

Bird watching on Chiloé **(4 days / 3 nights)**

Included: private transport, bilingual birding guide, 3 nights lodging, 3 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 3 dinners, all activities

Not Included: alcohol, tips, insurance

DAY 01 FERRY RIDE TO CHILOÉ - ANCUD

Pick up from airport Pto. Montt or your hotel in Puerto Varas, transfer to Pargua to board the ferry to the emerald island of Chiloé. Our birding experience begins with the 40 minute ferry crossing through the Chacao Channel, home to many native and endemic species. Once on the island, spotting scopes will be set up at Punta Tres Cruces, a privileged lookout, where the Gulf of Ancud flows into the channel holding a plethora of species. We will look for: Pink footed & Sooty Shearwater, a number of petrels (White-chinned, Wilson Storm, and the Magellanic Diving), Chilean Skua, four species of Cormorant, Peruvian Pelican and the occasional albatross as well as many coastal species.

After a picnic lunch, we continue to a picturesque on the north coast of the island. While locals collect seaweed, which they load on their oxcarts at low tide, we can take advantage of the bay's rich marine life that supports many unique species. The bay is home to a large colony of black-necked swans, furthermore you will see Flightless Steamer Ducks, Black Skimmers, Sandpipers, Whimbrels, Hudsonian Godwit, Coots and many more. In the afternoon, we drive to the oceanside city Ancud with its colourful port, where we enjoy a nice dinner. Overnight at a hostel Ancud or country home 7 kms away (both options have private bath). (BL,D)

DAY 02 EAST COAST CHILOÉ - ESTUARIES, FOREST - BOAT TRIP TO PUÑIHUIL

After an early breakfast, our guide takes us towards the wetlands and estuaries at the head of the Bay of Ancud, excellent for various species of ducks (Chiloé Wigeon, Cinnamon Teal, Yellow-billed Pintail), Austral Negrito, Greater Yellowlegs, plovers among other species. When we arrive at the Pacific Coast we embark in zodiac boats to get to the unique penguin colony on the islands off the coast of Puñihuil - the only place in the world where Humboldt and Magellan penguins nest side by side. It is not allowed to leave the boat, because these are protected breeding grounds. The area is very rich and supports many other species, including 3 species of nesting cormorants (Red-legged, Rock & Imperial), Kelp Geese, three gull species, skuas, Blackish and Magellanic Oyster Catchers.

After lunch we'll venture into the native forest on the island Chiloé in search of the endemic Tapaculos (Huet-Huet, Magallanic & Chucao). We also keep an eye - and ear - out for the Rufous-tailed Plantcutter, White-crested Elaenia, Chilean Pidgeon, Chilean Woodpecker and several raptors (Chimango & Crested Cara Caras, Peregrine Falcon). Today we should be able to observe between 40 and 50 species in total. Try typical and delicious dishes from Chiloé for dinner and overnight at same lodging. (B,BL,D)

DAY 03 ISLAND INTERIOR: LAKES, RIVERS & WETLANDS

Early morning departure after breakfast for a 45 minute journey from Ancud to the Rio Chepu. This tidal effected valley dropped 2 m / 7 ft during the massive earthquake in

1960, which formed huge wetlands at the juncture of two rivers. We travel by boat up the Puntra river, past the remnants of the submerged forest, and look for birds, such as the Snowy, Great and Cattle Egrets, the Cocoi (White-necked) Heron, White-winged & Red-gartered Coots, White-tufted & Great Grebe, and the Spectacled Duck. This unique area is home and nesting area to more than 60 species of birds, offering a special opportunity for observation. After lunch we'll explore another branch of the river and go to the Laguna Coluco, a freshwater lake with thousands of nesting gulls (Brown hooded) and home to the Red Shoveler and other ducks. In the surrounding area we will look for the Spectacled Tyrant, Wren-like Rushbird, Rufous-tailed Hawk and others. Here, we will go on a short walk through the forest to try to spot some Slender-billed and Austral Parakeets, Des Mur's Wiretail and the Tufted Tit-tyrant among others. The mixture of forest, freshwater and tidal areas offers a wide range of species to observe, making this a wonderful day of birding. By late afternoon we'll arrive at the Putemun Estuary, outside the regional capital of Castro. This wetland is home to the second largest Hudsonian godwit population in the world as well as many other species. Overnight at a hostel in town or a rural country home should you wish to enjoy the warm island hospitality. (B,BL,D)

DAY 04 LAST OUTING ON CHILOÉ ISLAND - TRANSFER TO PUERTO MONTT/ PUERTO VARAS

After an early breakfast we'll have time for one last outing - we focus on the area of your choice: estuary, coast, wetlands or forest to try to observe any species that may have eluded you up to that point. We enjoy a final lunch either in the field or restaurant depending on the itinerary we choose and then head to the ferry, which takes us back to the continent. Drop-off can be at the airport or the hotel of your choice in Puerto Montt or Puerto Varas. (B,BL)