











Endemic Mammals of the Southern Cone

Destination: Argentina & Chile **Duration:** 14 Days **Dates:** 10th – 23rd Feb 2025

-  Finding **three** new mammal families for our family-collecting client!
-  Expert guidance from Argentina's best mammalwatching Marcelo Gavensky
-  Fantastic birding also, including Patagonian specialists on the coast and mountains
-  Finding elusive **Southern Monito del Monte & Long-nosed Shrew-opossum**
-  Enjoying a successful dolphin watching boat trip to see the mon-typic **Fanciscana**
-  Two species of **Tuco-tuco** and 13 other species of **rodent** many endemic!
-  Enjoying some stunning accommodation & fine dining in Chiloe Island & Bariloche
-  Seeing 5 species of marine mammal including **Southern Fur & Elephant Seals**
-  Finding a family of **Lesser Grisons** out hunting and watching them closely
-  Hiking the wonderful and unique Valdivian rainforests in both Argentina and Chile

Tour Leader / Guides

Martin Royle (Royle Safaris Tour Leader)
Marcelo Gavensky (Local Mammalwatching Guide)
Rodrigo (Luli) (Franciscana boatman)
Daniel (Puerto Blest Guide)

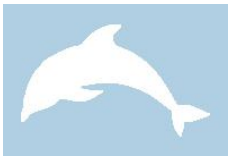
Participants

Dr. Stewart Summers

Overview

- Day 1:** Buenos Aires / Samborombon Bay
- Day 2:** Clemente del Tuyu
- Days 3-6:** Mar Chiquita
- Day 7:** Buenos Aires
- Days 8-9:** Puerto Blest
- Day 10:** Puerto Vargas
- Days 11-13:** Chiloe Island
- Day 14:** Puerto Montt / Home





Day by Day Breakdown

Overview

This was a specialist trip focusing on some of the Southern Cone's (an area encompassing Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, southern Bolivia and Uruguay) rarest and most unusual mammals. The targets are two monotypic families of mammals namely the Franciscana (a freshwater dolphin which lives in the sea) and Montio del Monte (an early marsupial and perhaps similar to a common ancestor for all marsupials). But alongside these species we will also be looking for representatives of other South American mammal families such as shrew opossums, latrine opossums and Chinchillidae. Further to all of these families that you are highly targeting we will also have a chance and hope for other mammals such as kodkod, southern pudu, marine otter, screaming hairy armadillo and many other species.

This trip began in the bustling capital of Argentina, before heading to the coastline of the Rio Plata in search of the monotypic Franciscana as well as some terrestrial mammal species around here. From here we then flew into the foothills of the Andes along the Argentinian / Chilean border where a very ancient lineage of marsupials is still alive and kicking in the forests here. We will be spending time in the hills looking for Montio del Monte as well as long-nosed shrew opossums and other endemic mammals.

The trip then crossed the border into Chile where we visited the incredible island of Chiloe and in particular the Tepuhueico Lodge. Which in recent years has gained a great reputation in the mammalwatching world for its reliable and close views of Darwin's fox, southern pudu and better chances of seeing kodkod than anywhere else in the world. There are also some great species which can be seen along the coast of the island and we spent time on foot in vehicle and possibly by boat also whilst looking for a range of wildlife around Chiloe Island.

All in all this trip explored some of the best areas in northern Argentina and central Chile and with the help of Marcelo Gurtkey (the best mammalwatching guide in the region) and Martin Royle and we had some great success (all of our major targets were seen) however we did also miss some species which we tried for.

Below is our trip report with a day to day blog of what happened followed by our species list. This was a specialist trip for a solo client who is a family collector. Having seen a member of each bird family he is now moving quickly through the mammal families and wanted to get three families from South America, but despite the specialist nature of this trip we can repeat it for any interested people or we can also produce other tailored trips for any species.



Day 1 **Buenos Aires / Somborombon Bay** *Arrival & Wildlife Watching*

Accommodation:

Estancia "Refugio
El Manantial
(Boutique Lodge)

Food:

Dinner was eaten at the hotel restaurant.

Transportation:

Private Vehicle
and Walking.

Stewart and Martin had arrived into Buenos Aires the previous day and so we were ready to be collected by Marcelo at 8am.

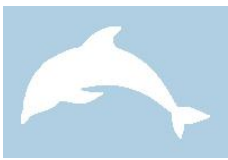
We then headed across (or more accurately around) the city and then out towards our first lodge in Refugio el Manantia. After settling in we went to look for wildlife around some farmland first. Quickly we found a couple of **coypus** in a small river and lots of nice bird life, nice to see this animal (usually an introduced animal in many parts of the world) in its natural habitat. Also around dusk some **brown hares** appeared, this introduced species is common throughout much of Argentina. But there was nothing too special early on.

It was very hot today, around 40C and that was affecting wildlife sightings, so we would likely have to wait until after dark and the temperatures cool down. Other than the mammals the birds were seen in good numbers, such as chimango, crested caracaras, rufous horneros, spotted nothuras, upland sandpipers, snail kites and fork-tailed flycatchers and many more.

On the drive back to the lodge we went to a colony of **plains viscachas** near the side of the road, nice views of this great rodent as they came out of their burrows and started to feed and some having dust baths.

Also along the road were a couple of **pampas foxes** before we arrived back in time for dinner. After dinner we headed out again into the farmland of the ranch to see what we could find.

There were many Argentine toads around and a couple of **large hairy armadillos**, **brown hares** and **pampas foxes**. Then around 11:30pm we found our main target species here, the **screaming hairy armadillo** (after having



a couple in the thermal and missing them with the torch as they either disappeared into burrows or thick vegetation). We had some great views of this awesome species before heading back around midnight; the last sighting of note was a nice small swimming frog in a marsh against a chorus of Montevideo tree frogs calling

Day 2 San Clemente del Tuyu

Travelling & Wildlife Watching

Accommodation:

Hotel Morales
(Boutique Hotel)

Food:

Breakfast will be served at the estancia with lunch (not included) and dinner at in San Clemente del Tuyu.

Transportation:

Private Vehicle & Walking.

This morning we woke up after a huge storm had blown through overnight, lighting and fierce rain in the early hours. But at least it brought the temperature down by around 20C so it was a lot more pleasant today.

We left the lodge after breakfast and headed to the town of San Clemente, which is a popular beach town. Along the way we stopped at some locations for diurnal wildlife, but mammals were few and far between (which is to be expected). We had some **coypu** and **pampas foxes** giving nice views and a **Brazilian guinea pig** crossing the road. But the main highlights were the incredible birds. We went to a private marshy ranch and the numbers of waterfowl were staggering. Red shoveler, black-necked swans, coscoroba swans, white-fronted coots, greater yellowlegs, plumbers rails, white-rumped sandpipers and dozens more species. It was a truly remarkable birding destination, and on occasion big lutrine opossum can be seen here but we were not lucky.

Then we arrived in the town after lunch and rested for a while at the hotel, and in the late afternoon we headed to a marshland area to see what we would find mammalwise and found some more **coypu**, **pampas fox** and a nice **yellow pygmy rice rat** crossed the road and gave great views.



Day 3 Mar Chiquita

Travelling & Wildlife Watching

Accommodation:

Hotel Posada de los Sueños (Guest House)

Food:

Breakfast will be served at the estancia with lunch (not included) and dinner at in Chiquita.

Transportation:

Private car & Walking.

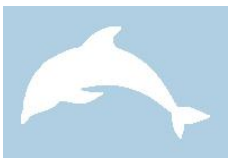
This morning we left the hotel and town of San Clemente for our main Franciscana location, where we would be spending the next 4 nights, a nice beach resort town of Mar Chiquita. Along the way we visited a special private reserve that is known as one of the few places in Argentina where some of the 100-150 critically endangered pampas deer can be found, along with Talas tuco-tuco. The bird life was also great, with many chimango caracaras, great and snowy egrets, coscoroba swans, silver teals and white-rumped sandpipers.

We drove around here for a couple of hours and found a couple of **pampas foxes** near the entrance and then a female and fawn **pampas deer**, but they ran off very quickly so we continued to better views. We then found a young male **pampas deer** close and gave us great views, we spotted another couple of **pampas deer** in the long grass, their heads staring back at us over the top of the grass or them bounding away with their white tails flashing. We staked out some tuco tuco colonies but no surface activity despite hearing them drumming under ground.

We then continued on towards the coastal town of Mar Chiquita and on the way and stopped at a petrol station where we found a very active colony of **Talas tuco tuco**. 6-7 of them all out and feeding, collecting grass and running back into their burrows and one that had a little fight with another and was pushed out of the burrow and ran across the grass giving us great views and then made its own new burrow. Around here we also had a nice **Brazilian guinea pig** and some chalk-browed mockingbirds dust bathing.

Continuing on we then arrived at the coast and went to the fishing point to scan the sea and see if we could see a franciscana close to the shore. We didn't see one but there was a great amount of mullet activity as they jumped high up out of the water. There was a female **South American sea lion** in the water along with some snowy-crowned terns and a pelagic cormorant.

We left the harbour and checked in and then went to a small grassland to see what we could see, walking along the road. Heard several **guinea pigs** and saw a few coming out at dusk. Also a nice **pampas fox** and some good birds



such as great pampa finch and long-tailed wren-finch and red-winged tinamou which was flushed from the side of the road.

Then back to the town for dinner and the night, would pray for calm seas tomorrow so we could get out on the water to look for the franciscana.

Day 4 Mar Chiquita

Wildlife Watching

Accommodation:

Hotel Posada de los Sueños (Guest House)

Food:

Breakfast was served at the guest house with lunch and dinner in local restaurants.

Transportation:

Private vehicle, Boat & Walking.

This morning we were up early with fingers crossed for fair winds and flat seas and headed to the harbour to meet our skipper, Rodrigo (nickname Luli) who would take us out on the boat. The lagoon was very calm and the sea not too bad (although it had a decent sized swell) but the breakers coming into the entrance of the lagoon were large. He said it would be ok once we got out there but we would have to be careful getting out of the lagoon. But Luli was very carefully and skilful in his navigation out of the lagoon and into the open sea.

Along the beach were hundreds of black skimmers, brown-hooded gulls, kelp gulls, white-rumped sandpipers and other waders all along the lagoon shore.

Then out at sea we went to some areas which Luli had had some recent success and pretty quickly we had a couple of very brief **fransicana** sightings, the first just Luli and Marcelo saw, the second we all saw but only the small dorsal fin, so we continued on.

We found a large female **southern elephant seal** bobbing at the surface and some nice birds including a few barn swallows feeding over the sea and snowy-crowned terns and a parasitic skua.

We then hit the jackpot with 2-3 small groups of **fransicanas**. Maybe around 8 individuals all together. They were feeding in areas and allowed for much better views of them coming up for air repeatedly and even showing their long 'river-dolphin' beaks. Great views of a largely cryptic cetacean species. On the way back we found another couple of individuals but they didn't offer prolonged views, they must have been travelling and not feeding.

So we arrived back in the lagoon in good spirits, the first new family target for Stewart ticked off and good views! Luli eased us back into the lagoon by surfing the breakers back to the calm shallow water and then near the dock we spotted an Olrog's gull a very nice rare species which this region of Argentina is famous among birders for.

Then after lunch and a rest in the afternoon we headed to another nearby private reserve. We walked with the owner around some of his fields which were full of black caterpillars, leaf cutter ant trails but not much else. However what the owner was looking for was recently used grison burrows. As he sees some of these amazing mustelids regularly in these field.

Walking around we spooked a **brown hare** which darted away fast before we did find a currently being used grison burrow, fresh tracks and dung around. Some nice birds in the lakes nearby the burrow, including large flocks of ibis and spoonbills and also 3 **coypu** resting in the water also.

We decided to stake out the grison burrow until dusk to see if the family would come back to this burrow; but alas, no grisons. Just a feeding **brown hare**.

Then after dark we started to thermal around and found a **vesper mouse** (most likely) but thermal only, very small and fast. Then we found a **small vesper mouse** in a bush and then down a half dug armadillo hole, nice views. Also found here were **brown hares** and **pampas foxes** and a second **small vesper mouse** which gave amazing views again. The only other mammal we found tonight was another **large hairy armadillo** foraging and then darting for its burrow and disappearing and the other sighting of note was a nice wrestler frog seen well despite great camouflage. Back for a late dinner and good nights rest after a great long day.



Day 5 Neocochea

Wildlife Watching

Accommodation:

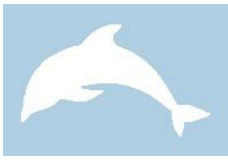
Hotel Posada de los Sueños (Guest House)

Food:

Breakfast was served at the guest house with lunch and dinner in local restaurants.

Transportation:

Private vehicle & Walking.



This morning we left Mar Chiquita for a day trip to Necochea which is another coastal town; where there is a colony of both South American fur seals and South American sea lions, which we hoped to see.

Along the way we saw some burrowing parakeets which was a nice bird to see along the roadside and a southern cone endemic.

We arrived at Necochea in the late morning and headed to the sand dunes which line the coast here. There is a special mammal which lives around here in the sand dunes and straight away 3m from the car at the first burrow we looked at, we found one, a **dune tuco tuco**. Obviously as soon as got our cameras out it disappeared and didn't reappear; so we carried on looking for others in various other areas which had signs of tuco-tuco activity, but we didn't find anymore.

We then visited a small beach and harbour which is famous for its sea lion and fur seal colonies. There was a colony of around 200 **South American sea lions** hauled out on the beach, separated into all males at one end, including some large males who were busy jostling and fighting with each other. Very interesting guttural roars and calls to each other; and then females and youngsters at the other end.

At the end of the storm wall there were many **South American fur seals** basking in the rocks and playing in the rough sea. They were nice to see, but pretty distant for great views and pictures unfortunately.

We had lunch here before going back out and looking for more tuco tucos. But we never found another one. Then we began the drive back and on the way we went through a beautiful sand dune ecosystem of Loberia and had very nice views of more burrowing parakeets on the shore cliffs. There were more flocks of birds around the coast including brown-hooded gulls, American oystercatchers, picazuro pigeons, kelp gulls, southern lapwings, as well as seeing some other nice southern cone specialties such as hooded siskin, austral negrito and chalk-browed mockingbird. We then arrived back at the guest house for dinner and a good rest.

Day 6 Mar Chaquita

Wildlife Watching

Accommodation:

Hotel Posada de los Sueños (Guest House)

Food:

Breakfast was served at the guest house with lunch and dinner in local restaurants.

Transportation:

Private vehicle & Walking.

Out after breakfast again this morning to drive down various roads in the local area which Marcelo had had precious success in seeing some other diurnal species which we had been missing and were proving to be very elusive so far.

The first sighting of note was a red-winged tinamou which crossed the road followed by a **Brazilian guinea pig** crossing the road and then as the sun started to climb in the sky we came across a coastal house snake slowly crossing the road, basking in the sun along the way.

We drove many roads, crisscrossing farmland this morning and found a nice spotted nothura as well as **pampas fox** on the road, having a scratch and then crossing, then **large hairy armadillo** crossed the road.

Along the fence wires running along the road we had a large flock of fork-tailed flycatchers and austral negritos with many bare-faced ibis feeding in the field beyond.

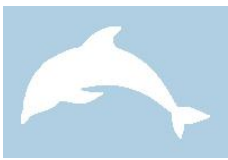
There was a second species of snake on the road, which turned out to be a Gunther's striped snake which allowed for nice views. High in the sky we had a flock of migratory Swainson's hawks over sunflower and maize fields, spiralling up on thermals. Then finally we found one of our last diurnal targets for the trip; a **southern long-nosed armadillo** was moving quickly through a field looking for food. We stopped and then it stood up, sniffed the air and came towards us, but stopped at the fence line and went deep into thick vegetation. We hoped it would come out of the vegetation but it didn't emerge again. But we had nice views finally, which is odd as this is a relatively common species. Last sighting of note before lunch was a nice long winged harrier perched on the side of the road.

After a break in the mid afternoon we headed to the private reserve with the active grison den to see if we could find them. Then of course, like London buses, after waiting days for a southern long-nosed armadillo to show up, we then found two more **southern long-nosed armadillos** very close but not good pics as the grass was long and they were moving quickly around, we then also stumbled on a **large hairy armadillo**.

Overhead Marcelo heard a rare black-faced ibis flying over, a very early migratory arrival as they are not usually here until winter.

Then as the sun got lower and eventually set we started to thermal around marsh, finding a couple of **Azara's akodonts**, one of which was seen well climbing among the reeds. There were also a couple of wrestler frogs near marsh and then another **small vesper mouse** and a young Montevideo treefrog close. Found roosting glittering bellied emerald and another **small vesper mouse**. This is the place for small vesper mice.

We then left, having not seen the lesser grisons, despite having recently used burrows here, they may have left the area just a day or two ago or have many other burrows around. Getting back and being near the accommodation back in Mar Chaquita we had a **pampas fox** on the side of the road.



Day 7 Buenos Aires

Travelling & Wildlife Watching

Accommodation:

Hotel Cyan
Americas Tower
(4* Hotel)

Food:

Breakfast will be served in Mr Chiquita with lunch en route (not included) and dinner back in Buenos Aires.

Transportation:

Private vehicles.

This morning we check out of the guest house and left Mar Chaquita at 7am and headed back towards Buenos Aires, but first we would look around the local agricultural land for some more wildlife. The birds were great again with more southern lapwings, chimango caracaras, chotoy spinetails, burrowing owls, rufous horneros, barn swallows, eared doves, grassland yellow finches and vermillion flycatchers around as well as **Brazilian guinea pigs**. We were seeing more **guinea pigs** today than other days.

Then out of nowhere (and maybe because of the increase guinea pig activity around here) 3 **lesser grisons** appeared at the side of the road, gave us good views for around 30 seconds before disappearing off into the grass again. What a fantastic animal, not one that can be targeted in terms of going to a specific place and being assured of views, like many mustelid species that never stop moving around and being much smaller than the average vegetation height they are difficult to find.

We then left the fields here and joined the highway back to the capital, stopping for breakfast at the Talas tuco tuco petrol station, one very active **Talas tuco tuco** clearing away dirt from its burrow. Showing its white markings behind its head and rump. There was also another **guinea pig** too in the lawn.

Arrived in Buenos Aires in the evening and rested as we have an early start tomorrow.

Day 8 Puerto Blest

Travelling & Wildlife Watching

Accommodation:

Hosteria Puerto
Blest (Guest
House)

Food:

Breakfast will be served at the lodge with lunch not included and dinner in Puerto Blest.

Transportation:

Private vehicles,
Ferry & Domestic
Flight.

Today was a very early start as Martin and Stewart were collected from the hotel at 3:45am and then went to collect Marcelo from his home down town and then to the airport to catch the morning flight to Bariloche. On the drive through the city to get to the airport a **brown rat** crossed the road.

The flight was on time and uneventful, and when we arrived the beautiful blue sky welcomed us to the amazing town of Bariloche. Here we met Daniel our local guide, who would be helping us out for these next days. And we all drove together to the harbour to get the ferry over the lake to Puerto Blest.

Surrounding us at the harbour was the stunning Patagonian scenery, snow capped mountains, pine trees and deep blue lakes as far as the eye can see.

Waiting for the ferry to come along we had some ashy-headed geese on the golf course nearby and as the ferry departed a white-throated hawk soared overhead.

The cruise along the length of the Nahuel Huapi Lake is just amazing and beautiful and as we approached Puerto Blest harbour 3 Andean condors were all overhead.

We checked in and settled into the amazing hotel and waited for the day tourists to leave on the final ferry back to Bariloche. Around dusk we had some swallows (Chilean and Blue-and-white) around as well as a friendly **culpeo fox** hanging around the kitchen.

Then after an incredible dinner (the food here is exceptional – even by the high standards of food in Argentina) we went out after dark spotlighting and thermal imaging and quickly found the **culpeo** close to hotel again.

Then on the edge of a picnic lawn and along the fringes of the road we found many rodents and also something larger in the thermal but couldn't find it again (from the size, shape and eye-shine we had briefly, it was likely a kodkod) and then roosting rufous-tailed grass-cutter.



We struggled to get to see all of the rodents we found in the thermal, but we did have very nice relaxed **long-tailed pygmy rice rat** close to the road. We then had another larger rodent seen, it stayed in view for a short while but was obscured, from what we could see (feet, tail, size and colouration and tail length) we decided it was a **Valdivian long-clawed mole-mouse**. Not too many other options in the nothofagus forest, particularly ones with feet such as what we could see in between the vegetation.

Martin then found a **southern monito del monte** on the side of a tree just off the road. Brief views before it jumped to another tree and away. Found it again a couple of times in the thermals but couldn't locate it with the torch. We then thermalled a roosting hummingbird (green-backed firecrown) before finding a second **southern monito del monte**, at first moving fast in the branches and then got him stationary. Half hidden but could see his face looking down at us, hanging upside down for some reason. Nice views. But we carried on as things were quite productive around here and Marcelo then found a third **monito del monte** and this one was the whole animal, showing very well on the side of a tree and posed nicely.

We then turned around and slowly spotlighted and thermalled along the road and back to the picnic lawn. Near the buildings we found a **hairy-soled coneysrat** on the edge of the bushes and also an **olive grass mouse** briefly. Other smaller rodents and maybe another monito showed up in the thermal but evaded us when the light went on around the lawn.

No one had tried to thermal here before (or even specifically spotlight for mammals) and despite Daniel saying that the area is perfect habitat and trapping in the past had been good for small mammals and so we didn't really know what to expect, but the productivity of small mammals here staggered us.

Day 9 Puerto Blest

Wildlife Watching

Accommodation:

Hosteria Puerto Blest (Guest House)

Food:

All of our meals were at the guest house in between walks in the forest.

Transportation:

Walking.

This morning we woke happy after a very successful night last night and the stunning views over the lake with cloudless blue skies over head it was hard not to be very content as we had a very nice breakfast.

We then went for walk along some of the trails which crisscross the Valdivian rainforest here; we were not expecting to find any mammals today as there are very few (if any) diurnal mammals here. But we were looking for places to try out tonight for the shrew opossum. Log piles, tangles of roots, recently uprooted / felled trees etc are all good foraging areas for this unusual and secretive species.

Walking the forests we did have some nice bird sightings including Patagonian Siskin, chuckow tapaculo, white-crested elania, thorn-tailed rayadito and a nice pair of painted tree iguanas, both males fighting and then looking for and jumping to catch insects.

We also had some white-throated tree-runners moving along the trunks of trees near the path and pair of striped woodpeckers, several thorn-tailed rayadito. Amazing endemic nothofagus plant species all around in this incredible forest. Another great bird seen today were black-throated huet-huets seen a couple of times running quickly among the dead wood and brush.

In a fantastic example of primary valdivian rainforest, we found a roosting juvenile black-crowned night-heron, seemingly out of place; but we are not far from the lake.

We walked towards the shore of the lake and back towards the hotel; in the sky a few Andean condors were around and we found several more painted tree iguanas moving along the lake shore. Arrived back for lunch after a good morning, many endemic birds, plants and nice lizards and scouted some promising areas for the long-nosed shrew-opossum tonight.

We then rested around the hotel and took in the great location before heading out again at around 6:30pm for a walk, passing the resident ashy-headed geese grazing outside hotel. At around sunset we found another chuckow tapaculo again and the local **culpeo** was around the picnic area as well as some Chimango caracaras feeding on the leftovers from the day trippers. Walking around just around dusk we had a small flock of austral parakeets overhead; but it was a quiet with a chuckow tapaculo and some very nice old endemic cypresses. Nice close black-throated huet-huet foraging along roadside and then crossed road right in front of us, not bad for a little pre sunset walk and we went back to the hotel for dinner before going out to look in the areas scouted this morning which looked promising for shrew-opossum habitat.

Almost straight away found something interesting in the thermal, had fleeting views in the spotlight; but very very brief. The size, shape and behaviour (the way the shrew-opossums walk is quite distinctive compared to the rodents here – accordingly to the YouTube videos available); however it was perfect for the long-nosed shrew opossum (so very possible but has to be unconfirmed at this point). One key piece of information we got from trying to see this animal over several minutes was that it was very light phobic so difficult to see well. We watched it for a while in the thermal though. Moving on after this animal disappeared into the thick vegetation we found nice **long-tailed pygmy**



rice rat climbing the vegetation, using its prehensile tail wrapped around the twigs. We then found several other mice in the thermal couldn't see in the lights.

Marcelo then spotted a **southern monito del monte** running fast along the ground but quickly disappeared without good views and then we had another small mammal in the thermal, Martin got bins on it and was most likely a **valdivian long-clawed mole-mouse** based on size, shape and colouration but once again darted off quickly. We also had some **Chilean myotis** flying around, the most likely species in this habitat and at this altitude.

Walking around more we found a nice posing **Chilean climbing mouse** on top of a stem of bamboo, incredibly long tail as well as another roosting green-backed fire-crowned and Chimango caracaras.

Then Marcelo had an animal moving along the trail towards us, on the edge of the trail foraging (shrew like – which is a very distinctive characteristic of the shrew-opossum compared to the rodents here). We waited until it got as close as we dared to wait and with everyone on the bins in the right place we turned on the light we all saw what was a **long-nosed shrew-opossum** on the trail, seen by everyone before it ran straight off the trail and into the forest floor vegetation. We were happy and started the return walk back towards the hotel with a **culpeo** seen nearby some of the staff / ranger houses.

Further sightings as we got closer to the hotel including a pair of **monito del montes** in a tree overhanging the path very close to the hotel. Then another **monito del monte** even closer and pretty much eye level, giving us the best views of the species so far, just staring at us from a stem of bamboo. This area is definitely the place for monito del monte, we were seeing them without even trying at the end!



Day 10 Bariloche

Travelling

Accommodation:

Local Guesthouse

Food:

All of your meals will be served at the accommodation or local restaurants in between looking for wildlife (lunch not included).

Transportation:

Ferry & Private vehicle.

This was a more relaxed morning today as we checked out of the hotel and waited for the ferry at 3:30pm. Around lunch we went for a walk and found some pudu and kodkod tracks nearby picnic areas. Further now highlighting the amazing potential of this place for mammalwatching.

We then took the ferry in the afternoon and cruised back through the beautiful lake to Bariloche and onwards to our hotel and had a relaxing afternoon in the stunning scenery of Bariloche.



Day 11 Puerto Montt

Travelling

Accommodation:

Hotel Don Luis (4* Hotel)

Food:

Breakfast will be served at the Bariloche with lunch (not included) en route and dinner at in Puerto Montt.

Transportation:

Private vehicle & Walking.

Today would be a travelling day, leaving Bariloche at 9:30am and started the drive to the Chilean border which means crossing over the Andes to the coastal port town of Puerto Montt, where we would spend the night.



Journey started by driving around the stunning and huge Lago Nahuel Huapi. Some birds along the way all relatively common such as Chimango caracaras and southern lapwings, as well as a black-faced ibis. Driving through steppe and then valdivian forest. Arrived in Chile around 3pm crossed one national park to another, large collection of protected areas here. First Chilean endemic was a Chilean mockingbird which flew over the road not long after crossing the border. Nearer to Puerto Montt a small flock of slender-billed parakeets flew over the road. Got to the hotel in time for dinner.

Day 12 Chiloe Island

Travelling & Wildlife Watching

Accommodation:

Tepuhueico Lodge
(Eco Lodge)

Food:

Breakfast was at the hotel in Puerto Montt and then lunch and dinner in Tepuhueico.

Transportation:

Private vehicle,
Ferry & Walking.

This morning we got the ferry over to Chiloe, the drive to the harbour was relatively quiet with just a **South American sea lion** or two in the bay.

There were some birds around ferry port, Peruvian pelicans and imperial cormorants being the most prominent and new species for the trip. Ferry quiet for mammals (just a few more **South American sea lions**) but some nice birds including cormorants, pelicans, gulls, terns and shearwaters as well as a brief Humboldt's penguin. Male and female flightless steamer ducks on shore of Chiloe near port as well as whimbrel and Baird's sandpiper. Some other very nice shore birds around such as Chiloe wigeon, black-necked swans, Hudsonia godwit, dark-bellied cinclodes and others on the stoney beaches as we arrived.

We then set off and began the drive south through the archipelago to the Tepuhueico lodge and park.

Arrived at Tepuhueico around 12:40 and drove through some of the park to get to the lodge for lunch. First close up views of slender-billed parakeets feeding above the road.

At the lodge we settled in and had a beautiful lunch and watched as there were several birds around, Patagonian tyrants, green-backed fire-crown, Chilean hawk, rufous-tailed plant-cutters and slender-billed parakeets all flying around the lodge. Rain (which seems to be the default weather here) was coming consistently as drizzle but we went out for a walk along some of the trails in the late afternoon.

The trails were quite today, although the rain stopped around 6pm, and some birds including Chuckow tapaculpo, Chilean pigeons, thorn-tailed rayalito and slender billed parakeets came out after the rain stopped.

A walk through some forest resulted in three maganellid woodpeckers seen and all hammering trees together, adult male, female and immature male. Great views of South America's largest woodpecker.

We arrived back at the lodge in time for dinner, then out after dark to spotlight along the roads. Having seen monito del montes so well in Puerto Blest we didn't have to spend any time looking for them here. We found a band-winged nightjar very early on as we drove the various trails thermaling and spotlighting.

We got a cat shape on the thermal on a bank on the side of the road. But it darted away quickly, no views, very frustrated. We then found a **southern pudu** on side of the road, showing nicely, then crossed over and walked down a little. Very nice and then a short while after another **pudu** crossed the road, closer and giving better views. Marbled wood frog on road then many more of them. Second species of frog (Chiloe Island ground frog) on the road. And then another **pudu** on the side of the road feeding on leaves to finish off the sightings today.



Day 13 Chiloe Island

Wildlife Watching

Accommodation:

Tepuhueico Lodge
(Eco Lodge)

Food:

Breakfast and dinner were taken at the lodge with lunch at a restaurant in Cucao.

Transportation:

Private vehicle &
Walking.

Today was wet and windy and we would hang around the lodge for the morning as this is the most likely place for the small and enigmatic Darwin's fox to show up at (it was last seen a few days before we arrived, so we hoped it



could make an appearance for us). As the rain came down we saw some of the common birds around the lodge as normal.

Stewart had nice **pudu** view on a walk around the lodge in the middle morning and then we all went for walk around the meadows near the lodge and found another **pudu** browsing. Many birds alarm calling but couldn't see into the thick bush to what they were alarmed by. Excellent views of a Chilean hawk, also a great grebe calling from a solitary position on a lake.

We continued to stay around the lodge in the middle of the day and then out afterwards before dinner. On the way out we visited an abandoned house just off the road in the forest and despite copious amounts of guano there was only one **Chilean myotis** inside, either the last of a larger colony or one with a bad case of diarrhoea.

From here we left the park and headed out towards the coast to see if we could see any otters this evening, on the way we had a mother and fawn **pudu** feeding on the side of the road, oblivious to us and giving fantastic views!

At the town of Cucao, we had some food and then staked out the South American river otter holt under the bridge, but it was a Saturday night and it was very busy and loud and people were paddling around in the river, music blaring loudly and so we had no luck. We stayed until dark and then went back to the lodge, realising that they wouldn't be emerging until long after the people had calmed down and that didn't look like happening any time soon.

On the way back to the park we had another **pudu** on side of the main road with more **pudus** as we got to the forest. Then just before we entered the park properly at a large bridge, we found melanistic **kodkod** sat on the opposite river bank. Looking at us for around 1 min, before slinking off into the vegetation, we had good views in binocular but at the limit of our not very good cameras so we have a dark pixilated blob as evidence. But we all saw it well, nice!

The only other sighting of note on the drive back to the lodge was a well seen **hairy soft-haired mouse** on the side of the road. We would miss out of the fox unfortunately, as we would be leaving early tomorrow morning to catch the ferry back to the mainland.

Day 14 **Puerto Montt**

Wildlife Watching & Travelling

Accommodation:

NA

Food:

Breakfast was served at the lodge, with no other meals included today.

Transportation:

Private vehicle & Ferry.

We left the lodge at around 8:30am and headed back to the north of the Island to catch the ferry back to Puerto Montt. We saw a single **pudu** on the way out. Some common roadside and water birds driving back along the lakes and sea shores but nothing particularly special.

Then on the ferry there was a single **Chilean dolphin** seen porpoising 5-6 times before disappearing from view and a female **South American sea lion** from the ferry going back to Puerto Montt.

We then drove to the airport and arrived at the airport around 1pm. We said our goodbyes to Marcelo who would now drive back to Bariloche today as Stewart and Martin would fly to Santiago and onwards home.

All in all a successful trip with three new mammal families for Stewart and some very nice sightings including the kodkod last night.

Species List

Endemic Mammals of the Southern Cone / February 2025

Mammals (* = heard or signs only)

	Common Name	Binominal Name
1	Hairy soft-haired mouse	<i>Abrothrix hirta</i>
2	Olive grass rat	<i>Abrothrix olivacea</i>
3	Azara's akodont	<i>Akodon azarae</i>
4	South American fur seal	<i>Arctocephalus australis</i>
5	Small vesper mouse	<i>Calomys laucha</i>
6	Brazilian guinea pig	<i>Cavia aperea</i>
7	Chilean dolphin	<i>Cephalorhynchus eutropia</i>
8	Screaming hairy armadillo	<i>Chaetophractus vellerosus</i>
9	Large hairy armadillo	<i>Chaetophractus villosus</i>
10	Dune tuco-tuco	<i>Ctenomys australis</i>
11	Talas tuco-tuco	<i>Ctenomys talarum</i>
12	Southern long-nosed armadillo	<i>Dasypus hybridus</i>
13	Southern monito-del-monte	<i>Dromiciops gliroides</i>
14	Lesser grison	<i>Galictis cuja</i>
15	Valdivian long-clawed mole-mouse	<i>Geoxus valdivianus</i>
16	Chilean climbing-mouse	<i>Irenomys tarsalis</i>
17	Plains viscacha	<i>Lagostomus maximus</i>
18	Kodkod	<i>Leopardus guigna</i>
19	Brown hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>
20	Culpeo	<i>Lycalopex culpaeus</i>
21	Pampas fox	<i>Lycalopex gymnocercus</i>
22	Southern elephant seal	<i>Mirounga leonina</i>
23	Coypu	<i>Myocastor coypus</i>
24	Chilean myotis	<i>Myotis chiloensis</i>
25	Yellow pygmy rice rat	<i>Oligoryzomys flavescens</i>
26	Long-tailed pygmy rice-rat	<i>Oligoryzomys longicaudatus</i>
27	South American sea lion	<i>Otaria flavescens</i>
28	Pampas deer	<i>Ozotoceros bezoarticus</i>
29	Franciscana	<i>Pontoporia blainvillei</i>
30	Southern pudu	<i>Pudu pudu</i>

[illegible]

31	Brown rat	<i>Rattus rattus</i>
32	Hairy-soled coneysrat	<i>Reithrodon auritus</i>
33	Long-nosed shrew-opposum	<i>Rhyncholestes raphanurus</i>

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Birds (* = heard or signs only)

	Common Name	Binominal Name
1	Crested mynah	<i>Acridotheres cristatellus</i>
2	Grayish cowbird	<i>Agelaioides badius</i>
3	Brazilian teal	<i>Amazonetta brasiliensis</i>
4	Yellow-billed teal	<i>Anas flavirostris</i>
5	South American anhinga	<i>Anhinga anhinga</i>
6	Firewood gatherer	<i>Anumbius annumbi</i>
7	Thorn-tailed rayadito	<i>Aphrastura spinicauda</i>
8	Limpkin	<i>Aramus guarauna</i>
9	Great egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
10	Cocoi heron	<i>Ardea cocoi</i>
11	Western cattle egret	<i>Ardea ibis</i>
12	Pink-footed shearwater	<i>Ardenna creatopus</i>
13	Sooty shearwater	<i>Ardenna grisea</i>
14	Chilean hawk	<i>Astur chilensis</i>
15	Burrowing owl	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>
16	Upland sandpiper	<i>Bartramia longicauda</i>
17	White-throated hawk	<i>Buteo albigula</i>
18	Swainson's hawk	<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>
19	Striated heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>
20	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>
21	Baird's sandpiper	<i>Calidris bairdii</i>
22	White-rumped sandpiper	<i>Calidris fuscicollis</i>
23	Pectoral sandpiper	<i>Calidris melanotos</i>
24	Ringed teal	<i>Callonetta leucophrys</i>
25	Magellanic woodpecker	<i>Campephilus magellanicus</i>
26	Southern crested caracara	<i>Caracara plancus</i>
27	Turkey vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>
28	Southern screamer	<i>Chauna torquata</i>
29	Ashy-headed goose	<i>Chloephaga poliocephala</i>

February													
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68	Black-necked stilt	<i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>
69	Barn swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
70	Spectacled tyrant	<i>Hymenops perspicillatus</i>
71	Olrog's gull	<i>Larus atlanticus</i>
72	Kelp gull	<i>Larus dominicanus</i>
73	Long-tailed meadowlark	<i>Leistes loyca</i>
74	White-tipped dove	<i>Leptotila verreauxi</i>
75	Austral negrito	<i>Lessonia rufa</i>
76	Imperial cormorant	<i>Leucocarbo atriceps</i>
77	Magellanic cormorant	<i>Leucocarbo magellanicus</i>
78	Hudsonian godwit	<i>Limosa haemastica</i>
79	Cattle tyrant	<i>Machetornis rixosa</i>
80	Chilean wigeon	<i>Mareca sibilatrix</i>
81	Ringed kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle torquata</i>
82	Chimango caracara	<i>Milvago chimango</i>
83	Patagonian mockingbird	<i>Mimus patagonicus</i>
84	Chalk-browed mockingbird	<i>Mimus saturninus</i>
85	Chilean mockingbird	<i>Mimus thenca</i>
86	Shiny cowbird	<i>Molothrus bonariensis</i>
87	Screaming cowbird	<i>Molothrus rufoaxillaris</i>
88	Wood stork	<i>Mycteria americana</i>
89	Monk parakeet	<i>Myiopsitta monachus</i>
90	Neotropical cormorant	<i>Nannopterum brasilianum</i>
91	Spotted nothura	<i>Nothura maculosa</i>
92	Hudsonian whimbrel	<i>Numenius hudsonicus</i>
93	Black-crowned night-heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
94	Lake duck	<i>Oxyura vittata</i>
95	Plumbeous rail	<i>Pardirallus sanguinolentus</i>
96	Red-crested cardinal	<i>Paroaria coronata</i>
97	House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
98	Chilean pigeon	<i>Patagioenas araucana</i>
99	Spot-winged pigeon	<i>Patagioenas maculosa</i>
100	Picazuro pigeon	<i>Patagioenas picazuro</i>
101	Peruvian pelican	<i>Pelecanus thagus</i>
102	Wilson's phalarope	<i>Phalaropus tricolor</i>
103	Bare-faced ibis	<i>Phimosus infuscatus</i>
104	Wren-like rushbird	<i>Phleocryptes melanops</i>
105	Chilean flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus chilensis</i>

[illegible]

143	South American tern	<i>Sterna hirundinacea</i>
144	Common tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>
145	Snowy-crowned tern	<i>Sterna trudeaui</i>
146	Rufous-legged owl	<i>Strix rufipes</i>
147	European starling	<i>Strunus vulgaris</i>
148	Whistling heron	<i>Syrigma sibilatrix</i>
149	Band-winged nightjar	<i>Systellura longirostris</i>
150	Least grebe	<i>Tachybaptus dominicus</i>
151	Chilean swallow	<i>Tachycineta leucopyga</i>
152	Flying steamer duck	<i>Tachyeres patachonicus</i>
153	Flightless steamer duck	<i>Tachyeres pteneres</i>
154	Royal tern	<i>Thalasseus maximus</i>
155	Black-faced ibis	<i>Theristicus melanopis</i>
156	Greater yellowlegs	<i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>
157	Southern house wren	<i>Troglodytes musculus</i>
158	Austral thrush	<i>Turdus falcklandii</i>
159	Tropical kingbird	<i>Tyrannus melancholicus</i>
160	Fork-tailed flycatcher	<i>Tyrannus savana</i>
161	American barn owl	<i>Tyto furcata</i>
162	Southern lapwing	<i>Vanellus chilensis</i>
163	Striped woodpecker	<i>Veniliornis lignarius</i>
164	Andean condor	<i>Vultur gryphus</i>
165	White monjita	<i>Xolmis irupero</i>
166	Eared dove	<i>Zenaida auriculata</i>
167	Rufous-collared sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia capensis</i>

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Reptiles (* = heard or signs only)

	Common Name	Binominal Name
1	Painted tree iguana	<i>Liolaemus pictus</i>
2	Gunther's striped snake	<i>Lygophis anomalus</i>
3	Argentine black-and-white tegu	<i>Salvator merianae</i>
4	Keeled sepia snake	<i>Thamnodynastes hypoconia</i>

February													
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
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					1								

Amphibians (* = heard or signs only)

	Common Name	Binominal Name
1	Marbled wood frog	<i>Batrachyla antarctandica</i>
2	Montevideotree frog	<i>Boana pulchella</i>
3	Chiloe Island ground frog	<i>Eupsophus calcaritus</i>
4	Wrestler frog	<i>Leptodactylus luctator</i>
5	Lesser swimming frog	<i>Pseudis minuta</i>
6	Argentine toad	<i>Rhinella arenarum</i>

February													
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
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Fishes (* = heard or signs only)

	Common Name	Binominal Name
1	Lebranche mullet	<i>Mugil liza</i>

February													
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
			~30										

Pictures from Marcelo Gavensky & Martin Royle (this is the last trip before Martin's camera fully broke, sorry for the poor quality and lack of photos)



Southern Monito del Monte



Franciscana



Brown Hare



Screaming Hairy Armadillo



Southern Long-nosed Armadillo (hiding half down a hole)



Chilean Myotis



South American Seal Lion



South American Fur Seal



Coypu



Brazilian Guinea Pig



Talas Tuco-tuco



Small Vesper Mouse



Chilean Climbing Mouse



Plains Viscacha



Long-tailed Pygmy Rice Rat



Pampas Fox



Culpeo



Lesser Grison



Southern Pudu



Painted Tree Iguana



Keeled Sepia Snake



Gunther's Striped Snake



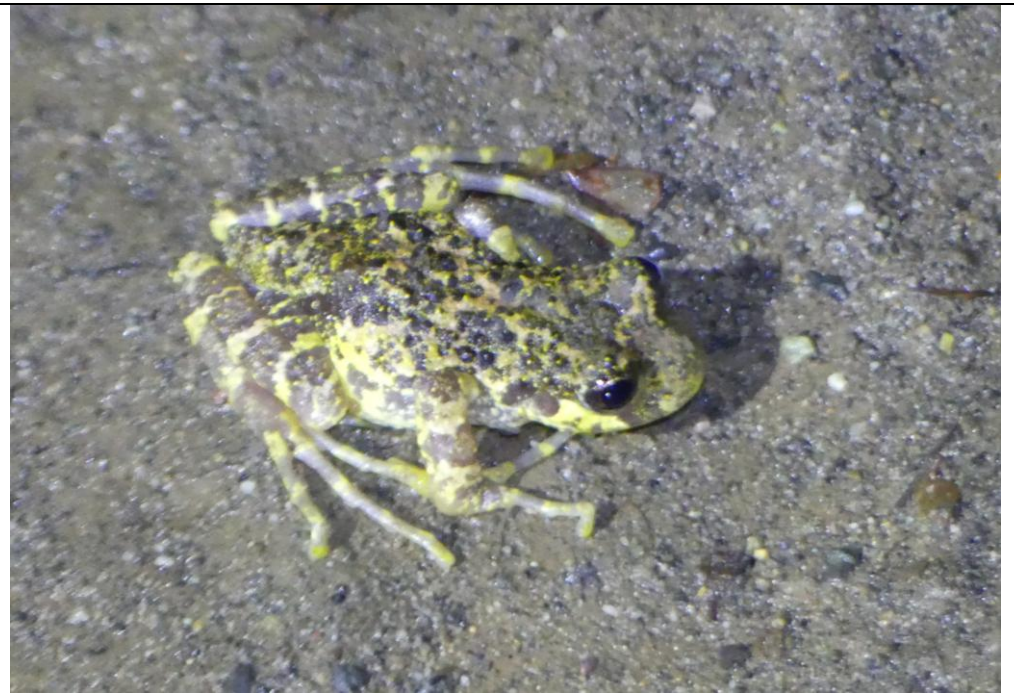
Argentine Toad



Montevideo Treefrog



Wrestler Frog



Marbled Wood Frog



Chiloe Island Ground Frog



Great Rhea



Southern Crested Caracara



Chilean Hawk



Burrowing Owl



Chilean Flamingo



Black-necked Swan



Coscoroba Swan



Ashy-headed Goose



Red Shoveler



Brazilian Teal



Flightless Steamer Duck



Chilean Wigeon



White-rumped Sandpiper



Greater Yellowlegs



Hudsonian Whimbrel



Hudsonian Godwit



Plumbeous Rail



Black-necked Stilt



Great Grebe



Southern Screamer



Brown-hooded Gull



Gull-billed Tern



Black-crowned Night-heron



Imperial Cormorant



Spotted Nothura



Band-winged Nightjar



Burrowing Parakeet



Slender-billed Parakeet



Green-backed Firecrown



Black-throated Heut-heut



Chuca Tapalucó



Magellanic Woodpecker



Spot-winged Pigeon



Great Pampa Finch



Hooded Siskin



Patagonian Sierra-finch



Brown-and-yellow Marshbird



Fork-tailed Flycatcher



White-crested Eleania