

Albatross

Birding and Nature Tours



Chile, December 2011

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Albatross Birding and Nature Tours

www.albatross-birding.com

Always surrounded by amazing landscapes, Chile offers the most scenic birding in South America and some of the most beautiful birds.

This private trip was specially designed to look for all Bernard's possible lifers in Central and South Chile.

And we did quite well, as we saw (and well!!!) all of the 38 possible lifers present inland, and 2 of the 5 possible pelagic lifers. Even the rarest species have been seen: Black and Austral Rail, Rufous-legged Owl, Chilean and Rufous-tailed Hawk, South American Painted Snipe, all tapaculos, all possible Chilean endemics, King Penguin, etc....

Wonderful birds but also wonderful landscapes, as we birded in some of the most impressive places of Chile: Farellones highlands, *Nothofagus* forest at Altos de Lircay, Conguillio NP, Chiloé Island, Torres Del Paine NP and all the amazing Patagonia!!

Of course, mammals were not excluded and we saw almost 15 species during our trip, including the rare Killer Whale!!

To see more bird pictures, please have a look to my gallery:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/fabrice-schmitt/>



King Penguin in Tierra del Fuego (picture: Martine Fombarlet)
King Penguins are now breeding in Chile and easily seen during a trip to Patagonia!



The Moustached Turca is a common Chilean endemic, easily seen around Santiago (picture: Fabrice Schmitt).



The Magellanic Woodpecker, a sought-after species found in the wonderful *Nothofagus* forest (picture: Fabrice Schmitt)

DAY BY DAY ACTIVITIES

December 5th, International flight to Santiago - Lampa wetlands

Arriving in Santiago at 10 a.m. after a long flight, we went directly to the hotel in Santiago, to drop the luggage and have a lunch in the nice suburb of Providencia.

After a short rest, we went to the Lampa wetlands looking for one of our difficult target, the South American Painted Snipe. The Lampa wetlands are a good place for that species, but the unpredictable water level always makes the search of that species a bit difficult. Actually we will not find that Painted Snipe on our first visit here, and will have to come back 3 different times to finally see it!!

These wetlands are also a good introduction to Chilean waterfowl, and we will see large numbers of ducks, coots and shorebirds here!

Night in Santiago.

December 6th, Farellones - Vallee Nevado

A full day in the mountains surrounding Santiago, looking especially for Chilean endemics and a few more specialities.

We did quite well, as we found 6 of the 9 possible endemics on that trip: 2 Dusky-tailed Canastero, a very cooperative pair of Crag Chilia seen at less than 5 meters!, the charismatic Moustached Turca, excellent view on a pair of White-throated Tapaculo, a very excited Dusky Tapaculo standing in the open in the middle of the trail, and lot's of Chilean Mockingbird. But this area is also excellent for several species difficult to see elsewhere: we found a male of White-sided Hillstar, a few pairs of Creamy-rumped Miner (some of them feeding chicks), nice views on Black-fronted Ground-tyrant, and plenty of Greater Yellow-finches.

We also had wonderful views on several Andean Condors with beautiful Andean mountains landscapes in the background, and other nice birds like Striped Woodpecker, Band-tailed Sierra-finch, Rufous-banded Miner or Magellanic Tapaculo.

Night in Santiago

December 7th, Laguna El Peral - coastal wetlands - Valparaiso

As the trip was designed to find all the Bernard's possible lifers, we decided to stay as long as possible at El Peral Lake, waiting for the secretive Stripe-backed Bittern. A long wait indeed as the bird did not show... but a nice wait also, as this reserve is absolutely full of birds: hundreds of Coots (3 species) and breeding Egrets (3 species too), many ducks including the rare Black-headed, breeding White-backed Stilts, Many-colored Rush-tyrant, Wren-like Rushbird, Plain-mantled Tit-Spinetail, a pair of Rufous-tailed Plantcutter, and an Aplomado Falcon flying around and probably looking for a meal! During our long wait here we found some time to attract and see the super secretive Black Rail!! But after a full morning here, we did not find the tip of the tail of a bittern, and went to a restaurant on the seashore. A nice restaurant actually, with views on a pair of Chilean Seaside Cinclodes (Chilean endemic) and hundreds of Sooty Shearwater in the distance.

After lunch, we visited another wetland where we immediately found a superb adult of Stripe-backed Bittern! Unbelievable!! Excellent view on the target of the day!!

With all the afternoon to reach Valparaiso, we did a few stops looking for breeding Peruvian Pelican and Humboldt penguin, and also found a few migrants like Sanderlings and Turnstones on the rocky shore.

Night in Valparaiso

December 8th, pelagic trip off Valparaiso

A pelagic trip on the Humboldt Current can provide one of the most fabulous experiences a seabird enthusiast can wish for.

And with no less than 5 species of Albatrosses, 40+ Westland's petrel, an excellent view on a Juan-Fernandez Petrel, tenth of Peruvian Diving-Petrel and hundreds of Pink-footed Shearwater, we had a wonderful trip!!

After a nice lunch in the Valparaiso harbor, we drove north to do some more coastal birding. Our main target was the impressive and local Great Shrike-tyrant, and we rapidly found one bird at one of our well known places. In the same area we also had great views on a lovely Southern Sea-Otter, and 2 Bottle-nosed Dolphins seen very close to the shore.

Night in Santiago

December 9th, highlands above Los Andes and Lampa wetlands

An early beginning and 2 hours driving to reach the alpine habitat in the highlands above Los Andes, on the way to Argentina. Here we rapidly find our main target: a flock of Thick-billed Siskin!!

And the area is full of other interesting species, like Yellow-rumped Siskin, a very cooperative Magellanic Tapaculo, lot's of White-sided Hillstars including excellent views on males and females, a pair of Crested Duck with a young chick, a pair of the stunning Black-chested Buzzard-eagle, etc...

On the way back to Santiago, we stopped again to the Lampa wetlands, looking for the Painted Snipe. But after 2 hours walking in the marshes, we only flushed 30+ Magellanic Snipes, and a few ducks... fortunately, we found the recently splited Ticking Doradito, a welcome tick for Bernard!

Night in Santiago.

December 10th, Lampa wetlands (again), Lampa foothill and drive to Vilches.

Back to the Lampa wetlands for our Painted Snipe quest! And we finally found it: 8 birds standing together and seen wonderfully well!!! After scanning hectares of marshes, we finally found the little place where they were all waiting for us!!

We spent the rest of the morning in the foothills above Lampa, where we first had a stunning view on the endemic and difficult to see Chilean Tinamou!! Excellent! And after a short walk in the Chilean *Matoral* we were looking at a pair of Chilean hawk on their nest.... 3 lifers in a couple of hours for Bernard!

We then had to drive to Talca and then Vilches, where we will stay in a nice lodge.

Night in Vilches.

December 11th, Altos de Lircay NP and Lago Colbún.

We spent the morning in the beautiful Altos de Lircay NP, where we rapidly found a Chestnut-throated Huet-huet breeding in a tree cavity, an almost Chilean endemic (only present in a very few locations in Argentina).

We also found here a pair of Magellanic Woodpecker, a Chucao Tapaculo, a White-throated Hawk soaring above the splendid forests of this NP and some common species of these Nothofagus forests like Thorn-tailed Rayadito, White-throated Treerunner, or Patagonian Sierra-finch. And after a long search, we even found a pair of Patagonian Tyrants.

After a nice lunch in our lodge, we drove to the Colbún Lake, where we quickly found several flocks of Burrowing Parakeets near their breeding colonies, and a few Spectacled Duck.

Night in Vilches

December 12th, Drive to Temuco - Cerro Nielol.

After a long drive (6 hours) to Temuco and a rest during the hot hours of the day, we visited the Cerro Nielol reserve. The main target there was the rare Rufous-tailed Hawk, and thanks to Heraldo Norambuena we easily found 2 juveniles on the nest fed by a beautiful adult! Others interesting species found here include the Ochre-flanked Tapaculo, Black-throated Huet-huet, or the Slender-billed Parakeet. Unfortunately we only heard the Rufous-legged Owl.

Night in Temuco.

December 13th, Conguillio NP.

A full day in the stunning Conguillio NP!

We spent all day surrounded by amazing landscapes, of volcanoes, snow covered mountains, Araucaria forests, turquoise water lakes.... one of the most beautiful place in Chile!

Off course we found some good birds here, like Andean Condors, or Flying Steamer-ducks, but our main target here was the recently splited Patagonia Forest Earthcreeper: we found 2 pairs at our usual spot . A local species not easy to see during breeding season in Chile!

Back to Temuco in the afternoon, we decided to go back to the cerro Nielol reserve in the late evening. Good choice as we had excellent views on 2 Rufous-legged Owl!!

Night in Temuco.

December 14th, drive to Caullin

Again a long drive to reach Chiloé Island and the Caullin Bay.

The Caullin Bay is one of the main wintering places for the Hudsonian Godwit, and we saw hundreds of them with as numerous Whimbrel, Sanderlings and a group of Black Skimmers, lot's of Flightless Steamer-ducks (some with chicks), and nice groups of Black-necked Swans, etc...

Night in Caullin.

December 15th, Puñihuil penguin colony, Pargua-Chacao ferry.

After a nice breakfast with the beautiful Caullin Bay in front of us, we drove to the Puñihuil penguin colony.

As both Magellanic and Humboldt Penguins are breeding here, it was very instructive to compare the plumages of these very similar species. During a short boat ride between the islets, we found other interesting species breeding here: Flightless Steamer-duck, Kelp Goose, Red-legged, Imperial and Magellan Cormorant. And 3 lovely Southern Sea Otters entertained us when fishing just a few meters of the boat.

We then decided to cross a few times the channel between Chiloé Island and the continent, to give us a chance to find the recently discovered new Storm-Petrel. But even crossing the channel 8 times, we didn't see a SP here... but a huge, very huge, surprise was waiting for us: 5 Killer Whales swimming in the calm waters of the Ancud Golf!!

Night in Caullin.

December 16th, flight to Punta Arenas, Estancia San Juan

Morning flight to Punta Arenas.

After dropping our luggage at the hotel in Punta Arenas, we drove to the Estancia San Juan where the very rare Ruddy-headed Goose breeds. We found a few pairs, all of them with chicks - this species is endangered on the mainland but the population breeding on the Falklands is still numerous and stable. The others species of geese, Upland and Ashy-headed are numerous, and from the shore of the Magellan's channel, we saw our first South American tern and Chilean Skua.

Night in Punta Arenas

December 17th, ferry to Porvenir, Tierra del Fuego.

After an early breakfast, we took the ferry to cross the Magellan Strait. During the two and a half hours crossing, we saw some Magellanic Diving-Petrels, Black-browed Albatross and Southern Giant Petrels. We also have been lucky with the sea mammals, with a group of 5 peal's Dolphin, and 4 different Fin Whales!!

After a lunch in Porvenir, we drove to a private reserve protecting a group of King Penguins, including a few breeding pairs (the first documented for Chile)!! Amazing to see these wonderful birds, with the dark sea in the background where are flying a few Black-browed Albatrosses!!

Night in Porvenir.

December 18th, long drive to Puerto Natales.

A long drive today, through all the northern part of Tierra del Fuego, crossing the Magellanic Channel at the Primera Angostura, and then to Puerto Natales. On the way we found several new species, like a pair of Austral Canasteros, several Short-billed Miners, Least Seedsnipes, a pair of Magellanic Plover, 10+ White-bridled Finch, Chocolate-vented Tyrant, hundreds of Lesser Rheas, and even the very local Band-tailed Earthcreeper (Chile tick for Fabrice!).

Night in Puerto Natales.

December 19th, Sierra Baguales and Torres Del Paine: 2 flat tires!!

We began the day with a flat tire... bad luck!

After having lost some time to fix the tire, we drove to Sierra Baguales. On the way, we found a group of Andean Condors perched close to the road, and a fox trying to open a Rhea's egg! Surrounded by the wonderful scenery of the Sierra Baguales, we found some excellent birds: Yellow-bridled Finch, Patagonian Mockingbird, or Cinnamon-bellied Ground-tyrant.

After leaving this impressive area we drove through another unbelievable place, the Torres Del Paine NP!!

Impressive mountains, lakes and forests, an absolutely wonderful place!! And in one of the little lakes, we even found the rare and endangered Austral Rail!!

But on the way back, we just had our second flat tire of the day... too bad! Fortunately, a friendly Chilean driver immediately stopped to help us, and in only 20 minutes we were already following our trip to Puerto Natales!!

Night in Puerto Natales.

December 20th, back to Punta Arenas

We basically spent the morning waiting for a new tire, and after a lunch in Puerto Natales we drove back to Punta Arenas.

On the way, we found a last Magellanic Plover, a few White-rumped Sandpiper, 100+ Coscoroba Swan, and had a very nice view on a pair of Short-eared Owls hunting on the side of the road.

Night in Punta Arenas

December 21th, flight back to Santiago.

Flight in the morning to Santiago. End of the trip.

BIRDLIST

RR = Restrictes-range species (total range < 50.000 km²)

Conservation Status follows Birdlife International

Taxonomy follows mostly South American Classification Committee

<http://www.museum.lsu.edu/~Remsen/SACCBaseline.html>

(H) heard only

RHEAS

Lesser Rhea *Rhea pennata* **Near-threatened**

Really common in Patagonia, with more than 200 birds seen some days. The birds seen here belong to the *pennata* subspecies.

TINAMOUS

RR Endemic Chilean Tinamou *Nothoprocta perdicaria*

2 birds seen very well: one near Lampa, and one on the way back from the Conguillio NP!!
Also heard on the way to Farellones.

DUCKS

Black-necked Swan *Cygnus melancoryphus*

25 at El Peral lake, and very common on Chiloé Island and in Patagonia.

Coscoroba Swan *Coscoroba coscoroba*

Fairly common in Patagonia, with a max of 160 together on one lake near Punta Arenas.

Upland Goose *Chloephaga picta*

Hundreds or maybe thousands seen daily in Patagonia.

Kelp Goose *Chloephaga hybrida*

At least three pairs breeding at the Puñihuil penguin colony.

Ashy-headed Goose *Chloephaga poliocephala*

A few seen south of Punta Arenas.

RR Ruddy-headed Goose *Chloephaga rubidiceps*

30+ seen south of Punta Arenas including the young chicks. This species is very rare and endangered on the mainland. The only safe population is found on the Falkland Islands.

Flying Steamer-Duck *Tachyeres patachonicus*

2 seen in the Conguillio NP, and also in Patagonia.

Flightless Steamer-Duck *Tachyeres pteneres*

Great views in the north of Chiloé Island, and in Patagonia. These birds refer to two allopatric and distinctive populations, and may represent two different subspecies.

Crested Duck *Lophonetta specularioides*

A pair with a chick above Los Andes, and relatively common in Patagonia.

Spectacled Duck *Speculanus specularis* Near-threatened

4 birds seen on Colbun Lake, and 2 more in the Conguillio NP.

Chiloe Wigeon *Anas sibilatrix*

Seen at different locations around Santiago and common in Patagonia.

Yellow-billed Teal *Anas flavirostris*

Fairly common around Santiago and especially on Chiloé Island. All these birds belong to the *flavirostris* subspecies (distinct from the *oxyptera* subspecies found in the north of the country and sometimes supposed to be a full species).

Yellow-billed Pintail *Anas georgica*

Common around Santiago, on Chiloé Island and in Patagonia.

Cinnamon Teal *Anas cyanoptera*

A few seen around Santiago.

Red Shoveler *Anas platalea*

120+ at El Peral lake, and also seen in Patagonia.

Rosy-billed Pochard *Netta peposaca*

5 seen well at the Lampa marshes

Black-headed Duck *Heteronetta atricapilla*

10+ seen at El Peral lake. The Black-headed Duck is the only parasitic duck species in the world. As its usual hosts are the Red-gartered and Red-fronted Coots, this duck usually stays inside the reed beds and riparian vegetation, and so is usually difficult to see. But around Santiago, sometimes large numbers (to 800 !!) are found at the Lampa/Batuco wetlands.

Lake Duck *Oxyura vittata*

Common around Santiago.

NEW WORLD QUAIL

California Quail *Callipepla californica*

Common around Santiago. This introduced species is now more common in Chile than in California!

GREBES

White-tufted Grebe *Rollandia rolland*

The largest group was found at El Peral Lagoon, with at least 50 birds.

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps*

Just 1 seen at El Peral lake.

Great Grebe *Podiceps major*

A few seen around Santiago and in Patagonia.

FLAMINGOS

Chilean Flamingo *Phoenicopterus chilensis*

Only 2 seen in Patagonia.

PENGUINS

King Penguin *Aptenodytes patagonicus*

A group of 35, including 4 birds incubating eggs, in a private reserve east of Porvenir.

A non-breeding group has been seen for several years now in the same area, and the first eggs have been laid during the summer 2011/2012: the first breeding evidence for Chile!!

Humboldt Penguin *Spheniscus humboldti* **Vulnerable**

Seen at two different breeding colonies, at Algarrobo and on Chiloé Island, and also several sightings at sea.

Magellanic Penguin *Spheniscus magellanicus* **Near-threatened**

We visited a breeding colony on Chiloé Island, and found a few more birds when crossing the Chacao Channel and the Magellan Strait.

ALBATROSSES

Northern Royal Albatross *Diomedea sanfordi* **Endangered**

At least 4 birds during our pelagic trip off Valparaíso

Black-browed Albatross *Thalassarche melanophrys* **Endangered**

Five seen during our pelagic trip off Valparaíso, and at least 15 when crossing the Magellan Strait. A few more seen from the shore in Patagonia.

Buller's Albatross *Thalassarche bulleri* **Near-threatened**

At least 20 birds seen during our pelagic trip off Valparaíso, where the species is usually not that common!

Salvin's Albatross *Thalassarche salvini* **Vulnerable**

50+ seen during our pelagic trip off Valparaíso.

A recent and accepted split from Shy Albatross (*Thalassarche cauta*).

Chatham Albatross *Thalassarche eremita* **Vulnerable**

An immature seen during the pelagic trip off Valparaíso, unfortunately did not stay close to the boat and not seen by all.

SHEARWATERS

Southern Giant-Petrel *Macronectes giganteus*

1 seen on the way to Chiloé Island, and 2 more between Punta Arenas and Porvenir.

Northern Giant-Petrel *Macronectes halli*

1 seen during our pelagic trip off Valparaíso

Juan Fernandez Petrel *Pterodroma externa* **Vulnerable**

1 seen very well and photographed during our pelagic trip off Valparaíso.

White-chinned Petrel *Procellaria aequinoctialis* Vulnerable

5+ during our pelagic trip off Valparaiso, and 2 more on the way to Chiloé Island.

Westland Petrel *Procellaria westlandica* Vulnerable

40+ during our pelagic trip off Valparaiso.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus* Near-threatened

200+ seen from the shore at El tabo and Algarrobo, 20+ during our pelagic trip off Valparaiso, and a few more seen around Chiloé Island. The ones seen from shore off Chiloé Island are probably breeding on Guafo Island, south of Chiloé, where a large colony hosts more than four million Sooty Shearwaters!

Pink-footed Shearwater *Puffinus creatopus* Vulnerable

200+ during our pelagic trip off Valparaiso, and a few more seen around Chiloé Island. This shearwater, which makes a long migration through the Pacific, is a Chilean endemic breeder with 95% of the population breeding on Mocha Island. Should be renamed Mocha Shearwater!!

STORM-PETRELS

Wilson's Storm-Petrel *Oceanites oceanicus*

15 birds during our pelagic trip off Valparaiso, and 20+ seen when crossing the Magellan Strait.

All these birds belong to the *chilensis* subspecies, supposedly breeding in the Chilean fjords, and are sometimes called Fuegian Storm-petrel.

DIVING-PETRELS

Peruvian Diving-Petrel *Pelecanoides garnotii* Endangered

20 seen during our pelagic trip off Valparaiso.

Magellanic Diving-Petrel *Pelecanoides magellani*

Common when crossing the Chacao-Pargua channel, and the Magellan Strait.

PELICANS

Peruvian Pelican *Pelecanus thagus* Near-threatened

A very common species in central Chile.

This is a recent and accepted split from the Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*).

BOOBIES

Peruvian Booby *Sula variegata*

A common species in central Chile.

CORMORANTS

Neotropic Cormorant *Phalacrocorax brasilianus*

A very common species in Chile, found in most of the wetlands visited and along the coast.

Red-legged Cormorant *Phalacrocorax gaimardi* Near-threatened

Perhaps the most elegant Cormorant in the world!!

Seen on several occasions, from Valparaíso to Chiloé Island. The biggest groups were seen on the Chacao-Pargua channel, where up to 500 birds were seen together!

Magellan Cormorant *Phalacrocorax magellanicus*

A few breeding pairs seen on Chiloé Island, and a few more in Patagonia.

Guanay Cormorant *Phalacrocorax bougainvillii* Near-threatened

just 2 during our pelagic trip off Valparaíso.

Imperial Cormorant *Phalacrocorax atriceps*

A very common species seen in the south of the country.

HERONS

Stripe-backed Bittern *Ixobrychus involucris*

1 adult seen very well, after a long search!, on the coastal wetlands north of San Antonio.

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

A few seen on several occasions during the trip.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Fairly common in central Chile.

Cocoi Heron *Ardea cocoi*

1 seen in the Lampa wetlands

Great Egret *Ardea alba*

Common in central Chile.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*

Fairly common.

IBISES

Black-faced Ibis *Theristicus melanopis*

A very common species in the south of the country where hundreds can be seen every day, but we also saw a few in the highlands above Santiago where the species is much rarer.

NEW WORLD VULTURES

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*

Common in most of the country.

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus*

Mostly seen around Chiloé Island and Puerto Montt.

Andean Condor *Vultur gryphus* Near-threatened

We had great views of the heaviest flying birds of the world during our first day birding around Santiago, with five birds seen. We also had exceptional views in the Conguillio NP, and a wonderful group of 10 perched birds in Patagonia where the species is more common.

HAWKS

Cinereous Harrier *Circus cinereus*

We saw a male offering a prey to his female in the Lampa wetlands, and a few more in Patagonia.

Bicolored (Chilean) Hawk *Accipiter bicolor chilensis*

Thanks to Andrea Minoletti (who is studying the species) and Fernando Díaz, we had a wonderful view of a male carrying a prey to the female on the nest!! wonderful!

Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle *Geranoaetus melanoleucus*

Regular sightings in Central Chile and in Patagonia.

Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus*

A brief view during one of our long drives.

White-throated Hawk *Buteo albigula*

A soaring bird in the Altos de Lircay NP. Nice view!!

Variable Hawk *Buteo polyosoma*

Regular sightings during the trip.

Rufous-tailed Hawk *Buteo ventralis* **Near-threatened**

Thanks to Heraldo Norambuena who studied the breeding biology of the species during a few years, we saw an adult female carrying a prey to 2 big juvenils still on the nest!!

FALCONS

Southern Caracara *Caracara plancus*

Really common in the south of the country.

This is a recent and accepted split from Crested Caracara (*Caracara cheriway*).

Mountain Caracara *Phalcoboenus megalopterus*

A few birds seen in the highlands above Santiago.

Chimango Caracara *Milvago chimango*

A very common species in the center and south of the country.

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius*

Regular sightings during the trip.

Aplomado Falcon *Falco femoralis*

One bird seen at El Peral lake, and 2 more sightings in Patagonia.

RAILS

Austral Rail *Rallus antarcticus* **Vulnerable**

At least two birds heard in the Torres del Paine NP, and one seen!!

A very rare bird, supposed to be extinct and rediscovered only a few years ago.

Black Rail *Laterallus jamaicensis* **Near-threatened**

A very secretive species. We heard at least 4 different birds, and glimpsed 1, in the coastal wetlands north of San Antonio. The Black Rails present in Chile belong to the *salinasi* subspecies, and the song differences between the nominate subspecies indicate that they may be better considered as distinct species.

Plumbeous Rail *Pardirallus sanguinolentus*

Common in the Lampa wetlands.

Spot-flanked Gallinule *Gallinula melanops*

1 seen at El Peral lake.

Red-gartered Coot *Fulica armillata*

A common coot in Chile

Red-fronted Coot *Fulica rufifrons*

Common in central Chile.

White-winged Coot *Fulica leucoptera*

A few seen in central Chile and in Patagonia.

PLOVERS

Southern Lapwing *Vanellus chilensis*

Very common and noisy!!

Jaramillo comments "two groups exist, southern 'Chilean Lapwing' (*chilensis* and *fretensis*) and more northern and eastern 'Cayenne Lapwing' (*cayannensis* and *lampronotus*). The two differ in structure, plumage, crest length and colour, soft-part coloration and voice". Jaramillo is currently researching this issue. More than one species is probably involved.

Two-banded Plover *Charadrius falklandicus*

Several sightings in Patagonia, including a few pairs with young chicks.

OYSTERCATCHERS

American Oystercatcher *Haematopus palliatus*

Fairly common along the coast, from Valparaiso to Puerto Montt.

Blackish Oystercatcher *Haematopus ater*

A few pairs seen on the rocky shores in central Chile and on Chiloé Island.

Magellanic Oystercatcher *Haematopus leucopodus*

Seen almost daily in Patagonia.

AVOCETS and STILTS

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*

A few breeding pairs and flying juveniles at El Peral lake and Lampa wetlands. All these birds belong to the *melanurus* subspecies, sometimes considered as a distinct species.

MAGELLANIC PLOVER

RR Magellanic Plover *Pluvianellus socialis* **Near-threatened**

4 birds seen in Tierra del Fuego, and 1 more north of Punta Arenas!

SANDPIPERS

South American Snipe *Gallinago paraguaiae*

40+ flushed in the Lampa wetlands, and 2 displaying pairs in Patagonia.

Hudsonian Godwit *Limosa haemastica*

Hundreds in the Caullin bay, just in front of our cabins! And a group of 30+ in Patagonia.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus hudsonicus*

Fairly common along the Chilean coast, and hundreds in the Caullin bay.

SACC comment: Zink et al. (1995) proposed a return to earlier classifications (e.g., Ridgway 1919) that considered New World *hudsonicus* to be a separate species from Old World populations based on genetic distance. Although plumage pattern also differs substantially, vocalizations are evidently very similar, in contrast to the many allotaxa in the Scolopacidae treated as a separate species.

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*

Only 2 in the Lampa wetlands, and 30+ with Hudsonian Godwits in Patagonia.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*

150+ in the Lampa wetlands.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

2 seen on the rocky shore at Algarrobo.

Surfbird *Aphriza virgata*

A nice group of 10 birds at Zapallar.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

100+ at Algarrobo, and 100+ in the Caullin Bay.

White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*

Fairly common in Patagonia.

Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii*

The most common sandpiper in Chile.

Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor*

4 in the Lampa wetlands.

Red Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

50+ during our pelagic trip off Valparaiso.

SEEDSNIPES

Least Seedsnipe *Thinocorus rumicivorus*

A few in Patagonia.

PAINTED-SNIPE

South American Painted-snipe *Nycticryphes semicollaris*

A long search for this one, but we finally had excellent views on 8 birds in the Lampa wetlands!!

SKUAS

Chilean Skua *Stercorarius chilensis*

1 seen during our pelagic trip off Valparaiso, 25+ seen around Punta Arenas and Porvenir.

GULLS

Andean Gull *Chroicocephalus serranus*

15+ on Colbun Lake, near Talca.

Brown-hooded Gull *Chroicocephalus maculipennis*

A common gull in the center and south of the country.

Dolphin Gull *Leucophaeus scoresbii*

A beautiful gull seen at Punta Arenas and Porvenir.

Gray Gull *Leucophaeus modestus*

Just 5 seen at Algarrobo.

All the world's population breeds in the Atacama Desert in the north of Chile, very far from the ocean or any wetlands. The adults cross the desert every day to reach the Pacific coast where most of them will look for their food on the sandy beaches. After the breeding season, they spread along the Peruvian and Chilean coasts.

Franklin's Gull *Leucophaeus pipixcan*

A nearctic migrant seen in huge numbers in Chile during the boreal winter. We saw a few hundred from Valparaiso to Chiloé Island.

The Franklin's Gull makes one of the longest migrations of any gull, and so is the only gull species undergoing two complete molts in a year.

Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus*

Common everywhere along the Pacific coast.

Inca Tern *Larosterna inca* **Near-threatened**

Excellent views on this beautiful tern during our pelagic trip off Valparaiso.

South American Tern *Sterna hirundinacea*

300+ in the Valparaiso harbor (mostly in basic plumage) and common in Chiloé Island and Patagonia (all in alternate or breeding plumage).

Elegant Tern *Thalasseus elegans* **Near-threatened**

1 when we crossed the Chacao-Pargua channel on the way to Chiloé Island.

SKIMMERS

Black Skimmer *Rynchops niger*

100+ in the Caullin bay. All of them belonging to the *cinerascens* subspecies.

The SACC comments that Sibley & Monroe (1990) and Zusi (1996) considered *Rynchops niger* to form a superspecies with African *R. flavirostris* and Asian *R. albicollis*; justification for

treating them as separate species is weak; in fact, Jaramillo (2003) pointed out that the differences between the Amazonian subspecies *cinerascens* and nominate *niger* are as great as those between *R. flavirostris* and nominate *niger*. The subspecies *cinerascens*, common for most of South America, was formerly (e.g., Ridgway 1919) considered a separate species from *R. nigra*, but Peters (1934) treated them as conspecific; this treatment has been followed in most subsequent classifications.

PIGEONS

Picui Ground-Dove *Columbina picui*

Fairly common in central Chile.

Black-winged Ground-Dove *Metriopelia melanoptera*

30+ seen around Farellones and five more in the highlands above Los Andes.

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*

An introduced species present in most cities.

RR Chilean Pigeon *Patagioenas araucana*

Common from Talca to Chiloé Island.

Eared Dove *Zenaida auriculata*

A common species in Chile.

PARROTS

Burrowing Parakeet *Cyanoliseus patagonus*

200+ individuals near Talca. These birds belong to the endangered *bloxami* subspecies, endemic to Chile.

Austral Parakeet *Enicognathus ferrugineus*

Commonly heard near Talca, and 2 perched birds seen very well on the way to Torres Del Paine NP.

RR Endemic Slender-billed Parakeet *Enicognathus leptorhynchus*

Excellent sightings near Temuco!!

Monk Parakeet *Myiopsitta monachus*

A feral species common in Santiago.

Mountain Parakeet *Psilopsiagon aurifrons*

2 birds seen in the highlands above Los Andes.

OWLS

Rufous-legged Owl *Strix rufipes*

A pair seen very well in Cerro Nielol reserve near Temuco!

(H) Austral Pygmy-Owl *Glaucidium nanum*

Heard only in Altos de Lircay NP.

Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia*

1 seen in the foothill above Lampa.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

A pair seen nicely near Punta Arenas.

HUMMINGBIRDS

Green-backed Firecrown *Sephanoides sephaniodes*

Common in woodlands in central Chile.

White-sided Hillstar *Oreotrochilus leucopleurus*

1 male seen at farellones, and 5+ seen very well in the highlands above Los Andes.

Giant Hummingbird *Patagona gigas*

The largest hummingbird in the world!

We had several great views of this species in central Chile.

KINGFISHERS

Ringed Kingfisher *Megaceryle torquata*

1 seen along the highway on the way to Chiloé Island, and 1 more at Caullin bay.

WOODPECKERS

Striped Woodpecker *Veniliornis lignarius*

Regular sightings between Santiago and Temuco

Chilean Flicker *Colaptes pitius*

Four sightings during our trip.

Magellanic Woodpecker *Campephilus magellanicus*

We had long and spectacular views of a pair at the Altos de Lircay NP, near Talca.

OVENBIRDS

Common Miner *Geositta cunicularia*

A few birds seen in Patagonia, belonging to the *cunicularia* subspecies.

Several split are probably involved in that group, so note carefully the subspecies you have seen.

RR Short-billed Miner *Geositta antarctica*

A few in Tierra del Fuego.

Creamy-rumped Miner *Geositta isabellina*

10+ seen near Vallee Nevado in the highlands above Santiago.

Rufous-banded Miner *Geositta rufipennis*

15+ seen around Farellones, and a few more in the highlands above Los Andes. These birds belong to the *fasciata* subspecies.

Band-tailed Earthcreeper *Ochetorhynchus phoenicurus*

1 bird seen at a usual spot near the Primera Angostura, and 1 more found in the Sierra Baguales. Found in Chile only few years ago; no more an Argentinean endemic!

RR Endemic Crag Chilia *Ochetorhynchus melanurus*

An excellent view of a pair near Farellones. A beautiful Chilean endemic.

Patagonian Forest Earthcreeper *Upucerthia saturiator*

At least 3 birds in the Conguillio NP, where they are only found in a very specific habitat. This species is probably breeding in Chile, but so far there is no breeding evidence known in the country.

A recent split from the following species.

Scale-throated Earthcreeper *Upucerthia dumetaria*

At least 2 birds seen in the highlands above Santiago (*hypoleuca* subspecies), and 1 more in Patagonia (*dumetaria* subspecies).

Buff-winged Cinclodes *Cinclodes fuscus*

A recent split from the Bar-winged Cinclodes.

Common in the highlands above Santiago and also seen in Patagonia.

Gray-flanked Cinclodes *Cinclodes oustaleti*

Found breeding at Farellones and in the highlands above Los Andes.

Dark-bellied Cinclodes *Cinclodes patagonicus*

Common in Southern Chile around Puerto Montt and on Chiloé Island.

Endemic Seaside Cinclodes *Cinclodes nigrofumosus*

A Chilean endemic, related to the Surf Cinclodes endemic to Peru.

A nice pair seen during our lunch at El Tabo.

Wren-like Rushbird *Phleocryptes melanops*

Common vocally in the reedbeds near Santiago, where we had some good views of a few birds.

Thorn-tailed Rayadito *Aphrastura spinicauda*

Very common in the Nothofagus forests at Altos de Lircay and Conguillio NP.

Plain-mantled Tit-Spinetail *Leptasthenura aegithaloides*

Several sightings in central Chile. These belong to the *aegithaloides* subspecies.

Des Murs's Wiretail *Sylviorthorhynchus desmursii*

A tiny bird with an extremely long tail!!!

Excellent view on this very particular species in Conguillio NP.

Austral Canastero *Asthenes anthoides*

Great views in Patagonia.

Sharp-billed Canastero *Asthenes pyrrholeuca*

A few seen in the highlands above Santiago.

RR Endemic Dusky-tailed Canastero *Asthenes humicola*

Nice views on the way to Farellones.

White-throated Treerunner *Pygarrhichas albogularis*

Common in Altos de Lircay NP.

TAPACULOS

RR Chestnut-throated Huet-huet *Pterotochos castaneus*

Excellent views in Altos de Lircay NP. A spectacular tapaculo, almost endemic to Chile!

RR Black-throated Huet-huet *Pterotochos tarnii*

Excellent views at Cierro Nielol near Temuco.

RR Endemic Moustached Turca *Pterotochos megapodius*

A very big tapaculo, easy to see in the open!!! Wonderful !!

We had great views of this species around Santiago.

RR Endemic White-throated Tapaculo *Scelorchilus albicollis*

Excellent and very close view of a pair on the way to Farellones.

RR Chucao Tapaculo *Scelorchilus rubecula*

Excellent views in Altos de Lircay NP, crossing a trail just in front of us..

RR Ochre-flanked Tapaculo *Eugralla paradoxa*

A very cooperative bird at Cierro Nielol.

Magellanic Tapaculo *Scytalopus magellanicus*

Excellent views in the open near Farellones, and many more heard farther south.

RR Endemic Dusky Tapaculo *Scytalopus fuscus*

One bird seen at less than a meter, almost walking between our feet, on the way to Farellones.

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS

White-crested Elaenia *Elaenia albiceps*

Common in most of Chile. All the birds seen during our trip belong to the *chilensis* subspecies. The differences in plumage between these different subspecies are so evident that a split is clearly expected. Keep track of these subspecies for a forthcoming armchair tick!

Tufted Tit-Tyrant *Anairetes parulus*

Some nice views around Santiago

Ticking Doradito *Pseudocolopteryx citreola*

One bird seen very well in the Lampa wetlands.

A recent split from Warbling Doradito: two cryptic species with very different voices!

Many-colored Rush Tyrant *Tachuris rubrigastra*

One of the most colourful flycatchers !

We had great views of this bird in the Lampa wetlands and at El Peral Lagoon.

Austral Negrito *Lessonia rufa*

Very common in Patagonia

Spectacled Tyrant *Hymenops perspicillatus*

A beautiful flycatcher seen in the wetlands near Santiago, and on Chiloé Island.

Ochre-naped Ground-Tyrant *Muscisaxicola flavinucha*

10+ seen near Vallee Nevado.

White-browed Ground-Tyrant *Muscisaxicola albilora*

Common in the highlands above Santiago near Farellones.

Cinnamon-bellied Ground-Tyrant *Muscisaxicola capistratus*

2 seen in Sierra de Baguales.

Black-fronted Ground-Tyrant *Muscisaxicola frontalis*

2 seen very close near Vallee Nevado

Great Shrike-tyrant *Agriornis lividus*

The largest Tyrant flycatcher. We saw 1 of this very local and rare species at our usual spot on the coast north of Valparaíso.

Fire-eyed Diucon *Xolmis pyrope*

Seen almost daily from Santiago to Chiloé Island.

RR Chocolate-vented Tyrant *Neoxolmis rufiventris*

We found at least 7 different individuals of this spectacular flycatcher in Patagonia. One of the most wanted Patagonian specialties!!

Patagonian Tyrant *Colorhamphus parvirostris*

A pair found in Altos de Lircay NP, the northern place where the species is breeding in Chile.

COTINGAS

Rufous-tailed Plantcutter *Phytotoma rara*

Several sightings during our trip, even in the gardens in Santiago!

SWALLOWS

Blue-and-white Swallow *Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*

Common

Chilean Swallow *Tachycineta meyeni*

Common from Santiago to Patagonia

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

2 seen in the Lampa wetlands

WRENS

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*

A common species. These birds belong to the *musculus* group and may be split from the ones common in the North America.

Sedge Wren *Cistothorus platensis*

A few seen in Patagonia.

THRUSHES

Austral Thrush *Turdus falcklandii*

Common from Santiago to Patagonia

MOCKINGBIRDS

RR Endemic Chilean Mockingbird *Mimus thenca*

Common in central Chile

Patagonian Mockingbird *Mimus patagonicus*

1 bird actively singing, near Torres del Paine NP.

PIPITS

Correndera Pipit *Anthus correndera*

Regular sightings during the trip, around Santiago and in Patagonia.

SPARROWS

Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis*

Very common. Seen everywhere.

Gray-hooded Sierra-Finch *Phrygilus gayi*

Common in the highlands above Santiago.

Patagonian Sierra-Finch *Phrygilus patagonicus*

Common in the forested areas like Altos de Lircay and Cierro Nielol.

Mourning Sierra-Finch *Phrygilus fruticeti*

Displaying birds on the way to Farellones.

Plumbeous Sierra-Finch *Phrygilus unicolor*

1 seen in the highlands above Los Andes.

Band-tailed Sierra-Finch *Phrygilus alaudinus*

5 singing birds seen very well on the way to Farellones.

Common Diuca-Finch *Diuca diuca*

Common in central Chile

RR White-bridled Finch *Melanodera melanodera*

A beautiful finch, restricted to the Patagonian grassland. We found at least 10 birds on the way to Puerto Natales. Fantastic!!

Yellow-bridled Finch *Melanodera xanthogramma*

5 at our pic-nic spot in the Sierra Baguales!

Greater Yellow-Finch *Sicalis auriventris*

Common in the highlands above Santiago. We also saw a few in the Sierra Baguales.

Grassland Yellow-Finch *Sicalis luteola luteiventris*

Common in the wetlands around Santiago.

SACC comments that Meyer de Schauensee (1966) and Ridgely & Tudor (1989) suggested that the southern subspecies *luteiventris* might represent a separate species from *Sicalis luteola*, and it was treated as such by Sibley & Monroe (1990) and AOU (<?> 1983, 1998). This split, unaccepted by the SACC, was called Misto Yellow-Finch.

BLACKBIRDS

Austral Blackbird *Curaeus curaeus*

Commonly seen in central and south Chile.

Yellow-winged Blackbird *Agelasticus thilius*

A common bird in the wetlands around Santiago.

Shiny Cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis*

A common species. This parasitic species usually lays its eggs in Rufous-collared Sparrow or Common Diuca-finch nests.

Long-tailed Meadowlark *Sturnella loyca*

A common species in Chile seen several times from Santiago to Patagonia.

FINCHES

Thick-billed Siskin *Carduelis crassirostris*

5 seen in the highlands above Los Andes. The birds here belong to the *crassirostris* subspecies.

Yellow-rumped Siskin *Carduelis uropygialis*

Fairly common at high elevation at Farellones and above Los Andes.

Black-chinned Siskin *Carduelis barbata*

A common species.

OLD WORLD SPARROWS

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Too common.

MAMMAL LIST

Fence Degu *Octodon degus*

1 seen briefly below farellones, and 1 well seen in the foothill above Lampa.

Coruro *Spalacopus cyanus*

1 seen well when excavating his burrow near Valle Nevado.

Guanaco *Lama guanicoe*

Very common around Torres del Paine NP

Culpeo Fox *Pseudalopex culpaeus*

2 in Tierra del Fuego

Gray Fox *Pseudalopex griseus*

A very common fox in Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego.

Southern Sea Otter *Lontra felina*

1 seen at Zapallar, and 3 very cooperative ones at the Puñihuil penguin colony on Chiloé Island.

European Rabbit *Orytolagus cuniculus*

Introduced in Chile

European Hare *Lepus europaeus*

Introduced in Chile. Very common in Patagonia.

South American Sea Lion *Otaria flavescens*

Very common in Chile.

Fin Whale *Balaenoptera physalus*

4 ones seen in the Magellan Strait between Punta Arenas and Porvenir.

Killer Whale *Orcinus orca*

A group of 5 seen when crossing the channel to reach Chiloé Island!! Very rare in Chile!

Bottle-nosed Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus gephyreus*

2 seen close to the shore at Zapallar!

Peale's Dolphin *Lagenorhynchus australis*

5 seen when we crossed the Magellan Strait, between Punta Arenas and Porvenir.

Dusky Dolphin *Lagenorhynchus obscurus*

A few seen when crossing the Chacao-Pargua channel, between Chiloé Island and the continent.

REPTILE LIST

Liolaemus lemniscatus

Common during our walk in the foothill above Lampa.

Liolaemus leopardinus

Common at Farellones

Liolaemus tenuis

A beautiful green and blue lezard, common in the Nothofagus forests!!

Callopistes palluma

A nice adult seen in the foothill above Lampa.



The Coruro, a relatively common mammal in Central Chile, living in huge colonies with sometimes hundreds of burrows (picture: Fabrice Schmitt)