Chile

Arica Extension

Birds, Wildlife & Andean landscapes



Diademed Sandpiper-Plover by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Chile occupies a 2,650-mile-long narrow ribbon of land between the Pacific Ocean and the Andes and stretches from north of the Atacama Desert to Cape Horn, the southernmost headland of the Tierra del Fuego archipelago. Chile is one of South America's most stable and prosperous nations and our tour covers the highlights of this fabulous country as we search for its numerous specialities and endemics. These range from the giant Andean Condor to the tiny Chilean Woodstar and include the unique Chilean tapaculos called huet-huets and turcas.

One of our primary targets will no doubt be the highly prized Diademed Sandpiper-Plover, while other no less desirable species include James's Flamingo, Puna Ibis, Chilean Tinamou, Grey-breasted Seedsnipe, Andean Avocet, Rufous-legged Owl, Slender-billed Parakeet, Magellanic Woodpecker, White-throated Treerunner and the appropriately named Giant Hummingbird.

We will also undertake an exciting pelagic excursion in search of the region's seabirds, including the rare Peruvian Diving Petrel and Chilean Skua, while mammal possibilities include herds of stately Vicunas, the range-restricted Marine Otter and the bizarre Southern Mountain Viscachas.

Accommodations, meals, and wines are excellent throughout the tour and the Chilean people offer warm hospitality. Combined with the outstanding scenery of high-altitude Puna lakes and snow-capped volcanoes, excellent coastal desert and rich Patagonian Forest, this is without doubt one of South America's most memorable birding destinations!

Our Arica Extension takes us to the country's far north, where we explore the scenic, varied habitats ranging from the Atacama Desert oasis valleys (thousands of feet deep!) and venture up the desolate west face of the Andes to the high Puna. Coastal birds such as Grey Gull and beautiful Peruvian Tern grace the beaches, while Slender-billed Finch, Tamarugo Conebill, Chilean Woodstar, Peruvian Sheartail and Oasis Hummingbird occur within the Oasis Valleys. Other highlights may include Lesser (Puna) Rhea, Puna Tinamou and tons of flamingos of three species.

Itinerary & Map

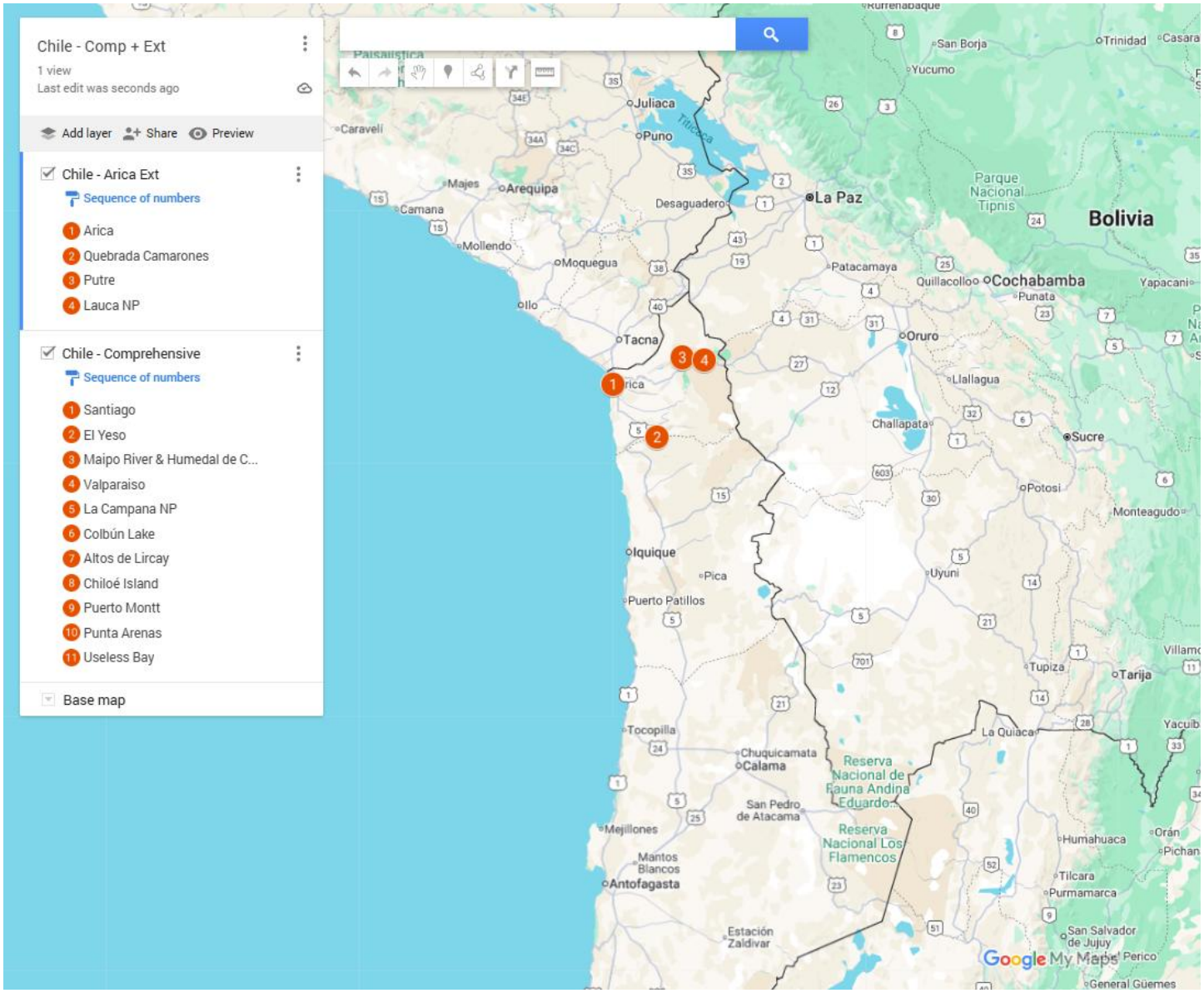
Arica Extension

Day 1	**Flight from Santiago to Arica**
Day 2	**Quebrada Camarones and Arica coastal area**
Day 3	**Arica to Putre**
Day 4	**Parque Nacional Lauca**
Day 5	**Parque Nacional Lauca & Belén Polylepis Forest to Arica**
Day 6	**Flight from Arica to Santiago & final departure**

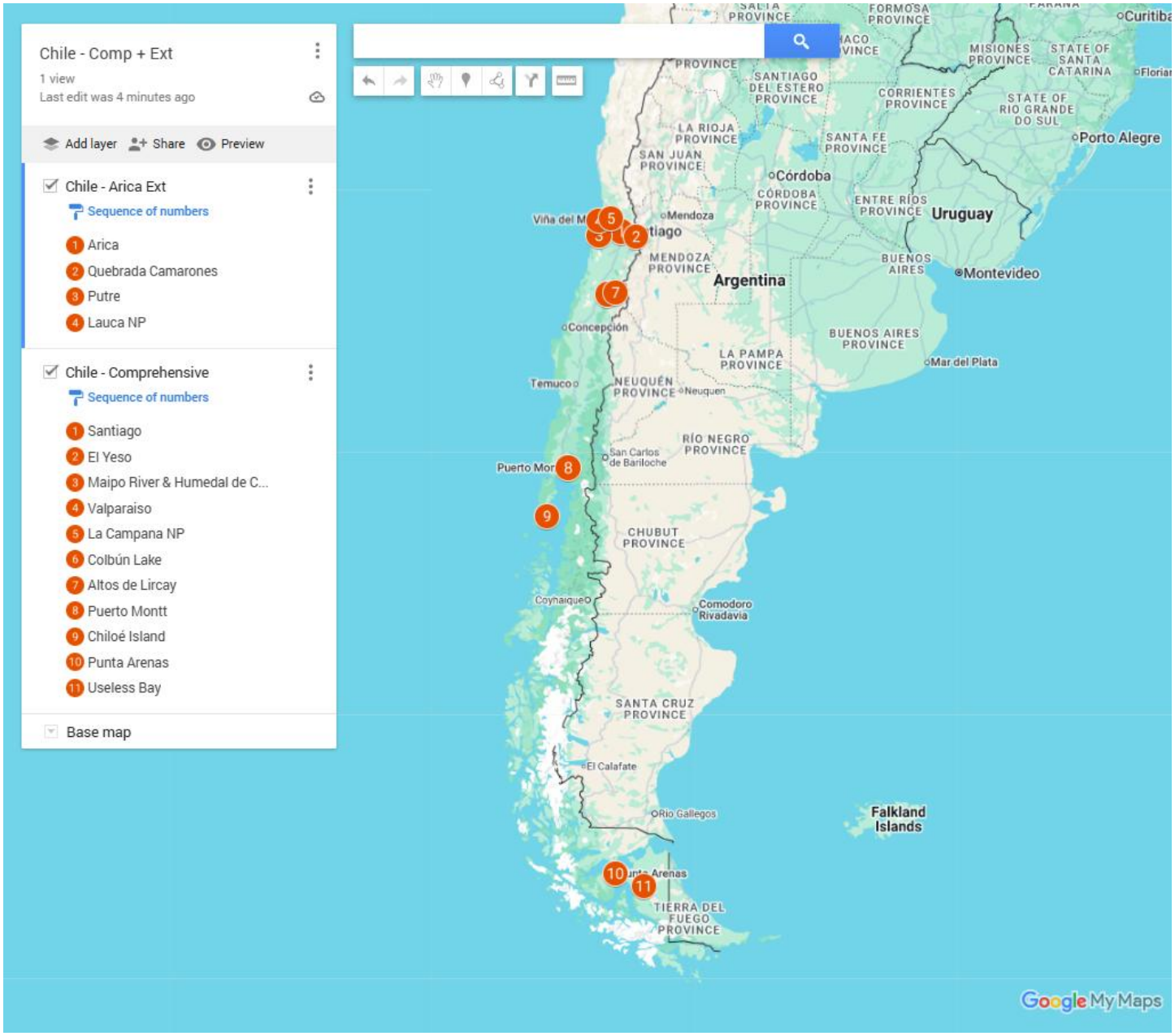
Birds, Wildlife & Andean landscapes

Day 1	**Arrival in Santiago, afternoon birding in the Farellones area**
Day 2	**El Yeso Valley**
Day 3	**Rio Maipo & Humedal de Cartagena**
Day 4	**Valparaíso Pelagic**
Day 5	**Parque Nacional La Campana & Laguna de Batuco**
Day 6	**Lago Colbún & Reserva Nacional Altos de Lircay**
Day 7	**Reserva Nacional Altos de Lircay to Santiago**
Day 8	**Flight from Santiago to Puerto Montt, transfer to Chiloé Island**
Day 9	**Chiloé Island**
Day 10	**Chiloé Island to Puerto Montt, flight to Punta Arenas**
Day 11	**Ferry trip to Tierra del Fuego & King Penguin colony of Useless Bay**
Day 12	**Ferry trip to Punta Arenas: Buque Quemado & Camino a Pali Aike**
Day 13	**Flight from Punta Arenas to Santiago & final departure**

Arica Extension



Birds, Wildlife & Andean landscapes



Birding sites in detail



Tamarugo Conebill by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Arica. The coastal city of Arica is Chile's northernmost city. An exploration of the local habitats may produce Peruvian Pelican, Grey Gull, several species of shorebird, Peruvian Meadowlark, Slender-billed Finch, Peruvian Thick-knee and, with luck, Peruvian Tern.

Quebrada Camarones. The greater Quebrada Camarones incorporates the arid cactus-studded valleys of Azapa, Lluta and Chaca. These sites are the haunts of some special birds that include the increasingly rare Chilean Woodstar, Croaking Ground Dove, Peruvian Sheartail, Oasis Hummingbird, Pied-crested Tit-Tyrant, Cinereous Conebill and the widespread but gaudy, Vermillion Flycatcher. Chestnut-throated Seedeater is normally quite common, though it could take some effort to connect with the unique Tamarugo Conebill. In recent years, we have also found flocks of Raimondi's Yellow Finch in the area.

Arica Coast. We'll explore the Arica coast where we expect to see a great array of localised seabirds, including Peruvian Pelican, the attractive Red-legged Cormorant, Brown-hooded and Belcher's Gulls and the exquisite Inca Tern. Along the desert coast, we will also look for flocks of Willet, Hudsonian Whimbrel, Ruddy Turnstone, Surfbird, Franklin's Gull and Elegant Tern.

Arica to Putre. The drive from Arica towards Putre takes us to the pre-Puna zone, up to a height of over 3 000m (10 500ft) above sea level. Travelling and ascending slowly and being careful not to over-exert ourselves with the increase in altitude, we will look for Peruvian Thick-knee, Andean Swift and Greyish Miner (rare), while we may also see our first Guanaco of the tour.

Putre. The small commune of Putre is well frequented by hikers, climbers and birders visiting the nearby Lauca National Park. We'll begin our stay here by looking for Dark-winged and Canyon Canasteros, bright Blue-and-yellow Tanager, Greenish Yellow Finch, Black-hooded Sierra Finch, Hooded Siskins, and Bare-faced Ground Dove, amongst a whole array of exciting birds that occur here, some at the very southern limit of their range. We will also search for a trio of tricky furnarids called earthcreepers: namely Buff-breasted, the scarce White-throated and Straight-billed. We will also listen for the distinctive call of Ornate Tinamou, although unpredictable.



James's Flamingos by Clayton Burne

Parque Nacional Lauca. Established to protect one of the world's highest lakes



Chilean Woodstar by Dušan Brinkhuizen

(Lago Chungará is 4520masl), the lofty Lauca National Park supports a great diversity of Andean specialities. Puna Ibis, Giant and Andean Coots, Rufous-bellied and Grey-breasted Seedsnipe, Andean Avocet, Andean Lapwing, Puna Plover and an opportunity to find the scarce Diademed Sandpiper-Plover are all possible here. In rocky areas, we will look for Andean Flicker, where we should even find the bizarre Southern Mountain Viscacha, a strange-looking mammal with a squirrel body and rabbit ears. We should also encounter Andean Gull, Cordilleran Canastero, Puna and White-fronted Ground Tyrants, Andean Negrito, Glacier Finch, White-throated Sierra-Finch (rare) and Black Siskin.

Lago Chungará. This scenic high altitude lake host to the photogenic Volcan Parinacota provides us excellent opportunities for Chilean, Andean and James's Flamingoes, numerous waterfowl including Andean Goose, Puna Teal and Crested Duck. The lake surroundings are excellent habitat for Lesser (Puna) Rhea and stately Vicunas strutting over the scrubby plains, the Black-billed Shrike-Tyrant, Cream-winged and White-winged Cinclodes scurrying over the rocks, Puna Ibis, Puna Miner, Puna Ground Tyrant and the secretive Puna Tinamou lurking in the open grasses and scrub.

Belén Polylepis Forest. Time permitting, we'll pay a quick visit to this forest patch to search for the localized Thick-billed Siskin, D'Orbigny's Chat-Tyrant, Black-hooded, Ash-breasted and Mourning Sierra Finches, Yellow-billed Tit-Tyrant and with immense luck, Giant Conebill.

Farellones area. Time permitting, we will then spend the afternoon birding in the vicinity of Farellones for several Andean species, including our first opportunity to see the stately Andean Condor soaring overhead. Mountain Caracaras are also a conspicuous feature of this landscape while we search for White-sided Hillstar, Rufous-banded Miner, Sharp-billed Canastero, Grey-hooded Sierra Finch, Greater Yellow Finch and a host of Ground Tyrants including Black-fronted, White-browed and Rufous-naped. We will also look for the secretive endemic Chilean Tinamou, Moustached Turca and Chilean Mockingbird, while other raptors we might encounter are Variable Hawk and the sleek Aplomado Falcon.



Black-throated Huet-huet by Dušan Brinkhuizen

El Yeso Valley. We can look forward to exploring the scenic surroundings of El Yeso reservoir in the Andean foothills. Rewarding sightings here could include the



Moustached Turca by Dušan Brinkhuizen

endemic Crag Chilia, the huge Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle, Black-winged Ground Dove, Greater Yellow Finch, Grey-flanked Cinclodes, Black-billed Shrike-Tyrant, Creamy-rumped Miner, Magellanic Tapaculo, and Yellow-rumped Siskin, among other Andean specialities.

Much of our time will be spent carefully scanning the boggy areas of shallow grass and streams for the stunning Diademed Sandpiper-Plover, our main target species for the day. We can also listen for the call of Mountain Parakeets that regularly flock to this area, as well as the elusive Grey-breasted Seedsnipe.

Rio Maipo & Humedal de Cartagena. Our time today will be divided between the Maipo River mouth and nearby coastal wetlands, searching through areas that teem with birdlife for many water-associated species. We will also include a visit to the exceptional Humedal de Cartagena where we will concentrate on finding the brood-parasitic Black-headed Duck, Lake Duck, White-tufted and Great Grebes, Coscoroba Swan, Red Shoveler, Brown-hooded Gull and the striking Many-colored Rush Tyrant. In addition, today will be our best chance to locate the scarce Ticking Doradito and Dusky Tapaculo among others.

Valparaíso Pelagic. Today we make an unforgettable visit to the cold waters of the Humboldt Current, considered to be one of the world's finest pelagic birding locations. We can expect to see a great variety of tubenoses here, including Black-browed and Salvin's Albatrosses, plus chances for Buller's, Chatham (very rare), and both Northern and Southern Royal Albatrosses. We should also find Southern and Northern Giant Petrels, and the occasional De Filippi's (Masatierra), White-chinned and Westland Petrels, Pink-footed, and Sooty Shearwaters, Wilson's (Fuegian) Storm Petrel and the tricky Peruvian Diving Petrel. Other seabirds we may encounter during our pelagic include Red (Grey) Phalarope, the decorative Sabine's Gull and Chilean Skua.



Buller's Albatross by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Parque Nacional La Campana. This morning we visit La Campana National Park, a reserve that supports one of the last remaining Chilean Wine Palm forests amidst picturesque mountain peaks. Here, we will look for an interesting array of endemic passerines, including Dusky-tailed Canastero, Moustached Turca and the furtive White-throated Tapaculo. We are also likely to encounter the remarkable Giant Hummingbird, Striped Woodpecker, Austral Pygmy Owl, Chilean Elaenia, Tufted Tit-



Magellanic Woodpecker by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Tyrant, Plain-mantled Tit-Spinetail, Grey-hooded Sierra Finch, Chilean Pigeon and the endearing Thorn-tailed Rayadito while in the national park.

Laguna de Batuco. As we return to Santiago, we'll make pay a visit to the extensive Laguna de Batuco. Masses of freshwater birds can be expected here including the scarce Black-headed Duck and Rosy-billed Pochard.

Lago Colbún & Reserva Nacional Altos de Lircay. We'll continue our exploration south of Santiago to seek forest-dwelling birds of the Andean slopes. First, we'll concentrate on locating the endemic and threatened Chilean race of Burrowing Parrot, which usually congregates in noisy flocks. Along the route, we should also have the opportunity to observe Upland Goose, the scarce Spectacled Duck and if we are lucky, Chilean Tinamou. The rich forests in the area host a wide range of specialised birds, although few conjure up such magnificence as the goliath Magellanic Woodpecker! Males show off a bright red head over a huge black body, while females adorn a ridiculously curled crest. We will listen for the distinctive taps of what is surely one of the world's greatest woodpeckers, while also searching for the localised White-throated Treerunner, Dark-bellied Cinclodes and near-endemic Chestnut-throated Huet-huet. Tonight, we can also stay out in search of Rufous-legged Owl.

Puerto Montt to Chiloé Island. We will take a ferry across to Chiloé Island, keeping an eye out for Imperial and Rock Cormorants as well as Magellanic Diving Petrel from the deck.

Chiloé Island. We will spend our time search out several key species such as Slender-billed Parakeet, Black-throated Huet-huet, Ochre-flanked Tapaculo, Chilean Elaenia, Patagonian Tyrant and even the tricky Rufous-tailed Hawk. Along the coastline, there are chances for 'Chiloé' Flightless Steamer Duck, Kelp Goose, Humboldt Penguins and Magellanic Oystercatcher. Intertidal mudflats host wintering flocks of Hudsonian Godwit, Red Knot, Sanderling, large congregations of elegant Black-necked Swans, and attractive Silvery Grebes.

The grasslands, orchards and meadows are ideal for sighting Black-faced Ibis, Austral Blackbird, Chimango Caracara, Black-chinned Siskin, Chilean Flicker, Rufous-tailed Plantcutter, Common Diuca Finch and Grassland Yellow Finch. If we are particularly lucky, we may come across the very rare Pudu.

Chiloé Island Pelagic. Today we head to the local dock for our pelagic trip. We shall keep our eyes peeled for our primary target - the recently described Pincoya Storm Petrel. Other species we



Slender-billed Parakeet by Dušan Brinkhuizen



Green-backed Firecrown by Dušan Brinkhuizen

can hope to find whilst searching for our quarry include Magellanic Penguin, Sooty Shearwater, Chilean Skua, Parasitic Jaeger, Kelp Gull and South American Tern. Pods of Peale's Dolphin and South American Sea Lion are normally found too.

Ferry trip to Tierra del Fuego & King Penguin colony of Useless Bay. This morning, we will catch a ferry to Tierra del Fuego, with chances for Magellanic Diving Petrel, Fuegian Steamer Duck, Black-browed Albatross, Southern Giant Petrel, as well as Rock and Imperial Shags. En route to the spectacular King Penguin colony, we'll also be searching for beauties that include Ruddy-headed and Kelp Geese, Short-billed Miner, and the stunning Rufous-chested Plover. In the afternoon, our main target will be the very unusual and monotypic Magellanic Plover.

Ferry trip to Punta Arenas. This morning, we will board another ferry, a shorter crossing, this time destined back towards Punta Arenas. While we cross the straits, we stand a chance of finding Magellanic Oystercatcher and Dolphin Gull, along with Dusky, Chilean and Commerson's Dolphins.

Buque Quemado & Camino a Pali Aike. After the ferry crossing, we'll visit the areas of Buque Quemado and the Pali Aike Road in search for some of the many special birds here, including Lesser (Darwin's) Rhea, both Upland and Ashy-headed Geese, Elegant Crested and Patagonian Tinamous, as well as Least Seedsnipe, Tawny-throated Dotterel, Patagonian Yellow Finch, the erratic Chocolate-vented Tyrant, White-bridled Finch, Austral Canastero and Band-tailed Earthcreeper, to name just a handful! Mammal opportunities also abound, with numerous Guanacos and the occasional Argentine Grey Fox. The landscape in this region is utterly stunning, while a plethora of plants should be in bloom, adding to the overall aesthetic.



Magellanic Plover by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Tour Grading & Key

Overall Ease		Undemanding. Suitable for all birding / wildlife interest levels.
Birding Ease		Moderate. Most species provide good visuals in open conditions, but several target species are quite elusive and may require repeated searching.
Accommodation		Comfortable.
Walking / Trails		Mostly short to moderate walks on flat ground or gently sloping ground. Much birding is roadside, or near to the vehicle.
Vehicles / Roads		Good quality sealed and dirt roads for the most part. Comfortable vehicle.
Photography		Reasonable to good. No dedicated hides.
Annoyances		Pelagic trips can be rough. Some very high altitudes.

Financial Arrangements and Important Notes

Tour dates, prices, single supplement, approximate flight costs and tour spaces are displayed on our website.

Tour inclusions:

- All meals from lunch on day 1 to breakfast on day 6 of the Arica extension;
- All meals from lunch on day 1 to breakfast on day 13 for the main tour;
- All lodgings;
- Bottled drinking water;
- All ground transportation during the tour;
- All reserve entrance fees;
- Pelagics;
- All guiding services
- Tips for local guides, drivers and services.

Tour exclusions:

- Visa fees;
- ANY flights;
- Any beverages (including mini-bar charges at hotels);
- Optional excursions;
- Special gratuities;
- Telephone calls, laundry and other items of a personal nature.

Single Supplement: The single supplement cost for this tour will be charged if you wish to have single accommodation. If RBL cannot provide you with a rooming partner for these nights although you choose to share, the single supplement will become applicable. We will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a rooming partner is found if you do wish to share.

Tipping: As noted above, gratuities (drivers, hotel staff, restaurants etc.) are included on this tour. However, this does NOT include your Rockjumper leader/s. If you feel that they have given you excellent service, it is entirely appropriate to tip them at your discretion.

- **Due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, we quote our tours in 4 currencies. The tour price is fixed only in the currency printed in bold, and the actual cost in the other currencies listed will be adjusted according to prevailing exchange rates at the time of final invoicing. The same applies to approximate flight and single supplement rates.**
- **Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registrations, a small group supplement will be offered to confirm the tour.**
- **Tour prices are subject to unforeseen increases in tour related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result.**
- **The designated tour leader/s may be changed at short due to unforeseen circumstances.**
- **The itinerary is indicative only. Changes may need to be made to the order in which the tour is conducted, or some of the venues we visit closer to departure. We will attempt to adhere as close to the original program as possible.**

- It is important for the comfort of your fellow travellers that you do not over-pack. Kindly stick to 20kg (44lb) for check in luggage and 5kg (+-18lb) for hand luggage.
- We spend time birding some high elevation sites such as Farellones +-3100m / 10,000ft and Lauca up to 4600m / 15 000ft. Our lodge in Putre is situated at 3370m / 11 000ft. Those prone to altitude sickness should take precautions.
- Temperatures are variable depending on altitude but are often cold at higher elevations (6°C / 43°F) but can rise quite sharply at low elevations (32°C / 90°F).
- Dry and sunny weather is normal in central and northern Chile, but the south is typically cool to quite cold, and rain showers are always a possibility.
- Please note that the seas during the pelagic trips can be unpredictable, and guests who opt for this activity, must bear this in mind. You should consider bringing along some motion sickness medication if you suspect that you could be prone to seasickness. We suggest that you contact your travel doctor for information regarding the various medication options.
- If you have any medical conditions or physical limitations relating to balance and mobility, please do let the Rockjumper office know.

Arrival and Departure Details

The Arica Extension will depart from Comodoro Arturo Merino Benítez International Airport, Santiago (IATA: SCL) on day 1 of the extension with a flight to Arica and will conclude here by mid-morning of day 6 after a return flight form Arica.

The Main Tour will depart from the hotel in Santiago on day 1, and you are welcome to arrive at any time before 13:00 on this day (or arrive the day before preferably). The tour will conclude at Comodoro Arturo Merino Benítez International Airport, Santiago (IATA: SCL) after a morning flight from Punta Arenas.

The above information in respect of arrivals and departures is a guide only. Precise arrival and departure information will be sent to you in your Tour Confirmation package once the tour has been officially confirmed. If you wish to arrive early and/or depart late and would like assistance in this regard, kindly contact the Rockjumper office.

Comodoro Arturo Merino Benítez International Airport, Santiago (IATA: SCL), is the main port of entry for international flights into Chile.

Visa requirements differ by country, nationality of the traveller and duration and purpose of your intended stay. It may be necessary to obtain a visa or an electronic travel authorization in advance of your travel. It is therefore vitally important that you check with your travel agent/consulate/embassy for exact visa requirements.

DO NOT book any flights until the Rockjumper Team have officially confirmed the tour.