

KAIA SOUTHERN ARGENTINA

Nov 4, 2011 to Nov 21, 2011
Dave Stejskal



This Yellow-bridled Finch provided some fantastic looks for our group in the Ushuaia area. Great bird! (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)

It had been quite a while since I was down in the southern half of Argentina (2004 to be exact), and it sure was great getting back to the pampas of Buenos Aires province, Tierra del Fuego, and the northern and southern portions of Patagonia with all of you in November! We all saw fabulous birds, landscapes, plants and mammals, and enjoyed some good food and wine along the way during our nearly three weeks together.

Drought in parts of Argentina still continues to be an issue, especially in the pampas region. Nowhere was it more pronounced than what we experienced on our first afternoon at the Costanera Reserve a few minutes from our downtown hotel in B.A. Not a drop of water could be seen in any of the basins, and it was my first trip ever, since I first started visiting this important reserve in 1990, that I didn't see a single duck or rallid there! Pretty remarkable. Still, we had a productive outing and saw a few landbird species that we wouldn't run across again. The pampas south of B.A. were pretty dry as well, and waterbird numbers were down noticeably, but we did very well anyway, seeing most of the specialty birds one can expect.

Northern Patagonia in Chubut and Rio Negro provinces was a little wetter than I expected it to be, but it was very productive -- as usual. Magellanic Penguins and Southern Right Whales delighted the group, and a fine collection of endemics and rare and local specialty birds and mammals kept us busy during our time in this region that reminds me so much of the American Southwest.

Tierra del Fuego and Santa Cruz province in the southernmost reaches of the continent were visually thrilling, and the birding wasn't half bad, was it? There's nothing quite like the setting of Ushuaia and the Beagle Channel, with the icy Cordillera de Darwin looming over the town and the channel teeming with birds. And the Calafate area of southern Santa Cruz province, with its steppe vegetation, dark Nothofagus forests, lakeshore, marshes, and the incomparable Moreno Glacier was a fantastic place to wrap this trip up. And staying at the lovely Estancia Alice while there was surely one of the highlights of the trip for me.

Thanks to all of you for your good companionship on this fun trip, and thanks to Denis especially for pulling this great group together -- and for being such a good sport. I was really impressed with his willingness to take over the rest of the trip on such short notice -- ha! Seriously, I thoroughly enjoyed my time with all of you and sincerely hope there will be another

trip with the gang from Chicago. All the best in 2012 and I hope to see all of you again 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*) – Once we got closer to the coast near San Clemente, we started picking these up more frequently along the roadside.

LESSER RHEA (DARWIN'S) (*Rhea pennata pennata*) – Jack spotted our first bird, a male, accompanied by a boatload of youngsters out near Punta Tombo. [N]

Tinamidae (Tinamous)

DARWIN'S NOTHURA (*Nothura darwinii*) [*]

SPOTTED NOTHURA (*Nothura maculosa*) – Those first birds on the way down to San Clemente sure were exciting! We had a more leisurely view of one right next to the road on our way back to B.A. It's those checkard flags, you know...

ELEGANT CRESTED-TINAMOU (*Eudromia elegans*)

– Maybe not as common as I'm used to seeing them, but we still ended up with a bunch of these on the Valdes Peninsula.

Anhimidae (Screamers)

SOUTHERN SCREAMER (*Chauna torquata*) – We cleaned up our looks of this beast once we got closer to San Clemente.

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

BLACK-NECKED SWAN (*Cygnus melancoryphus*) – This one far outnumbered the next species on the tour, which isn't always the case.

COSCOROBA SWAN (*Coscoroba coscoroba*) – Like a big barnyard goose, but you can count this one.

UPLAND GOOSE (*Chloephaga picta*) – Easily the most common of the three species of 'sheldgeese' that we saw down in the far south. [N]

KELP GOOSE (*Chloephaga hybrida*) – This distinctive goose seems to be much easier to see in the Argentine side of Tierra del Fuego than it is on the Chilean side. One of the first birds to greet our late arrival at the hotel in Ushuaia.

ASHY-HEADED GOOSE (*Chloephaga poliocephala*) – Marscha spotted our first along the road into Tierra del Fuego NP. We never did see that many this year, but it's never as common as Upland Goose.

FLYING STEAMER-DUCK (*Tachyeres patachonicus*) – Daily in front of our hotel in Ushuaia.

FLIGHTLESS STEAMER-DUCK (*Tachyeres pteneres*) – Very similar to the above and the next species, we had nice comparisons in Ushuaia between this one and the Flightless. I don't think that it overlaps anywhere with the White-headed.

WHITE-HEADED STEAMER-DUCK (*Tachyeres leucocephalus*) – Relatively easy to see in the Trelew/Peninsula Valdes area. It shares that huge orange bill with the Flightless. [E]

CRESTED DUCK (*Lophonetta specularioides*) – We got to see that crest a few times on the tour. [N]

CHILOE WIGEON (*Anas sibilatrix*) – We watched one of these almost get murdered by a pair of Red-gartered Coots at Estancia Alice!

CINNAMON TEAL (*Anas cyanoptera*) – It's odd how this part of S. America shares this species and the White-faced Ibis



Kelp Geese near Ushaia (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)

with western N. America.

RED SHOVELER (*Anas platalea*) – Unparalleled views at Estancia Alice.

YELLOW-BILLED PINTAIL (*Anas georgica*) – The old name for this one was Brown Pintail - maybe a better name?

SILVER TEAL (*Anas versicolor*) – These normally common ducks were inexplicably scarce this year - having the basins dry at Costanera Sur Reserve in B.A. played a big part in that absence.

YELLOW-BILLED TEAL (FLAVIROSTRIS) (*Anas flavirostris flavirostris*) – Speckled Teal was split up with these southern birds with yellow bills being called, you guessed it, Yellow-billed Teal. The northern ones are Andean Teal now (they have black bills). **[N]**

ROSY-BILLED POCHARD (*Netta peposaca*) – This gorgeous pochard was pretty easily seen in the pampas near San Clemente.

BLACK-HEADED DUCK (*Heteronetta atricapilla*) – The Costanera Reserve in B.A. used to be 'the' place to see this scarce parasitic duck, but we had it in the pampas, at Trelew, and way down south at El Calafate. Great looks!

RUDDY DUCK (ANDEAN) (*Oxyura jamaicensis ferruginea*) – This one used to be split out as a separate species, the Andean Duck. Both sexes look very different than our Ruddy, but the male's display is apparently the same - or close enough.

LAKE DUCK (*Oxyura vittata*) – The female is the plumage that you really need to scrutinize to separate these two similar Oxyuras.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

WHITE-TUFTED GREBE (*Rollandia rolland*) – The looks we had from the blind at Estancia Alice were particularly memorable. **[N]**

PIED-BILLED GREBE (*Podilymbus podiceps*)

GREAT GREBE (*Podiceps major*) – The largest of the grebes. **[N]**

SILVERY GREBE (OCCIPITALIS) (*Podiceps occipitalis occipitalis*) – We had our best looks at the 'Lagunas Ornitologicas' in Trelew (i.e. – the local sewage ponds). The distinctive race we had breeds in s. South America and winters to the north.

Phoenicopteridae (Flamingos)

CHILEAN FLAMINGO (*Phoenicopterus chilensis*) – We probably saw our largest numbers at the sewage ponds in Trelew. Lovely!

Spheniscidae (Penguins)

GENTOO PENGUIN (*Pygoscelis papua*) – When I first started doing this tour, there were only three birds at that colony in the Beagle Channel. I saw at least 22 birds either on nests or just standing around, so the numbers of the colony might be approaching 50 or so now. **[N]**

MAGELLANIC PENGUIN (*Spheniscus magellanicus*) – Up close and personal along our walk through the colony at Punta Tombo! **[N]**

Diomedeidae (Albatrosses)

BLACK-BROWED ALBATROSS (*Thalassarche melanophris*) – With only about 20 or so seen in the Beagle Channel this year, this was, by far, the worst year I've ever experienced for this species there.

Procellariidae (Shearwaters and Petrels)

SOUTHERN GIANT-PETREL (*Macronectes giganteus*) – I don't think this one was ever out of view when we were looking at the Atlantic in Chubut.

NORTHERN GIANT-PETREL (*Macronectes halli*) – We had more of these close relatives of the above species than I normally see in a given year. It was great to get scope views of a couple of individuals on the water close to Pto. Piramides.

SOUTHERN FULMAR (*Fulmarus glacialisoides*) – We had far more than I usually get on the Beagle Channel.



The wonderfully adorned and fantastically cute Tufted Tit-Tyrant! (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)

Ciconiidae (Storks)

MAGUARI STORK (*Ciconia maguari*) – A rather common sight in the pampas south of Buenos Aires.

WOOD STORK (*Mycteria americana*)

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasiliensis*)

MAGELLAN CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax magellanicus*) – Formerly called the Rock Shag. **[N]**

IMPERIAL CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax atriceps atriceps*) – This one, with the whiter face than the next form, used to be split out and was called Blue-eyed Cormorant or Shag. **[N]**

IMPERIAL CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax atriceps albiventer*) – The darker-cheeked bird of the two, and the commoner of the two forms. Formerly called King Cormorant. **[N]**

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

COCOI HERON (*Ardea cocoi*)

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*)

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*)

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*)

WHISTLING HERON (*Syrigma sibilatrix*) – Only a few distant birds in the pampas.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – Great views of one of the dark southern adults (*N.n. obscurus*) at Tierra del Fuego NP. I'd never noticed before, but the head plumes, on this one at least, are a sort of pinkish-orange in color, instead of the more typical white plumes. I'll have to check to see if that's consistent on future trips. **[N]**

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

WHITE-FACED IBIS (*Plegadis chihi*) – Easily told from the next species in flight by the long legs sticking out well beyond the tail.

BARE-FACED IBIS (*Phimosus infuscatus*) – Just a few in the pampas. Also called Whispering Ibis.

BLACK-FACED IBIS (*Theristicus melanopis*) – Really common around El Calafate. **[N]**

ROSEATE SPOONBILL (*Platalea ajaja*)

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*) – Just a couple of these near Las Grutas.

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*)

ANDEAN CONDOR (*Vultur gryphus*) – At least sixteen in the air at once near Estancia Alice was quite a sight!

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

SNAIL KITE (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*) – This migrant species was just now returning to the pampas.

BLACK-CHESTED BUZZARD-EAGLE (*Geranoaetus melanoleucus*) – Very few seen this year, but the best was the adult carrying the remains of some unidentified bird at Los Glaciares NP.

LONG-WINGED HARRIER (*Circus buffoni*) – Great views of both sexes and both color morphs in the pampas this year. More than I usually see in a typical year.

CINEREOUS HARRIER (*Circus cinereus*) – Exceptional views of a couple of pairs at the marsh at El Calafate. **[N]**

ROADSIDE HAWK (*Buteo magnirostris*) – This race (*B.m. saturatus*) is quite different-looking than what you are all used to seeing farther north.

SWAINSON'S HAWK (*Buteo swainsoni*) – The group saw one of these migrants from N. America just outside of B.A.

VARIABLE HAWK (VARIABLE) (*Buteo polyosoma polyosoma*) – Great views on the nest near Las Grutas. **[N]**

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

WHITE-THROATED CARACARA (*Phalcoboenus albogularis*) – A lucky sighting of one flying over the glacial valley above Ushuaia.



The distinctive Spectacled Tyrant is one of the specialties of the "Southern Cone." (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)

SOUTHERN CARACARA (*Caracara plancus*) – A rather recent split from Crested Caracara north of the Amazon basin..

CHIMANGO CARACARA (*Milvago chimango*) – Everywhere...and every single day.

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*)

APLOMADO FALCON (*Falco femoralis*) – I was really surprised that we only found a pair of these on the entire trip!

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – A nice sighting above the Moreno Glacier.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

GIANT WOOD-RAIL (*Aramides ypecaha*) – Marscha got us onto these huge rails as we arrived at Balneario La Balandra.

PLUMBEOUS RAIL (*Pardirallus sanguinolentus*) – Jack spotted one of these lovely rails at the water's edge in the canal next to the road near Punta Rasa.

COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*) – Now split from the Old World birds, our New World birds are again called gallinules.

RED-GARTERED COOT (*Fulica armillata*) – Who knew that these birds could be so feisty? **[N]**

RED-FRONTED COOT (*Fulica rufifrons*) – Just a couple of these in the pampas. When there's water at the Costanera Reserve in B.A., these birds are abundant, as is the next species.

WHITE-WINGED COOT (*Fulica leucoptera*) – Surprisingly small numbers.

Aramidae (Limpkin)

LIMPKIN (*Aramus guarauna*)

Chionidae (Sheathbills)

SNOWY SHEATHBILL (*Chionis albus*) – Great views, both perched and in flight, on the Beagle Channel islands.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

SOUTHERN LAPWING (NORTHERN) (*Vanellus chilensis cayennensis*)

SOUTHERN LAPWING (SOUTHERN SOUTH AMERICA) (*Vanellus chilensis chilensis*) – This southern race has the most black on the throat and the least amount of white in the face of the three races. Its calls are perceptibly different from the two northern races. **[N]**

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

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

TWO-BANDED PLOVER (*Charadrius falklandicus*) – A nice pick-up by Joy on the high plateau outside of El Calafate. A gorgeous little plover.

TAWNY-THROATED DOTTEREL (*Oreopholus ruficollis*) – This, the most beautiful of all of the shorebirds (fide DJS), was seen quite well in the short grasslands of the Valdes Peninsula in Chubut.

Pluvianellidae (Magellanic Plover)

MAGELLANIC PLOVER (*Pluvianellus socialis*) – Denis came through for the group and found this rare and local bird along the shores of Lago Argentino in El Calafate. Thought to number only in about the low 1000's in the entire World!

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus palliatus*)

BLACKISH OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus ater*) – Easily seen on the Chubut coastline and sparingly farther south.

MAGELLANIC OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus leucopodus*) – We even had a few of these well inland at Estancia Alice.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-NECKED STILT (WHITE-BACKED) (*Himantopus mexicanus melanurus*) – This very distinctive race was once split from Black-necked and was called White-backed Stilt. There's apparently some hanky-panky going on in the s.



This Cinereous Harrier made a close pass by our group at Calafate. (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)

Amazon basin between the two forms.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*) **[b]**

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*) – Many more of these than the above species on the tour. **[b]**

HUDSONIAN GODWIT (*Limosa haemastica*) **[b]**

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*) **[b]**

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER (*Calidris fuscicollis*) – This is the common wintering 'peep' in the pampas. **[b]**

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER (*Calidris bairdii*) – The common wintering 'peep' in the far south. **[b]**

PECTORAL SANDPIPER (*Calidris melanotos*) **[b]**

STILT SANDPIPER (*Calidris himantopus*) – Trelew is about the southern wintering limit for this species. **[b]**

SOUTH AMERICAN SNIPE (MAGELLANIC) (*Gallinago paraguaiae magellanica*) – Excellent scope looks at this one right below our rooms at Estancia Alice. They put on a nice show in the evenings as well.

Thinocoridae (Seedsnipes)

LEAST SEEDSNIPE (*Thinocorus rumicivorus*) – After a lot of searching, this was the only seedsnipe species that we uncovered on the tour.

Rostratulidae (Painted-Snipes)

SOUTH AMERICAN PAINTED-SNIPE (*Nycticryphes semicollaris*) – WHEW!!! I was a little worried after we walked that first marshy habitat without success. I wasn't too long into our second patch of habitat when we flushed one of these up at our feet. A very brief look, but good enough!

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

BROWN-HOODED GULL (*Chroicocephalus maculipennis*) – Very similar to the Old World Black-headed Gull. **[N]**

GRAY-HOODED GULL (*Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus*) – There were quite a few of these out in the pampas this year, which isn't always the case along our route.

DOLPHIN GULL (*Leucophaeus scoresbii*) – For a gull, a real beauty!

OLROG'S GULL (*Larus atlanticus*) – We often just squeak by with just one or two of these rare gulls, so I was relieved to see upwards of 50 birds on the mud at the San Clemente port. A relatively recent split from Belcher's (Band-tailed) Gull of the Pacific coast.

KELP GULL (*Larus dominicanus*) – The only 'big' gull in most areas of this tour.

GULL-BILLED TERN (*Gelochelidon nilotica*)

COMMON TERN (*Sterna hirundo*) **[b]**

SOUTH AMERICAN TERN (*Sterna hirundinacea*) – There were plenty of these around the numerous small islets in the Beagle Channel.

SNOWY-CROWNED TERN (*Sterna trudeaui*) – I had some of my best views ever of this uncommon tern in the pampas this year.

ROYAL TERN (*Thalasseus maximus*)

SANDWICH TERN (CAYENNE) (*Thalasseus sandvicensis eurygnathus*) – A single flyby along the Chubut coast.

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

Stercorariidae (Skuas and Jaegers)

CHILEAN SKUA (*Stercorarius chilensis*) – Lots of great views in flight and sitting in the Beagle Channel.

BROWN SKUA (FALKLAND) (*Stercorarius antarcticus antarcticus*) – These birds were easy this year at the penguin colony at Punta Tombo.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) **[I]**

PICAZURO PIGEON (*Patagioenas picazuro*) – The biggest (certainly the heaviest) of the S. American pigeons.

SPOT-WINGED PIGEON (*Patagioenas maculosa*) – Never as common as the above species.

EARED DOVE (*Zenaida auriculata*) **[N]**

PICUI GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina picui*) – Only a handful in the pampas. They're much more common farther north in Argentina.

Psittacidae (Parrots)

NANDAY PARAKEET (*Nandayus nenday*) – This feral population is doing quite well in B.A. [II]

BURROWING PARAKEET (*Cyanoliseus patagonus*) – Very easily seen in and around Las Grutas. This is a much more colorful race than we see in the n.w. Andes in Argentina.

AUSTRAL PARAKEET (*Enicognathus ferrugineus*) – We were frustrated with this one at Tierra del Fuego NP, but we were treated to exceptional looks at Los Glaciares NP a couple of days later.

MONK PARAKEET (*Myiopsitta monachus*) – A lot more countable than the birds in Chicago!

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

GUIRA CUCKOO (*Guira guira*) – An ornate ani relative.

Strigidae (Owls)

AUSTRAL PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium nana*) – Alejandro took us to the right spot to look for this one and we all have Jon to thank for spotting it!

BURROWING OWL (*Athene cunicularia*)

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

GLITTERING-BELLIED EMERALD (*Chlorostilbon aureoventris*) – The common hummer at the Costanera Reserve in B.A.

WHITE-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Leucochloris albicollis*) – We found this striking species once we found the Japanese Honeysuckle at Punta Rasa. Great looks!

GILDED HUMMINGBIRD (*Hylocharis chrysura*) – La Balandra was the place to see this rather inornate species.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

CHECKERED WOODPECKER (*Veniliornis mixtus*) – They seemed to be everywhere at the Costanera Reserve this year. Relatively recently removed from Picoides and transferred to Veniliornis.

GREEN-BARRED WOODPECKER (*Colaptes melanochloros melanolaimus*) – Sometimes this large form is split from Green-barred and is called Golden-breasted Woodpecker.

CHILEAN FLICKER (*Colaptes pitius*) – A nice surprise, thanks to Dave & Denis, on the grounds of Estancia Alice.

CAMPO FLICKER (*Colaptes campestris*) – Only in the pampas this trip.

MAGELLANIC WOODPECKER (*Campephilus magellanicus*) – We did a lot of searching and all we could muster was a good flyby look of three birds at Tierra del Fuego NP.

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)

COMMON MINER (*Geositta cunicularia*) – Very common in the sandier soils of the Valdes Peninsula. It's likely that this widespread species will be split into at least a few species sometime, so keep track of where you see them (this one was nominate cunicularia).

SHORT-BILLED MINER (*Geositta antarctica*) – Ann got us onto this little bird next to the bus high on the plateau above El Calafate. A s. Patagonia/Tierra del Fuego endemic.

SCALE-THROATED EARTHCREEPER (*Upucerthia dumetaria*) – A rather common species in the arid habitats of n. Patagonia.

BUFF-WINGED CINCOLODES (*Cinclodes fuscus*) – This is the southernmost member of the three-way split of Bar-winged Cinclodes.

DARK-BELLIED CINCOLODES (*Cinclodes patagonicus*) – The common cincolodes of the far southern littoral zone.

RUFOUS HORNERO (*Furnarius rufus*) – Argentina's national bird.

WREN-LIKE RUSHBIRD (*Phleocryptes melanops*) – We had nice looks of this very Marsh Wren-like species in the numerous stands of reeds in the pampas and s. Patagonia.

THORN-TAILED RAYADITO (*Aphrastura spinicauda*) – Like a cross between a chickadee and a Brown Creeper.

TUFTED TIT-SPINETAIL (*Leptasthenura platensis*) – Rather easily seen in the vegetation around the lighthouse at Punta Rasa.

PLAIN-MANTLED TIT-SPINETAIL (PALLIDA) (*Leptasthenura aegithaloides pallida*) – This charming little bird was seemingly common this year in the dry scrub in Chubut. They can be really difficult to track down some years.

BAY-CAPPED WREN-SPINETAIL (*Spartonoica maluroides*) – This Spartina grass specialty came in for some great looks out near Punta Rasa.

SULPHUR-THROATED SPINETAIL (*Cranioleuca sulphurifera*) – Called Sulphur-bearded Spinetail in the book. We heard far more than we ever saw on this year's tour.

SHORT-BILLED CANASTERO (*Asthenes baeri*) – This seemed to be the most common canastero in the monte habitat around Las Grutas.

HUDSON'S CANASTERO (*Asthenes hudsoni*) – Right on cue, this local specialty appeared in the middle of the road right in front of us for some fabulous looks.

AUSTRAL CANASTERO (*Asthenes anthoides*) – This one never uttered a sound as it came in silently to check us out on that windy morning at Estancia Alice.

CORDILLERAN CANASTERO (*Asthenes modesta*) – A few of these were mixed in with the Sharp-billed Canasteros around Trelew.

SHARP-BILLED CANASTERO (*Asthenes pyrrholeuca*) – Even though Lesser Canastero is a boring name, it's useful to lessen the confusion between this and the Short-billed Canastero. I guess the answer is learn the Latin names!

PATAGONIAN CANASTERO (*Pseudasthenes patagonica*) – This was our prize while we tromped in vain for the Darwin's Nothura near Pto. Piramides. **[E]**

FRECKLE-BREASTED THORNBIRD (*Phacellodomus striaticollis*) – Nicely on the first afternoon and afterward in the pampas.

FIREWOOD-GATHERER (*Anumbius annumbi*) – A last-ditch effort produced a fine view of this open country furnariid on our way back to B.A.

WHITE-THROATED CACHOLOTE (*Pseudoseisura gutturalis*) – I had almost given up when this big endemic furnariid finally revealed itself on the outskirts of Las Grutas. Whew! **[E]**

WHITE-THROATED TREERUNNER (*Pygarrhichas albogularis*) – This guy's head is just too darned big for his body!

NARROW-BILLED WOODCREEPER (*Lepidocolaptes angustirostris*) – We found an incredibly confiding individual in the Costanera Reserve that first afternoon.

Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)

RUFOUS-CAPPED ANTSHRIKE (*Thamnophilus ruficapillus*) – We really had to work for our looks at this one at La Balandra this year!

Rhinocryptidae (Tapaculos)

SANDY GALLITO (*Teledromas fuscus*) – A walk up that little gully produced super looks at this endemic tapaculo - just as advertised. **[E]**

MAGELLANIC TAPACULO (*Scytalopus magellanicus*) – Our vantage point on the boardwalk wasn't the best, but it worked just fine for this little skulker.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

YELLOW-BILLED TIT-TYRANT (*Anairetes flavirostris*) – Down here at the southern edge of the range, this bird seems to prefer desert areas with tall creosote.

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

BEARDED TACHURI (*Polystictus pectoralis*) – Another last-ditch effort produced a fabulous encounter with this tiny, scarce, and poorly-known flycatcher.

WARBLING DORADITO (*Pseudocolopteryx flaviventris*) – These tiny flycatchers were around in very good numbers in the pampas this year.

WHITE-CRESTED ELAENIA (*Elaenia albiceps*) – Everywhere in the Nothofagus forests of the far south.

SMALL-BILLED ELAENIA (*Elaenia parvirostris*) – The birds that we saw around Punta Rasa were likely spring overshoots.

SOOTY TYRANNULET (*Serpophaga nigricans*) – Always around water.

WHITE-CRESTED TYRANNULET (*Serpophaga subcristata*) – Very similar to the next species, which was only recently described to science. This species is longer-tailed and has a different voice.

STRANECK'S TYRANNULET (*Serpophaga griseicapilla*) – This one caused a lot of confusion over the years since it was typically misidentified as the above species until only very recently. Good looks of a few birds in the Las Grutas area.

MANY-COLORED RUSH TYRANT (*Tachuris rubrigastra*) – I think that if you didn't know that this beautiful bird was a flycatcher, you'd think you were looking at some ornately-patterned wood-warbler.

GREATER WAGTAIL-TYRANT (*Stigmatura budytoides*) – Like that Yellow-billed Tit-Tyrant, this one seems to need that tall creosote here at the s. edge of the range.

BRAN-COLORED FLYCATCHER (*Myiophobus fasciatus*)

VERMILION FLYCATCHER (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*)

AUSTRAL NEGRITO (*Lessonia rufa*) – This and the Andean Negrito used to be lumped as one and was called the Rufous-backed Negrito. **[N]**

HUDSON'S BLACK-TYRANT (*Knipolegus hudsoni*) – This is an Argentine endemic breeder, wintering as far north as e. Bolivia, s.e. Peru and s.w. Brazil. It can be a difficult bird to i.d. out of habitat.

WHITE-WINGED BLACK-TYRANT (*Knipolegus aterrimus*) – It was great to have both sexes of this one in the same area as the Hudson's for good comparisons.

SPECTACLED TYRANT (*Hymenops perspicillatus*) – Certainly one of the more memorable of the many birds in this region of the continent.

YELLOW-BROWED TYRANT (*Satrapa icterophrys*) – One of these finally sat long enough for the group to enjoy near San Clemente.

SPOT-BILLED GROUND-TYRANT (*Muscisaxicola maculirostris*) – The two birds that we found along the road to Punta Tombo were certainly migrants from somewhere north of there - but where?

OCHRE-NAPE GROUND-TYRANT (*Muscisaxicola flavinucha*) – One of the rewards for our hike up the glacial valley above Ushuaia. This one breeds here in the far south, but winters in the Andes n. to Peru.

DARK-FACED GROUND-TYRANT (*Muscisaxicola maclovianus*) – Another good bird above treeline while we searched for seedsnipe.

CINNAMON-BELLIED GROUND-TYRANT (*Muscisaxicola capistratus*) – That big rock outcrop near our estancia always seems to support a pair or two of these distinctive ground-tyrants.

GRAY-BELLIED SHRIKE-TYRANT (*Agriornis micropterus*) – At home in the flat, scrubby Patagonian steppe, and also at home in the high elevation (12,000') shrub zone up in the n.w. part of the country.

LESSER SHRIKE-TYRANT (*Agriornis murinus*) – For quite a long time, this shrike-tyrant was classified as a monjita and was called Mouse-brown Monjita. After watching it for a while, its relationship with the other shrike-tyrants is pretty clear.

FIRE-EYED DIUCON (*Xolmis pyrope*) – Quite striking with that gleaming red eye.

BLACK-CROWNED MONJITA (*Xolmis coronatus*) – This is another Argentine endemic breeder.

WHITE MONJITA (*Xolmis irupero*) – I'm surprised we saw so few of these on the tour.

RUSTY-BACKED MONJITA (*Xolmis rubetra*) – This mostly terrestrial flycatcher was around in good numbers during our visit, which isn't always the case. Some years they arrive in Chubut late, and you're lucky to get one distant bird on a tour. **[E]**

CHOCOLATE-VENTED TYRANT (*Neoxolmis rufiventris*) – This was a very nice find on the high plateau near El Calafate. One of the most striking of all of the many flycatchers in this region.

CATTLE TYRANT (*Machetornis rixosa*) – Those long legs are an adaptation for feeding on the ground.

GREAT KISKADEE (*Pitangus sulphuratus*)

STREAKED FLYCATCHER (*Myiodynastes maculatus*)

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus melancholicus*)

FORK-TAILED FLYCATCHER (*Tyrannus savana*) – Always a thrill to see!

Cotingidae (Cotingas)

WHITE-TIPPED PLANTCUTTER (*Phytotoma rutila*) – Those birds in the Las Grutas area were near their southern limit, though I have seen it near Trelew.

RUFOUS-TAILED PLANTCUTTER (*Phytotoma rara*) – With all of the new restrictions on stopping along the park road, I'd say we were lucky to see this one! Thanks to Marscha for spotting this one!

Tityridae (Tityras and Allies)

WHITE-WINGED BECARD (*Pachyramphus polychopterus*)

Vireonidae (Vireos)

RED-EYED VIREO (*Vireo olivaceus*) – This southern race is often called Chivi Vireo (formerly a good species).

RUFOUS-BROWED PEPPERSHRIKE (*Cyclarhis gujanensis*)

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

BLUE-AND-WHITE SWALLOW (PATAGONICA) (*Pygochelidon cyanoleuca patagonica*) – This is the race that

winters n. to the Amazon basin.

GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN (*Progne chalybea*)

SOUTHERN MARTIN (*Progne elegans*) – In this species, both sexes are very dark.

BROWN-CHESTED MARTIN (FUSCA) (*Progne tapera fusca*) – This is the race that sometimes wanders north to N. America.

WHITE-RUMPED SWALLOW (*Tachycineta leucorrhoa*) – Mostly in the pampas; it's replaced farther south by the next one.

CHILEAN SWALLOW (*Tachycineta meyeni*) – Very similar to the above species, but it usually lacks the white supraloral line.

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*) **[b]**

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

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

SEDGE WREN (PLATENSIS GROUP) (*Cistothorus platensis platensis*) – We found a few active territories at the lake outside El Calafate. Someday, someone will split up the many forms of Sedge Wren.

Polioptilidae (Gnatcatchers)

MASKED GNATCATCHER (*Polioptila dumicola dumicola*) – Our best were on that first afternoon in B.A.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

AUSTRAL THRUSH (*Turdus falcklandii*) – This one seems to have a foothold all of the way north to Las Grutas now. **[N]**

RUFOUS-BELLIED THRUSH (*Turdus rufiventris*) – This one is the more common of the two species of thrush in the B.A. area.

CREAMY-BELLIED THRUSH (*Turdus amaurochalinus*) – Slightly less common in the pampas than the above, it tends to prefer slightly drier habitats.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

PATAGONIAN MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus patagonicus*) – Probably the drabest of all of the mockers that occur in Argentina, but it's also the most widespread, occurring from the far south to nearly the Bolivian border.

CHALK-BROWED MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus saturninus*) – Mostly in the pampas region on this tour.

WHITE-BANDED MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus triurus*) – I've never seen that many individuals anywhere else in Argentina, ever!

Sturnidae (Starlings)

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) **[I]**

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

SHORT-BILLED PIPIT (*Anthus furcatus*) – This widespread pipit sat up nicely for us in the afternoon while we searched for a Darwin's Nothura.

CORRENDERA PIPIT (*Anthus correndera*) – Everywhere in the pampas. The most heavily marked of Argentina's many pipit species.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

MASKED YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis aequinoctialis*) – Lots of memorable looks in the pampas region. There's been talk of splitting Masked Yellowthroat into a few species. Ours would be the Southern Yellowthroat (*G. velata*).

TROPICAL PARULA (*Setophaga pitiayumi*)

GOLDEN-CROWNED WARBLER (*Basileuterus culicivorus*) – About as far south as it gets for this one.

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

WHITE-LINED TANAGER (*Tachyphonus rufus*) – A recent invader to the reserve in B.A.

BLUE-AND-YELLOW TANAGER (*Thraupis bonariensis*) – Well, if you only get one Blue-and-yellow Tanager, it better be a fancy male!

GOLDEN-BILLED SALTATOR (*Saltator aurantiirostris*) – A drab sub-adult bird at the Costanera Reserve on our first afternoon. One later in the distance at Las Grutas.

Emberizidae (Buntings, Sparrows and Allies)

GRAY-HOODED SIERRA-FINCH (*Phrygilus gayi*) – These were right where I'd thought they'd be. Although they

sometimes hybridize with the next species, I saw nothing that approached that.

PATAGONIAN SIERRA-FINCH (*Phrygilus patagonicus*) – One of the most colorful birds in the Nothofagus forest.

MOURNING SIERRA-FINCH (*Phrygilus fruticeti*) – Superficially similar to Carbonated, but much larger with a very different blackbird-like song.

CARBONATED SIERRA-FINCH (*Phrygilus carbonarius*) – Thankfully, these were back from the wintering grounds in very good numbers in the Las Grutas area. **[E]**

COMMON DIUCA-FINCH (*Diuca diuca*) – Not at all colorful, but that simple gray and white pattern is really attractive.

YELLOW-BRIDLED FINCH (*Melanodera xanthogramma*) – It took quite a lot of looking up in that valley, but we came away with extraordinary looks at a green-morph adult male. There's talk that these larger nominate southern birds with yellow outer tail feathers might get split from the more northerly birds with white outer tail feathers.

LONG-TAILED REED FINCH (*Donacospiza albifrons*) – There aren't many of them out there, but we managed some fine looks.

CINNAMON WARBLING-FINCH (*Poospiza ornata*) – I remember the first time I went to Las Grutas on a tour, these colorful little endemic warbling-finches were nowhere to be found - not back from the wintering grounds yet. We had no problem this year, though! **[E]**

BLACK-AND-RUFOUS WARBLING-FINCH (*Poospiza nigrorufa*) – A nice splash of color in the pampas. This and the form at the base of the Andes (the old Black-and-chestnut W.F.) were re-lumped by the SACC (South American Checklist Committee), which was adopted by Clements. **[N]**

RINGED WARBLING-FINCH (*Poospiza torquata*) – This one made a surprise appearance along the roadside while we searched for the White-throated Cacholote near Las Grutas.

BLACK-CAPPED WARBLING-FINCH (*Poospiza melanoleuca*) – A couple of birds only on that first afternoon in B.A.

DOUBLE-COLLARED SEEDEATER (*Sporophila caerulescens*) – A pair on our way back to B.A. from San Clemente was all we could find.

PATAGONIAN YELLOW-FINCH (*Sicalis lebruni*) – A couple of encounters with this one on the Valdes Peninsula.

There may be something 'funny' going on with the yellow-finches in this region in Argentina, so stay tuned.

SAFFRON FINCH (*Sicalis flaveola*)

GRASSLAND YELLOW-FINCH (GRASSLAND) (*Sicalis luteola luteiventris*) – These southern birds used to be split out and were called Misto Yellow-Finch.

GREAT PAMPA-FINCH (*Embernagra platensis platensis*) – A common sight and voice in the pampas. There's been recent talk that these nominate birds in the costal lowlands will get split from the birds to the west (*E.p. olivascens*), so stay tuned.

GRASSLAND SPARROW (*Ammodramus humeralis*)

RUFOUS-COLLARED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia capensis*) – Every single day - but they didn't all look alike, did they? Those southern birds have all-gray crowns. **[N]**

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

ULTRAMARINE GROSBEAK (*Cyanocompsa brissonii*) – A surprise for some on that first afternoon at Costanera Reserve.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

WHITE-BROWED BLACKBIRD (*Sturnella superciliaris*) – Not many this year, but Joy got us onto one in the pampas. A close relative of the Red-breasted Blackbird farther north.

LONG-TAILED MEADOWLARK (*Sturnella loyca*) – One of the characteristic roadside birds of the southern one-half of Argentina.

AUSTRAL BLACKBIRD (*Curaeus curaeus*) – Santiago ran interference for us while we enjoyed our encounter with this one in the park.

SCARLET-HEADED BLACKBIRD (*Amblyramphus holosericeus*) – Can't get enough of this one!

YELLOW-WINGED BLACKBIRD (*Agelasticus thilius*) – It's tough to see that yellow in the wing unless it flies.

BROWN-AND-YELLOW MARSHBIRD (*Pseudoleistes virescens*) – Big and noisy - and they love my squeaking! **[N]**

BAY-WINGED COWBIRD (*Agelaioides badius*) – Not a cowbird at all (and taken out of the cowbird genus *Molothrus*), this one is actually parasitized heavily by the Screaming Cowbird.

SCREAMING COWBIRD (*Molothrus rufoaxillaris*) – That call is usually the best way to i.d. this one, if your looks aren't optimal. We had only one decent look at Punta Rasa.

SHINY COWBIRD (*Molothrus bonariensis*)

VARIABLE ORIOLE (*Icterus pyrrhopterus*) – We wrongly called this one Epaulet Oriole on the tour, but it's now actually split from true Epaulet to the north of here.

Fringillidae (Siskins, Crossbills, and Allies)

HOODED SISKIN (*Spinus magellanicus*) – The most widespread siskin in Argentina.

BLACK-CHINNED SISKIN (*Spinus barbatus*) – A common bird of the Nothofagus forests of the far south.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) **[I]**

MAMMALS

BIG HAIRY ARMADILLO (*Chaetophractus villosus*) – This short-eared species was seen well outside the bus as we headed to the east end of the Valdes Peninsula.

PICHI (*Zaedyus pichiy*) – Jon spotted this tiny armadillo but it started digging into the ground before the rest of us could get a look at it. All I ever saw was a tiny tail!

OLD WORLD RABBIT (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) **[I]**

CAPE HARE (*Lepus capensis*) **[I]**

SOUTHERN CAVY (*Microcavia australis*) – We saw a number of these running around the penguin colony at Punta Tombo.

PATAGONIAN CAVY (*Dolichotis patagonum*) – Certainly one of the strangest of the mammals in southern S. America! Great looks right next to the road of a family of five. **[E]**

NUTRIA (*Myocastor coypus*) – Like a cross between a Muskrat and a Beaver, but hairier.

ORCA (*Orcinus orca*) – Wow!! These were a surprise at the east end of the Valdes Peninsula. I was hoping they'd swim up to shore and snatch an unsuspecting S. Elephant Seal, but it wasn't to be this time.

NORTH ATLANTIC RIGHT WHALE (*Eubalaena glacialis*) – One of the real spectacles of this trip is getting up close and personal with these rare cetaceans just off of the Valdes Peninsula. It's tough to get a more intimate experience with a whale other than actually getting into the water with them.

SOUTHERN GRAY FOX (*Pseudalopex griseus*) – We had this widespread species in the pampas, in northern Patagonia, and in southern Patagonia.

MOLINA'S HOG-NOSED SKUNK (*Conepatus chinga*) – Smelled only.

SOUTHERN SEA LION (*Otaria byronia*) – Great looks at these near Puerto Piramides on the Valdes Peninsula and also in the Beagle Channel, the latter spot with attendant Snowy Sheathbills!

SOUTHERN ELEPHANT SEAL (*Mirounga leonina*) – I'm sure these things are amazing during much of their lives, but they sure weren't very impressive when we saw them lying on the beaches - other than being enormous, of course!

GUANACO (*Lama guanicoe*) – This lovely camelid graced our tour at a couple of different spots in Patagonia, both north and south.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 254 bird taxa and 14 mammal taxa