



Field Guides Tour Report
Southern Argentina 2012

Nov 3, 2012 to Nov 20, 2012
Dave Stejskal

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Chilean Flamingos on scenic Laguna Nimez. Birds and beautiful scenery abound in southern Argentina! (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)

What a great trip! We spent about two and a half weeks together exploring the scenic and wildlife highlights, and the wine, of Southern Argentina without a hitch - well, almost without a hitch if you exclude the bus breakdown on Day 2! Even with that minor glitch, I thought we did great with just about everything, including the weather. I don't recall the weather ever significantly affecting our birding at all on this one, which might be a first.

The rich, flat pampas in Buenos Aires Province was our first venue and it proved to quite good, with good looks at nearly all the specialty birds that we were looking for there. The big prize this year was pulling out a rare Dot-winged Crake for incredible looks near Punta Rasa - a bird that I hadn't seen at all in at least fifteen years! Woo hoo!! A close male Bearded Tachuri was right up there, too, but it's proving to be rather regular on this tour - but still thrilling when you find one. Bay-capped Wren-Spintail, Hudson's Canastero, Olrog's Gull, and Curve-billed Reedhaunter were also high-quality finds this year, but there were many others, so read on.

Chubut Province was exciting as usual, providing us with numerous avian highlights as well as several excellent mammal encounters. The Southern Right Whale boat trip stands out as one of the supreme highlights of our stay here - I can't imagine seeing this leviathan any better than we did. Numerous Southern Elephant Seals, countless Guanacos, the strange Patagonian Cavy or Mara - all made our stay in the region so much richer. And the birds? How about the Punta Tombo Magellanic Penguin colony - with Lesser Rheas, Elegant Crested-Tinamous, and Brown Skuas thrown into the mix? And Argentine endemics like White-throated Cacholote, Patagonian Canastero, Rusty-backed Monjita, and Band-tailed Earthcreeper (almost endemic) - with Cinnamon Warbling-Finch, Carbonated Sierra-Finch, Hudson's Black-Tyrant, Black-crowned Monjita, and Sandy Gallito just to the north near Las Grutas. All kept us busy and excited throughout our stay in this arid region of northern Patagonia.

In the far south of the country, in Tierra del Fuego, we had quite a change of scenery. We went from one of the driest places in the country to one that probably never dries out. We also re-acquainted ourselves with trees down there, going from creosote flats to dark, tall forests of ancient Nothofagus. Targets going in were many, but we did very well indeed. Up at the top for me was finding a pair of rare White-bellied Seedsnipe up in the glacial valley above Ushuaia - a bird that I've only seen three times previously in almost twenty years of tours there! Our adult King Penguin standing among the growing colony of Gentoo Penguins in the Beagle Channel was right up there as well, seeing that it was the first time in about fifteen years that I'd seen one here. As with our previous venues, there were lots of other highlights that you'll have to discover for yourself later in this account.

We finished up our grand tour with a delightful stay in s. Santa Cruz Province. Scenery was again magnificent, with a memorable visit to Los Glaciares

NP being most memorable. The views we had of the Perito Moreno Glacier were absolutely breathtaking! We all (yours truly excluded!) finally caught up with the magnificent Magellanic Woodpecker in the park, thanks to Martina's sharp eyes. And the unique Magellanic Plover finally presented itself to us after a long trek across the gravel at Lago Argentino. Condors again made an impression here, with nearly 20 birds being spotted in the air at one time near our estancia. And don't get me started on the food and the wine here! What a great place to wind up the trip.

Thanks to all of you for joining me for this journey to the southernmost reaches of South America. It was a blast for me to be able to guide for you during those sixteen bird-filled days. I've got to thank all of the great co-leaders that helped me during the tour - German, Mabel, Marcelo, and Martina - I owe all of them a debt of gratitude. All the best in birding for 2013 and I hope to see all of you again on another adventure sometime soon!

--Dave

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Rheidae (Rheas)

GREATER RHEA (*Rhea americana*) – These ratites appeared to be a bit more common than usual, and we saw our first birds quite a way farther north than I typically see them.

LESSER RHEA (DARWIN'S) (*Rhea pennata pennata*) – This bird seemed to be enjoying fairly decent success this year with quite a few more seen than usual. That one male herding some 21 chicks was really impressive! [N]

Tinamidae (Tinamous)

DARWIN'S NOTHURA (*Nothura darwini*) – We sure did walk a lot of scrubby Patagonian desert before we flushed one of these!

SPOTTED NOTHURA (*Nothura maculosa*) – Nicely in the pampas, as usual.

ELEGANT CRESTED-TINAMOU (*Eudromia elegans*) – No shortage of these this year! [N]

Anhimidae (Screamers)

SOUTHERN SCREAMER (*Chauna torquata*) – Never very common, but we did see plenty of these throughout the pampas.

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

WHITE-FACED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna viduata*)

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – For some on the drive south to San Clemente from B.A.

FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna bicolor*)

BLACK-NECKED SWAN (*Cygnus melancoryphus*) – Including several pairs with very young chicks. [N]

COSCOROBA SWAN (*Coscoroba coscoroba*) – While there were a few in the pampas, we saw most of our birds far to the south in s. Santa Cruz near Calafate. [N]

UPLAND GOOSE (*Chloephaga picta*) – Numbers of all of the 'sheldgeese' (all of the geese in the genus *Chloephaga*) were much reduced in numbers compared to my previous trips, but this one was the most common of the three, by far. [N]

KELP GOOSE (*Chloephaga hybrida*) – We had good numbers of these along the shores and on the islands of the Beagle Channel. It's a much easier bird to see here than it is near Puntarenas, Chile.

ASHY-HEADED GOOSE (*Chloephaga poliocephala*) – I've never missed this species on Tierra del Fuego before, so it was quite a shock to have to wait until we got to Calafate before we found just a small handful of birds. I hope they were just late in arriving from the wintering grounds.

FLYING STEAMER-DUCK (*Tachyeres patagonicus*) – We had some good comparisons between this one and the next species right in front of our Ushuaia hotel.

FLIGHTLESS STEAMER-DUCK (*Tachyeres pteneres*) – These big, lumbering ducks were quite common on the Beagle Channel boat trip.

WHITE-HEADED STEAMER-DUCK (*Tachyeres leucocephalus*) – Excellent scope looks at this endemic duck on the shores south of Trelew. [E]

CRESTED DUCK (*Lophonetta specularioides*) – If you've only seen this one high in the Andes before this trip, it was probably a bit of a shock seeing feeding in the intertidal zone on this tour!

SPECTACLED DUCK (*Specularias specularis*) – There were none of these to be found the last time I led this trip, but we managed at least five birds this year, with especially great views at the glacier.

BRAZILIAN TEAL (*Amazonetta brasiliensis*) – Not very common in the pampas, but it may be increasing.

CHILOE WIGEON (*Anas sibilatrix*) – I like all of the wigeon, but this one might be the most handsome.

CINNAMON TEAL (*Anas cyanoptera*)

RED SHOVELER (*Anas platalea*) – Far fewer than normal this year. Where were all of the ducks this year??

YELLOW-BILLED PINTAIL (*Anas georgica*) [N]

SILVER TEAL (*Anas versicolor*) – Only in the pampas this year.

YELLOW-BILLED TEAL (FLAVIROSTRIS) (*Anas flavirostris flavirostris*) [N]

ROSY-BILLED POCHARD (*Netta peposaca*) – Gorgeous!

RUDDY DUCK (ANDEAN) (*Oxyura jamaicensis ferruginea*) – Good numbers of these around Calafate. I'm not sold on the idea that these are the same species as Ruddy Duck. [N]

LAKE DUCK (*Oxyura vittata*) – Really quite a few of these on the 'Lagunas Ornitológicas' at Trelew. We also had great comparisons between this species and the above Ruddies at Calafate.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

WHITE-TUFTED GREBE (*Rollandia rolland*) – We had to wait until we got to Calafate before we found this one on the tour. Numbers were way down there, and I've never missed it before in the pampas or in Trelew.

GREAT GREBE (*Podiceps major*) – Numerous, fabulous looks.

SILVERY GREBE (OCCIPITALIS) (*Podiceps occipitalis occipitalis*) – Our best looks came on the last day at Laguna Nimez in Calafate.

Phoenicopteridae (Flamingos)

CHILEAN FLAMINGO (*Phoenicopus chilensis*) – Hundreds in Trelew this year.

Spheniscidae (Penguins)

KING PENGUIN (*Aptenodytes patagonicus*) – WOWWW!!! It's probably been fifteen years since I've seen one of these on the tour! Great views of an adult hanging with the Gentoos in the Beagle Channel.

GENTOO PENGUIN (*Pygoscelis papua*) – I've watched this colony grow from one pair in the early 90's to the current 36 pairs. Amazing!

MAGELLANIC PENGUIN (*Spheniscus magellanicus*) – On the other hand, I've watch the colony at Punta Tombo decline by about 50 percent since I first visited the colony in 1990. [N]

Diomedidae (Albatrosses)

BLACK-BROWED ALBATROSS (*Thalassarche melanophris*) – We had very good luck with this one on the boat trip, with a number of very close individuals during our transit to Harberton.

Procellariidae (Shearwaters and Petrels)

SOUTHERN GIANT-PETREL (*Macronectes giganteus*) – Numerous good looks. The most common of the two giant-petrels on the Valdez Peninsula.

NORTHERN GIANT-PETREL (*Macronectes halli*) – We eventually found a couple of unambiguous birds to look at with the scopes at the far east end of the peninsula.

SOUTHERN FULMAR (*Fulmarus glacialis*) – Very common this year on the Beagle Channel, including a few birds right in the Ushuaia harbor.

CAPE PETREL (*Daption capense*) – At least two of these striking petrels flew past our boat as we headed east toward Harberton. I only see these on about <30% of the boat trips here.

Hydrobatidae (Storm-Petrels)

WILSON'S STORM-PETREL (*Oceanites oceanicus*) – One brief encounter from the catamaran for a few of us.

Pelecanoididae (Diving-Petrels)

MAGELLANIC DIVING-PETREL (*Pelecanoides magellani*) – I thought they were going to be a 'no show', but most folks got some sort of look very near Harberton this year.

Ciconiidae (Storks)

MAGUARI STORK (*Ciconia maguari*)

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*)

MAGELLAN CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax magellanicus*) – AKA Rock Shag.

IMPERIAL CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax atriceps atriceps*) – We saw both races of this one on the islets of the Beagle Channel.

IMPERIAL CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax atriceps albiventer*)

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

STRIPE-BACKED BITTERN (*Ixobrychus involucris*) – A lucky few got a look at one as it flew low over the reeds near San Clemente. We all had some good audio.

RUFESCENT TIGER-HERON (*Tigrisoma lineatum*) – By some folks at the reserve in B.A.

COCOI HERON (*Ardea cocoi*)

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*)

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*)

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*)

STRIATED HERON (*Butorides striata*)

WHISTLING HERON (*Syrigma sibilatrix*) – A real stunner of a heron!

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

WHITE-FACED IBIS (*Plegadis chihi*)

BARE-FACED IBIS (*Phimosus infuscatus*) – Numbers of these birds were just starting to arrive in the pampas from farther north.

BLACK-FACED IBIS (*Theristicus melanopis*) – Lots of these nesting in the little marsh on the grounds of Est. Alice. A fairly recent split from Buff-necked Ibis. [N]

ROSEATE SPOONBILL (*Platalea ajaja*)

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*)

ANDEAN CONDOR (*Vultur gryphus*) – We had some really memorable views of this giant, especially those first birds at Tierra del Fuego NP.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

WHITE-TAILED KITE (*Elanus leucurus*)

SNAIL KITE (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*)

BLACK-CHESTED BUZZARD-EAGLE (*Geranoaetus melanoleucus*) – It was great to see all of those various plumages at the Ushuaia dump!

LONG-WINGED HARRIER (*Circus buffoni*) – One of my favorite raptors in the world.

CINEREOUS HARRIER (*Circus cinereus*) – Our looks at Laguna Nimez in Calafate couldn't be beat!

HARRIS'S HAWK (*Parabuteo unicinctus*) – Including some chicks on an active nest! Formerly known as Red-backed Hawk.

ROADSIDE HAWK (*Buteo magnirostris*)

VARIABLE HAWK (VARIABLE) (*Buteo polyosoma polyosoma*) [N]

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

WHITE-THROATED CARACARA (*Phalcoboenus albogularis*) – We probably saw a few dozen of these, at least, at the Ushuaia dump. Most were immatures and were a little tricky to tell from the numerous Chimangos.

SOUTHERN CARACARA (*Caracara plancus*)

CHIMANGO CARACARA (*Milvago chimango*) – Every day, except the very first.

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*)

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

GIANT WOOD-RAIL (*Aramides ypecaha*) – That field near La Balandra has always been reliable for this one.

GRAY-NECKED WOOD-RAIL (*Aramides cajanea*) [*]

DOT-WINGED CRAKE (*Porzana spiloptera*) – YESSSS!!!! What a great bird to see so well! My last one in Argentina was at least fifteen years ago, but now I know what they sound like - that should help.

PLUMBEOUS RAIL (*Pardirallus sanguinolentus*) – After hearing a bunch of these, we finally got some absolutely fabulous views of a few birds near Calafate. They couldn't have been more cooperative.

COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*)

RED-GARTERED COOT (*Fulica armillata*) – This isn't usually the case, but this was the most common coot on the tour (White-winged usually takes that honor). [N]

RED-FRONTED COOT (*Fulica rufifrons*) – Very gallinule-like. Not many at all this year.

WHITE-WINGED COOT (*Fulica leucoptera*) – Numbers were way down on this normally very common coot.

Aramidae (Limpkin)

LIMPKIN (*Aramus guarauna*) – Plenty of Apple Snails for them in the pampas.

Chionidae (Sheathbills)

SNOWY SHEATHBILL (*Chionis albus*) – Wonderful looks, though I've never had one land on the boat before!

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

SOUTHERN LAPWING (NORTHERN) (*Vanellus chilensis cayennensis*) [N]

SOUTHERN LAPWING (SOUTHERN SOUTH AMERICA) (*Vanellus chilensis chilensis*) – This southern race looks and sounds a little different from birds to the north.

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [b]

AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER (*Pluvialis dominica*) [b]

TWO-BANDED PLOVER (*Charadrius falklandicus*) – It was great seeing those pairs with chicks on the peninsula - something I'd never seen there before this year. [N]

SEMIPALMATED PLOVER (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) [b]

TAWNY-THROATED DOTTEREL (*Oreopholus ruficollis*) – It was a good year for these on the Valdez Peninsula. Like the Two-banded Plover above, I'd never seen chicks there before this year. [N]

Pluvianellidae (Magellanic Plover)

MAGELLANIC PLOVER (*Pluvianellus socialis*) – YESSSS!!!! This very strange shorebird really made us work for our good looks this year, but it was worth the long walk! I'm sure that the following day, they were back at their usual spot.

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus palliatus*) [N]

BLACKISH OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus ater*) – Much like our Black Oystercatcher, but with a slightly shorter bill.

MAGELLANIC OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus leucopodus*) – It's still strange to see this one in the Calafate region so far from the nearest coastline.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-NECKED STILT (WHITE-BACKED) (*Himantopus mexicanus melanurus*)

Jacaniidae (Jacanas)

WATTLED JACANA (*Jacana jacana*) – A couple of birds on the first couple of days around B.A.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*) [b]

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*) [b]

HUDSONIAN GODWIT (*Limosa haemastica*) – It's always great to see healthy numbers of these wintering in the San Clemente area. [b]

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*) [b]

RED KNOT (*Calidris canutus*) [N]

SANDERLING (*Calidris alba*) [N]

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER (*Calidris fuscicollis*) – This one generally winters a little farther north than the next species. [N]

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER (*Calidris bairdii*) [N]

SOUTH AMERICAN SNIPE (MAGELLANIC) (*Gallinago paraguaiiae magellanica*) – Great views at close range in the Calafate area. The two races of this species in S. America might be different enough to warrant a split in the future.

WILSON'S PHALAROPE (*Phalaropus tricolor*) – Rainer had one of these at Lago Argentino. [b]

Thinocoridae (Seedsnipes)

WHITE-BELLIED SEEDSNIPE (*Attagis malouinus*) – YESSSS!!!! Marcelo managed to track down a pair of these very rarely seen seedsnipe above Ushuaia and we all came away with fabulous looks (& photos!)! I think it had been at least ten years since my last sighting of these subtly beautiful birds up there!

LEAST SEEDSNIPE (*Thinocorus rumicivorus*) – Wonderful views, including newly-hatched chicks, along the roadside on our drive out to the east end of the Valdez Peninsula. [N]

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

BROWN-HOODED GULL (*Chroicocephalus maculipennis*) – Certainly the most common small gull of the tour. [N]

DOLPHIN GULL (*Leucophaeus scoresbii*) – Very common in the Ushuaia area. Beautiful!

OLROG'S GULL (*Larus atlanticus*) – Not as many as I had the previous year, but we still managed a couple of sub-adult birds on the mudflats at the San Clemente harbor. Total numbers of this one are probably only around 10,000 individuals, making it one of the world's rarest gulls.

KELP GULL (*Larus dominicanus*) – An everyday bird on this tour.

COMMON TERN (*Sterna hirundo*)

SOUTH AMERICAN TERN (*Sterna hirundinacea*) – Lot's of good looks, especially down at the Beagle Channel.

SNOWY-CROWNED TERN (*Sterna trudeaui*) – Nicely at San Clemente on our last day there.

ROYAL TERN (*Thalasseus maximus*)

SANDWICH TERN (CAYENNE) (*Thalasseus sandvicensis eurygnathus*) – Excellent looks of several birds in flight from our whale-watching boat on the Valdez Peninsula. Formerly considered to be a separate species (Cayenne Tern).

BLACK SKIMMER (CINERASCENS) (*Rynchops niger cinerascens*) – We had two very distinct races at San Clemente. This was the smaller, darker race.

BLACK SKIMMER (INTERCEDENS) (*Rynchops niger intercedens*)

Stercorariidae (Skuas and Jaegers)

CHILEAN SKUA (*Stercorarius chilensis*) – Not uncommon at all in the Ushuaia/Beagle Channel area.

BROWN SKUA (FALKLAND) (*Stercorarius antarcticus antarcticus*) – I initially had my doubts about seeing this one at the penguin colony, but we eventually spotted a few birds headed our way from the point, giving us all fantastic views in flight.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) [I]

PICAZURO PIGEON (*Patagioenas picazuro*) – In the pampas area only on this tour.

SPOT-WINGED PIGEON (*Patagioenas maculosa*) – This one ranges south to the Las Grutas area in s.e. Rio Negro province.

EARED DOVE (*Zenaidura macroura*)

PICUI GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina picui*)

WHITE-TIPPED DOVE (*Leptotila verreauxi*)

Psittacidae (Parrots)

NANDAY PARAKEET (*Nandayus nenday*) – Decent looks at the reserve in B.A., where they are now established. [I]

BURROWING PARAKEET (*Cyanoliseus patagonus*) – Not very common this year in the Pto. Madryn/Trelew area, but we saw plenty in the Las Grutas area.

AUSTRAL PARAKEET (*Enicognathus ferrugineus*) – Nice encounters with this one both in Ushuaia and in the Los Glaciares NP area.

MONK PARAKEET (*Myiopsitta monachus*) – Very common in the pampas region.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

GUIRA CUCKOO (*Guira guira*) – The only cuckoo that we could find this year on the tour.

Strigidae (Owls)

AUSTRAL PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium nana*) – Barbara spotted one of these little guys in the trees on the grounds of our estancia, and we soon had looks at a pair. I hope they stick around!

BURROWING OWL (*Athene cunicularia*)

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

GLITTERING-BELLIED EMERALD (*Chlorostilbon aureoventris*) – The most common hummer in the pampas area.

WHITE-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Leucochloris albicollis*) – We got a couple of singing males in the scopes out at the trees on Punta Rasa. This is about as far south as this species gets.

GILDED HUMMINGBIRD (*Hylocharis chrysura*) – Several birds around the flowering *Erythrina*s near La Balandra.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

CHECKERED WOODPECKER (*Veniliornis mixtus*) – This one is now quite common in the reserve in B.A.

GREEN-BARRED WOODPECKER (*Colaptes melanochloros melanolaimus*) – The race that we saw was once split out as Golden-breasted

Woodpecker (*C. melanolaimus*).

CHILEAN FLICKER (*Colaptes pitius*) – We managed to pull one out for good looks just outside of the Los Glaciares NP entrance. I was hoping that they'd still be around the big trees at our estancia, but not this year.

CAMPO FLICKER (*Colaptes campestris*) – In the pampas region only on this tour.

MAGELLANIC WOODPECKER (*Campophilus magellanicus*) – This one really gave us trouble in the Ushuaia area, despite being found right behind our hotel! We eventually caught up with a quiet pair attending a nest at Los Glaciares NP at our picnic lunch spot, thanks to Martina. [N]

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)

COMMON MINER (*Geositta cunicularia*) – Nice views at both the Valdez Peninsula and east of Calafate. This one is due for some taxonomic splitting, so keep track of where you see them. Our was the nominate G.c. cunicularia.

BAND-TAILED EARTHCREEPER (*Ochetorhynchus phoenicurus*) – Mabel knew exactly where to look for this one and we all left satisfied. A Argentine near-endemic. [E]

SCALE-THROATED EARTHCREEPER (*Upucerthia dumetaria*) – Nicely at the Valdez Peninsula and along the old road above Calafate. [N]

BUFF-WINGED CINCLODES (*Cinclodes fuscus*) – This one is restricted as a breeder to s. Chile & s. Argentina, but it winters far to the n. in s.e. Brazil. Formerly know as Bar-winged Cinclodes, which has since been split into three species.

DARK-BELLIED CINCLODES (*Cinclodes patagonicus*) – This one is restricted to the immediate coast in s. Argentina & s. Chile. It was pretty neat to see this one foraging at the surf line on those tiny islets in the Beagle Channel!

RUFOUS HORNERO (*Furnarius rufus*) – This one petered out in the Trelew area, but was found just about everywhere north of there on this tour.

CURVE-BILLED REEDHAUNTER (*Limnornis curvirostris*) – We managed to reel one in for fantastic looks near La Balandra.

WREN-LIKE RUSHBIRD (*Phleocryptes melanops*) – We heard a lot more of these guys than we ever saw. Really abundant in the marshes near San Clemente.

THORN-TAILED RAYADITO (*Aphrastura spinicauda*) – One of the most characteristic species of the far southern Nothofagus forests.

TUFTED TIT-SPINETAIL (*Leptasthenura platensis*) – It took a little work, but we finally got him.

PLAIN-MANTLED TIT-SPINETAIL (PALLIDA) (*Leptasthenura aegithaloides pallida*) – We had one brief encounter on our final morning on the Valdez Peninsula, but he got away before everyone got a look.

BAY-CAPPED WREN-SPINETAIL (*Spartonoica maluroides*) – Nicely in the thick *Spartina* grass near Punta Rasa.

CHOTOY SPINETAIL (*Schoeniophylax phryganophilus*) – The one bright side moment at our bus breakdown near Magdalena.

PALE-BREASTED SPINETAIL (*Synallaxis albescens*) – A skittish pair near Las Grutas gave us decent views as we looked in vain for the Yellow Cardinal.

SPIX'S SPINETAIL (*Synallaxis spixi*) – Another spinetail that gave us a little trouble near La Balandra.

SULPHUR-THROATED SPINETAIL (*Cranioleuca sulphurifera*) – Great views out near Punta Rasa. Formerly called the Sulphur-bearded Spinetail.

STRIPE-CROWNED SPINETAIL (*Cranioleuca pyrrhophia*) – The Las Grutas area must be near the s. limit of this species' range. Great looks!

HUDSON'S CANASTERO (*Asthenes hudsoni*) – These birds were very quiet this year, but we managed good looks at one bird along the roadside near San Clemente.

CORDILLERAN CANASTERO (*Asthenes modesta*) – On our last full day around Calafate.

SHARP-BILLED CANASTERO (*Asthenes pyrrholeuca*) – This one is the most common canastero in the s. monte/n. Patagonian scrub habitat. Formerly called the Lesser Canastero.

PATAGONIAN CANASTERO (*Pseudasthenes patagonica*) – A random stop in the scrub on our way to Punta Tombo produced decent views of this endemic canastero. [E]

FRECKLE-BREASTED THORNBIRD (*Phacellodomus striaticollis*) – Very common in the pampas region.

FIREWOOD-GATHERER (*Anumbius anumbi*) – Another bright spot at our bus breakdown site.

BROWN CACHOLOTE (*Pseudoseisura lophotes*) – Mostly just heard, but some did see a bird at the edge of the taller habitat quite a ways back from the roadside near Las Grutas.

WHITE-THROATED CACHOLOTE (*Pseudoseisura gutturalis*) – A surprise find at the little Burrowing Parakeet colony near Pto. Madryn. [E]

WHITE-THROATED TREERUNNER (*Pygarrhichas albogularis*) – Pretty common this year in the Nothofagus forest near Ushuaia.

NARROW-BILLED WOODCREEPER (*Lepidocolaptes angustirostris*) – Great looks at the reserve in B.A. on the first afternoon.

Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)

RUFOUS-CAPPED ANTSHRIKE (*Thamnophilus ruficapillus*) – We had a couple of pairs near La Balandra, with the first pair seen bringing food to young in an unseen nest. [N]

Rhinocryptidae (Tapaculos)

SANDY GALLITO (*Teledromas fuscus*) [E]

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

YELLOW-BILLED TIT-TYRANT (*Anairetes flavirostris*) – Fleeting looks near Las Grutas.

TUFTED TIT-TYRANT (*Anairetes parulus*) – Insanely cute!

BEARDED TACHURI (*Polystictus pectoralis*) – Our 'shot in the dark' stop paid off very well with great views of a responsive little male on the fence right in front of us.

WARBLING DORADITO (*Pseudocolopteryx flaviventris*) – We ended up with some fine views in the marshes s. of B.A. and in the San Clemente area.

WHITE-CRESTED ELAENIA (*Elaenia albiceps*) – One of the most common passerines in the Nothofagus forests of the far south.

SMALL-BILLED ELAENIA (*Elaenia parvirostris*) – I figure that the birds we saw in B.A. were spring overshoots.

SOOTY TYRANNULET (*Serpophaga nigricans*) – Always associated with water throughout its range (at the s. limits here).

WHITE-CRESTED TYRANNULET (*Serpophaga subcristata*) – Very similar to the next species, but easily identified if they say something.

STRANECK'S TYRANULET (*Serpophaga griseicapilla*) – The monte habitat around Las Grutas is perfect for this little guy, who was only described to science just 5 years ago.

SOUTHERN SCRUB-FLYCATCHER (*Sublegatus modestus*) – A couple of birds in the Las Grutas area were new birds for me for the area, but I suspect that they're regular there.

MANY-COLORED RUSH TYRANT (*Tachuris rubrigastra*) – Our best looks were had at Canal 2 near San Clemente on our way back to B.A. An incredible little flycatcher!

GREATER WAGTAIL-TYRANT (*Stigmatura budytoides*) – Our quick stop on the way to Las Grutas gave us good looks at a pair of these very charismatic flycatchers.

BRAN-COLORED FLYCATCHER (*Myiophobus fasciatus*)

EULER'S FLYCATCHER (*Lathrotriccus euleri*) [*]

VERMILION FLYCATCHER (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*)

AUSTRAL NEGRITO (*Lessonia rufa*) – Right on the lawn of our Ushuaia hotel. These birds winter far to the north in s.e. Brazil.

HUDSON'S BLACK-TYRANT (*Knipolegus hudsoni*) – Fantastic studies of this very local rarity (an Argentine breeding endemic) in Las Grutas.

WHITE-WINGED BLACK-TYRANT (*Knipolegus aterrimus*) – Good comparisons with the above species in Las Grutas. It wouldn't surprise me at all if the race here is shown to be different enough from birds in the Andes to warrant a split.

SPECTACLED TYRANT (*Hymenops perspicillatus*) – All of the moist habitats on this tour hosted this remarkable little flycatcher, but they were most common in the pampas region.

YELLOW-BROWED TYRANT (*Satrapa icterophrys*) – A single bird on our way to San Clemente.

OCHRE-NAPED GROUND-TYRANT (*Muscisaxicola flavinucha*) – We eventually ended up with fabulous looks at this big ground-tyrant in the glacial valley above Ushuaia.

DARK-FACED GROUND-TYRANT (*Muscisaxicola maclovianus*) – Snow in the mountains above Ushuaia forced these birds down to sea level during our stay there.

WHITE-BROWED GROUND-TYRANT (*Muscisaxicola albilora*) – Who knew that it would respond so well to my pygmy-owl whistle?

CINNAMON-BELLIED GROUND-TYRANT (*Muscisaxicola capistratus*) – And we didn't even have to climb the fence! That rock is a very reliable spot for this one.

GRAY-BELLIED SHRIKE-TYRANT (*Agriornis micropterus*) – Our best was probably in the little draw that held the Sandy Gallito in Las Grutas.

LESSER SHRIKE-TYRANT (*Agriornis murinus*) – We had a few in Chubut at various spots, but none of the looks were really stellar. Another breeding endemic in Argentina.

FIRE-EYED DIUCON (*Xolmis pyrope*)

BLACK-CROWNED MONJITA (*Xolmis coronatus*) – Yet another breeding endemic, we had excellent views of this dapper flycatcher in the Las Grutas area.

WHITE MONJITA (*Xolmis irupero*) – These always stick out like a sore thumb when they're around.

RUSTY-BACKED MONJITA (*Xolmis rubetra*) – That last look that we had at this one was definitely our best. If you took both this tour, the Northwest Argentina tour, and the pre-tour extension, you left Argentina with 6 of the 8 species of *Xolmis* in the world. [E]

CHOCOLATE-VENTED TYRANT (*Neoxolmis rufiventris*) – That morning ride up to the Meseta Vizcachas provided us with our only encounter with this smashing flycatcher. It's always been one of my favorites!

CATTLE TYRANT (*Machetornis rixosa*)

SWAINSON'S FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus swainsoni*) – The bird we had at Las Grutas was a little farther south than I would have expected it.

GREAT KISKADEE (*Pitangus sulphuratus*)

STREAKED FLYCATCHER (*Myiodynastes maculatus*)

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus melancholicus*)

FORK-TAILED FLYCATCHER (*Tyrannus savana*) – South to the Las Grutas area.

Cotingidae (Cotingas)

WHITE-TIPPED PLANTCUTTER (*Phytotoma rutila*) – Fantastic looks that first afternoon in Las Grutas!

RUFOUS-TAILED PLANTCUTTER (*Phytotoma rara*) – One of our few stops along the park road got us very nice looks at a responsive male in the blooming Notro or Firebush.

Vireonidae (Vireos)

RED-EYED VIREO (*Vireo olivaceus*)

RUFOUS-BROWED PEPPERSHRIKE (*Cyclarhis gujanensis*) [*]

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

BLUE-AND-WHITE SWALLOW (PATAGONICA) (*Pygochelidon cyanoleuca patagonica*)

GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN (*Progne chalybea*)

SOUTHERN MARTIN (*Progne elegans*) – Nesting under the eaves at the Valdez Peninsula NP visitors center.

BROWN-CHESTED MARTIN (FUSCA) (*Progne tapera fusca*)

WHITE-RUMPED SWALLOW (*Tachycineta leucorrhoa*)

CHILEAN SWALLOW (*Tachycineta meyeni*) – Very similar to the above, but it usually lacks any white feathering on the supraloral area.

BANK SWALLOW (*Riparia riparia*)

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*)

CLIFF SWALLOW (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*)

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

HOUSE WREN (SOUTHERN) (*Troglodytes aedon musculus*)

SEDGE WREN (PLATENSIS GROUP) (*Cistothorus platensis platensis*) – On our last morning of birding at Laguna Nimez.

Poliptilidae (Gnatcatchers)

MASKED GNATCATCHER (*Poliptila dumicola dumicola*) – Attending a nest at the reserve in B.A. [N]

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

AUSTRAL THRUSH (*Turdus falcklandii*) – Our first was in the city park in Trelew, but they occur as far north as the Las Grutas area.

RUFOUS-BELLIED THRUSH (*Turdus rufiventris*) – Only in the B.A. area on this tour.

CREAMY-BELLIED THRUSH (*Turdus amaurochalinus*) – Often with the above species, but it's usually in drier habitats.

CHIGUANCO THRUSH (*Turdus chiguanco*) – A single bird near Las Grutas was a bit of a surprise, but it's recently colonized this stretch of Patagonia.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

PATAGONIAN MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus patagonicus*) – This is pretty much THE mockingbird in the Chubut area of the tour. [N]

CHALK-BROWED MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus saturninus*) – Mostly in the pampas, but also around Las Grutas. Replaced by the above species south of there.

WHITE-BANDED MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus triurus*) – This monte species can be really pretty common in the scrub around the Las Grutas area. Argentina tours that we do don't really get into the heart of this species' range.

Sturnidae (Starlings)

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) [I]

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

SHORT-BILLED PIPIT (*Anthus furcatus*) – Pretty common in the grassy habitats of Chubut.

CORRENDERA PIPIT (*Anthus correndera*) – This one always seems to prefer moister habitats than the above species.

HELLMAYR'S PIPIT (*Anthus hellmayri brasiliensis*) – Always around in small numbers in the San Clemente area (outnumbered by Correndera).

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

MASKED YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis aequinoctialis*) – All of our warblers were in Buenos Aires province.

TROPICAL PARULA (*Setophaga pitiaiyumi*)

GOLDEN-CROWNED WARBLER (*Basileuterus culicivorus*)

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

BLUE-AND-YELLOW TANAGER (*Thraupis bonariensis*) – We missed it at Punta Rasa, but caught up with it at Las Grutas.

GOLDEN-BILLED SALTATOR (*Saltator aurantirostris*) – I was a little surprised to find it far to the south at Las Grutas.

Emberizidae (Buntings, Sparrows and Allies)

GRAY-HOODED SIERRA-FINCH (*Phrygilus gayi*) – This one occurs in the dry habitats adjacent to the wetter habitats of Patagonian SF and hybridizes with it to an unknown extent. It looked like we found a hybrid male on our way into the park that day, but we did see a few pure ones closer to Calafate.

PATAGONIAN SIERRA-FINCH (*Phrygilus patagonicus*) – Very common in the Nothofagus forests of the south.

MOURNING SIERRA-FINCH (*Phrygilus fruticeti*) – Superficially somewhat similar to the next endemic species, but readily separated from that one by behavior & voice.

CARBONATED SIERRA-FINCH (*Phrygilus carbonarius*) – Our spot east of Las Grutas paid off with very nice looks at this one. We're never quite sure when this one will arrive back onto the breeding grounds in the Spring, so finding it is always a relief. [E]

COMMON DIUCA-FINCH (*Diuca diuca*) – Very common in the dry northern Patagonian scrub.

YELLOW-BRIDLED FINCH (*Melanodera xanthogramma*) – We were very lucky to see this rare finch, but seeing males of both the blue and the green morph within feet of each other was more than I was expecting!

LONG-TAILED REED FINCH (*Donacospiza albifrons*) – We never see many of these at San Clemente, but we always seem to find at least one for good looks.

CINNAMON WARBLING-FINCH (*Poospiza ornata*) – I was starting to sweat, think that they hadn't yet arrived on the breeding grounds, but our male betrayed his presence when he started to sing. A fantastic little warbling-finch that few birders ever see. [E]

BLACK-AND-RUFOUS WARBLING-FINCH (*Poospiza nigrorufa*) – In the pampas only.

RINGED WARBLING-FINCH (*Poospiza torquata*) – These birds at Las Grutas were surely near the s. limit of their range in Argentina.

DOUBLE-COLLARED SEEDEATER (*Sporophila caerulescens*) – In the B.A. area only.

PATAGONIAN YELLOW-FINCH (*Sicalis lebruni*) – We barely saw this one near Pto. Piramides.

SAFFRON FINCH (*Sicalis flaveola*)

GRASSLAND YELLOW-FINCH (GRASSLAND) (*Sicalis luteola luteiventris*) – When the Sibley & Monroe taxonomy was all the rage, this one was split out and was called the Misto Yellow-Finch.

GREAT PAMPA-FINCH (*Embernagra platensis platensis*) – In the pampas, obviously!

RED-CRESTED CARDINAL (*Paroaria coronata*) – Not closely related at all to our familiar Northern Cardinal.

GRASSLAND SPARROW (*Ammodramus humeralis*) [*]

RUFOUS-COLLARED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia capensis*) – Every single day.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

WHITE-BROWED BLACKBIRD (*Sturnella superciliaris*) – Nice views in the scope during our breakdown with the bus.

LONG-TAILED MEADOWLARK (*Sturnella loyca*) – Really common from Chubut southward.

AUSTRAL BLACKBIRD (*Curaeus curaeus*) – We tracked a pair of these down for good looks at Tierra del Fuego NP.

SCARLET-HEADED BLACKBIRD (*Amblyramphus holosericeus*) – We saw far fewer of these than I normally see. Still, an absolute stunner!

YELLOW-WINGED BLACKBIRD (*Agelasticus thilius*) – The most widespread icterid of the tour.

BROWN-AND-YELLOW MARSHBIRD (*Pseudoleistes virescens*) – Noisy and conspicuous. Our best were near La Balandra.

BAY-WINGED COWBIRD (*Agelaioides badius*) – We all ought to start calling this one the Baywing so that there's no confusing it with the unrelated cowbirds. Ironically, it happens to be the primary host species for the Screaming Cowbird!

SCREAMING COWBIRD (*Molothrus rufoaxillaris*) – Screaming? Really?

SHINY COWBIRD (*Molothrus bonariensis*)

SOLITARY BLACK CACIQUE (*Cacicus solitarius*) [*]

Fringillidae (Siskins, Crossbills, and Allies)

HOODED SISKIN (*Spinus magellanicus*) – Only in the pampas region.

BLACK-CHINNED SISKIN (*Spinus barbatus*) – Our first were in the city park in Trelew.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) [I]

MAMMALS

BIG HAIRY ARMADILLO (*Chaetophractus villosus*) – We had a pretty good look alongside the road on the Valdez Peninsula.

OLD WORLD RABBIT (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) – Only at Tierra del Fuego NP on this tour. All of the others we saw were the next species.

CAPE HARE (*Lepus capensis*)

SOUTHERN CAVY (*Microcavia australis*) – Occurs in drier habitats than the next species.

GUINEA PIG (*Cavia aperea*)

PATAGONIAN CAVY (*Dolichotis patagonum*) – Also called the Mara, we enjoyed many good encounters with this bizarre rodent on the Valdez Peninsula. [E]

NUTRIA (*Myocastor coypus*)

SHORT-BEAKED COMMON DOLPHIN (*Delphinus delphis*) – There was a feeding group of these and the next offshore on our whalewatching boat ride. I typically never see dolphins on this trip, so we were very fortunate.

DUSKY DOLPHIN (*Lagenorhynchus obscurus*)

SOUTHERN RIGHT WHALE (*Eubalaena australis*) – This was probably one of the best whale experiences ever for everyone in the group! We couldn't have asked for more - okay, maybe a breach...

SOUTHERN GRAY FOX (*Pseudalopex griseus*) – This is the fox species that I see most often on this tour.

CULPEO FOX (*Pseudalopex culpaeus*) – A very unwary animal was seen well from the bus in Tierra del Fuego NP.

SOUTHERN SEA LION (*Otaria byronia*) – These had not yet arrived in numbers, but some of those male were pretty impressive!

SOUTHERN ELEPHANT SEAL (*Mirounga leonina*) – Those sea lions are pretty big, but these guys are monsters! That young male on the first beach we stopped at south of Trelew was my favorite.

GUANACO (*Lama guanicoe*) – These seem to be getting more and more common in Chubut.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 273 bird taxa and 15 mammal taxa