *Elaenia albiceps [modesta]* Common Lluta valley.

**Chilean Elaenia** *Elaenia chilensis*

**Pied-crested Tit-Tyrant** ◊ *Anairetes reguloides* Common at Camarones. Several pairs seen.

**Yellow-billed Tit-Tyrant** *Anairetes flavirostris* Quite numerous near Putre.

**Tufted Tit-Tyrant** ◊ *Anairetes parulus* Small numbers in central Chile.

**Many-coloured Rush Tyrant** *Tachuris rubrigastra*

**Vermilion Flycatcher** *Pyrocephalus rubinus* A few in Chaca, Lluta and Camarones valleys.

**Austral Negrito** ◊ *Lessonia rufa* Common from central Chile southwards.

**Andean Negrito** *Lessonia oreas* Common in Lauca NP.

**Spectacled Tyrant** *Hymenops perspicillata* 3 at Estero Maipo, several near Talca.

**Puna Ground Tyrant** *Muscisaxicola juninensis* Commonly seen in Lauca NP.

**Cinereous Ground Tyrant** *Muscisaxicola cinereus* A few in Lauca NP.

**White-fronted Ground Tyrant** *Muscisaxicola albifrons* The common bofedale Ground Tyrant.

**Rufous-naped Ground Tyrant** *Muscisaxicola rufivertex* Several in Lauca NP.

**White-browed Ground Tyrant** *Muscisaxicola albiflora* Common along upper Farellones road.

**Cinnamon-bellied Ground Tyrant** *Muscisaxicola capistrata* Seen in the south.

**Ochre-naped Ground Tyrant** *Muscisaxicola flavinucha* Wintering birds Lauca .

**Dark-faced Ground Tyrant** *Muscisaxicola maclovianus* Single bird near Bahia Azul.

**Spot-billed Ground Tyrant** *Muscisaxicola maculirostris*

**Black-billed Shrike-Tyrant** *Agriornis montanus* 1 seen Farellones.

**Fire-eyed Diucon** ◊ *Xolmis pyrope* Regular encounters from the Maipo river southwards.

**Chocolate-vented Tyrant** ◊ *Neoxolmis rufiventris* Seen en route to Punta Delgado and along the road to Pali Aike NP.

**Rufous-webbed Bush Tyrant** *Polioxolmis rufipennis* Seen in polylepis near Putre.

**D'Orbigny's Chat-Tyrant** *Ochthoeca oenanthoides* Seen in polylepis near Belen.

**Patagonian Tyrant** ◊ *Colorhamphus parvirostris* Seen and others heard at Termas de Chillan.

**Rufous-tailed Plantcutter** ◊ *Phytotoma rara* From the Maipo river to Tierra del Fuego.

**Chilean Swallow** *Tachycineta meyeni* Common Santiago southwards.

**Blue-and-white Swallow** *Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*

**Andean Swallow** *Orochelidon andaecola* Reasonably common in Lauca NP.

**Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

**Grass Wren (Sedge W)** *Cistothorus platensis* Seen Chiloe and Torres del Paine.

**House Wren** *Troglodytes aedon*

**Chilean Mockingbird** ◊ *Mimus thenca* Common to abundant in central Chile.

**Chiguanco Thrush** *Turdus chiguanco* Common in the Lluta valet above 600m. Also, Putre.

**Austral Thrush** ◊ *Turdus falcklandii* Very common Santiago southwards.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

**Correndera Pipit** *Anthus correndera* 1 in Chiloe. Fairly common in the south.

**Hellmayr's Pipit** *Anthus hellmayri* Several displaying near Talca.

**Black-chinned Siskin** ◊ *Carduelis barbata* Canyon de Cordova southwards.

**Hooded Siskin *Spinus magellanicus*** Fairly common Chaca, Lluta and around Putre.

**Black Siskin *Spinus atrata*** A few in Lauca NP. Very dapper!

**Yellow-rumped Siskin** ♦ *Spinus uropygialis* Several in Lauca. Also, very smart.

**Thick-billed Siskin** ♦ *Spinus crassirostris* Several seen in Polylepis near Chapiquiña.

**Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis***

**Peruvian Meadowlark** ♦ *Sturnella bellicosa* Common at the Lluta river mouth.

**Long-tailed Meadowlark *Sturnella loyca*** Common from Santiago southwards.

**Shiny Cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis***

**Screaming Cowbird *Molothrus rufoaxillaris*** Small numbers seen along K-15 near San Dario. A species that has recently colonised Chile.

**Austral Blackbird** ♦ *Cureus cureus* Common in central Chile.

**Yellow-winged Blackbird *Agelaius thilius*** Common at wetlands from Santiago southwards.

**Blue-and-yellow Tanager *Rauenia bonariensis*** Common in the Lluta valley above 600m.

**Cinereous Conebill *Conirostrum cinereum*** Common in north.

**Tamarugo Conebill** ♦ *Conirostrum tamarugense* Vulnerable. 5 at the Pampa de Tamarugal.

**Black-throated Flowerpiercer *Diglossa brunneiventris*** 2 below Putre.

**Black-hooded Sierra-Finch *Phrygilus atriceps*** Not uncommon in the north.

**Grey-hooded Sierra-Finch *Phrygilus gayi*** Seen from Santiago southwards.

**Patagonian Sierra Finch *Phrygilus patagonicus*** Small numbers in Patagonian forest.

**Mourning Sierra Finch *Phrygilus patagonicus***

**Plumbeous Sierra Finch *Phrygilus unicolor*** Small numbers in the north.

**Ash-breasted Sierra Finch *Phrygilus plebejus***

**White-throated Sierra Finch** ♦ *Phrygilus erythronotus* 3 seen in Lauca NP.

**White-bridled Finch** ♦ *Melanodera melanodera* (X) Common along the road to Pali Aike NP.

**Glacier (White-winged) Diuca Finch *Diuca speculifera*** Not uncommon in Lauca NP.

**Common Diuca Finch *Diuca diuca*** Numerous from Santiago southwards.

**Slender-billed Finch** ♦ *Xenospingus concolor* Near threatened. Very common in Lluta, Chaca and Camarones.

**Greater Yellow Finch** ♦ *Sicalis auriventris* Common at Farellones.

**Greenish Yellow Finch *Sicalis olivascens*** Numerous at Putre.

**Bright-rumped Yellow Finch *Sicalis uropygialis*** 3 seen in Lauca NP, where very uncommon.

**Patagonian Yellow Finch** ♦ *Sicalis lebruni* Common on Tierra del Fuego.

**Grassland Yellow-Finch *Sicalis luteola***

**Chestnut-throated Seedeater *Sporophila telasco*** A pacific slope species. Not uncommon Lluta and Chaca valleys.

**Band-tailed Seedeater *Catamenia analis***

## MAMMALS

**European Hare (Introduced) *Lepus europeus*** Common in the south.

**European Rabbit (Introduced) *Oryctolagus cuniculus***

**Northern Viscacha (Mountain V) *Lagidium (viscacia) peruanum*** Abundant in Lauca NP.

**Coypu (Nutria) *Myocastor coypus*** 1 at Laguna Catagena.

**Bolivian Big-eared Mouse *Auliscomys boliviensis*** A few seen at La Cuevas, Lauca NP .

**Highland Yellow-toothed Cavy *Galea musteloides*** Seen Laguna Chungara, in Lauca NP

**Mountain Degu *Octodontomys gliroides*** A small grey mouse with a long black tipped tail

**Puma *Puma concolor*** Seen in Torres del Paine NP.

**South American Grey Fox *Pseudalopex griseus*** Several seen in Patagonia.

**South American Sea Lion *Otaria byronia*** Common at most coastal sites.

**Humpback Whale *Balaenoptera borealis*** 2 seen repeatedly breaching from Arica.

**Commerson's Dolphin *Cephalorhynchus commersoni*** 2 in the Magellan Straits.

**Dusky Dolphin *Lagenorhynchus obscurus*** Seen crossing to Chiloe and Tierra del Fuego. **Taruca (Northern Huemul)**

***Hippocamelus antisensis*** A herd of 6 seen below Putre.

**Guanaco *Lama guanicoe*** Abundant in the far south.

**Vicuña *Vicugna vicugna*** Abundant at Lauca NP.

**Patagonian Haired Armadillo *Chaetophractus villosus*** One seen at Bahia Azul.



*King Penguins at Bahia Inutil (image by Eustace Barnes)*





*Torres del Paine National Park is one of the most spectacular NP's out there! (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*The endemic Slender-billed Parakeet (image by Mike Galtry)*



*The elegant Silvery Grebe (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*White-throated Earthcreeper inhabits canyons in the Andean foothills (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*Short-eared Owl (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*Variable Hawk (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*Rufous-legged Owl overhead at Vilches was a tour highlight (image by Mike Galtry)*



*Upland Goose is a common species in Patagonia (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*Grey Gulls on the rocky shore at Iquique (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*The very attractive Red-legged Cormorant (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*Thorn-tailed Rayadito is common in Patagonian forests (image by Mike Galtry)*



*The now very rare Puna Rhea, the tarapacensis form of Lesser Rhea (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*Moustached Turca keeping an eye on us (image by Mike Galtry)*



*Flying Steamer Duck (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*Chestnut-throated Huet-huet (image by Mike Galtry)*



*The critically endangered Chilean Woodstar (image by Eustace Barnes)*





*Northern Giant Petrel off Iquique (image by Mike Galtry)*



*Oasis Hummingbird was numerous in the desert oases (image by Mike Galtry)*



*Kelp Goose on Isla Peñahuil (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*Andean Avocet defending young at Lago Chungara (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*Atacama Oases are havens for wildlife (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*Crag Chilia (image by Mike Galtry)*



*The scenery in Lauca National Park is some of the most spectacular in South America (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*A magnificent male Magellanic Woodpecker (image by Mike Galtry)*



*Crested Duck (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*The recently described Patagonian Forest Earthcreeper (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*Peruvian Pygmy Owl is uncommon in northern Chile (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*The spectacular Peruvian Sheartail performed nicely (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*The Chiloe form of the Magellanic Flightless Steamer-duck (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*Markham's Storm-petrel was very common on our Iquique pelagic (image by Mike Galtry)*





*The very pretty Dolphin Gull (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*Black-faced Ibis is now increasing on the northern coast (image by Eustace Barnes)*



*Austral Parakeet (image by Eustace Barnes)*