

Chile
(Central and North)



20-29 November 2010

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General

Chile had long been a destination I wanted to visit. Having been to Argentinian Patagonia and to southern Peru, I figured out that it was actually possible to squeeze into a week-long trip and still see the vast majority of the specialties. This short duration however caused the inevitable exclusion of Juan Fernandez and Rapa Nui (Easter Island), which I left out for next visit. Stig-Uno Svensson, my long term birding friend was as usual not difficult to convince about the excellence with this crazy twitch.

Highlights

This trip goes onto the top list of fantastic trips. Scenery, food, logistics, and a great selection of target birds of which all were seen, makes it an unforgettable experience.

Of particular birding highlights were:

- The pelagic trip with six species of Albatross (e.g. Antipodean Wandering) and Masatierra Petrel.
- All the weird tapaculos, like both species of Huet-huet, Chucao, White-throated, Ochre-flanked, Dusky, Magellanic Tapaculos and the huge Moustached Turca.
- Crippling south cone endemics like Crag Chilia, White-throated Treerunner, Slender-billed Parakeet,
- Enigmatic Black-headed Duck
- Rare and tricky-to-see Rufous-tailed Hawk and Patagonian Tyrant
- Endemic hummers like White-sided Hillstar and Green-backed Firecrown
- Flamingos, Coots and other waterbirds in the high altitude desert near San Pedro de Atacama.
- A great selection of furnarids, e.g. Dusky-tailed Canastero, Creamy-rumped, Puna and Rufous-banded Miners

Itinerary

20/11

We both arrived at Santiago's International airport in the early hours, with flights originating from Sweden respectively Panamá. With a quick breakfast at the airport we were soon greeted by our local guide Fernando. Eager to get going for some first class birding we soon set off for the first destination, which was Mahuida. Only some 45 minutes drive from the airport and lifers were starting to trickle in as we worked the scrubby hillsides of Mahuida; White-throated Tapaculo, Moustached Turca, Dusky-tailed Canastero and finally Chilean Tinamou. After having seen all the wanted birds we left for higher altitudes at Farellones. More key Chilean birds like Crag Chilia, Black-fronted Ground-Tyrant, Rufous-banded Miner, Greater Yellow-Finch, et al. We spent most of the time in the areas of Los Nevados and and the last part of the day at La Parva, and it was well after dark when we returned to our hotel in Santiago at 22.00. Great day to start the trip!



21/11

The entire morning was spent at two wetlands near Batuco. First we covered a marshy area near Santa Ines, where we finally scored on the target Ticking Doradito. The second site was more like a proper lake, Laguna Batuca, and it did not take us long until Black-headed Duck was under the belt. The birding was generally great at both these sites with a good selection of wetland species.

The afternoon was spent on the road with a four hour drive south to Lircay. In the late afternoon we scored on a few Chilean Pigeons as we approached Altos de Lircay, our final destination. The rest of the day was spent along a dirt road up towards the warden's house at the national park. Green-backed Firecrown and a few heard Huet-huets, the latter setting the standard for the morning to come. As darkness fell, we called in a Rufous-legged Owl that showed nicely. For the night we stayed at a small hotel nearby.

22/11

We walked some excellent forest trails at Altos de Lircay and enjoyed great views of Chestnut-throated Huet-huet and Chucao Tapaculo. Thanks to the knowledge of Fernando, we also picked up a pair of Patagonian Tyrant, a tricky species here occurring at its northernmost outpost. Having scored on all the targets by late morning, we set off further south. Along the way we stopped at a major dam and in the lake-side scrub we saw one more target; the weird Des Muir's Wiretail and played hide and seek with an uncooperative Dusky Tapaculo.



It took us 4-5 hours to drive from Lircay to our destination at Temuco. On arrival we immediately went to one of the look-outs on Cerro Ñielol, overlooking the town of Temuco. More importantly, there were several Slender-billed Parakeets flying around and perched nicely. Black-throated Huet-huets were calling from the forest, but this one had to wait for next day.

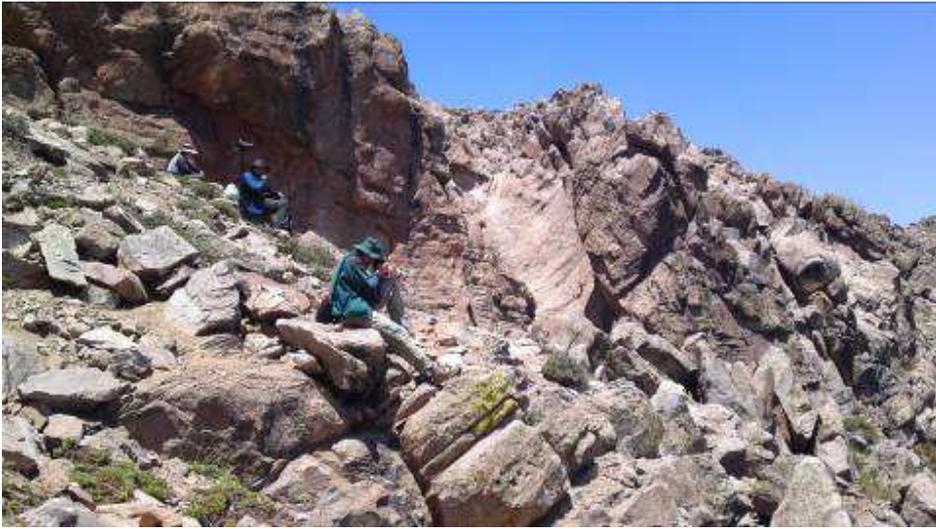
23/11

Most of the day was spent at Cerro Ñielol. The Huet-huet took us quite some time until one of them gave it self up, although Ochre-flanked Tapaculo proved much easier. Another target bird for the area was Rufous-tailed Hawk, a rare and difficult-to-see raptor. The local guide knew a nest that we were taken to and luck was with us as one of the adults was sitting out for prolonged scope views. Happy with the success of all our target birds we started the journey back north. However, just east of Temuco we flogged some particular meadows and saw the local taxon of Hellmayr's Pipit.

The journey back to Santiago was very long and it was late when we arrived at our hotel. The reason for us wanting to go all the way back was that we felt we had some urgent appointments with a last couple of targets at Farellones that had not collaborated during our first visit.

24/11

Shortly after a splendid sunrise saw us all the way up at Los Nevados at Farellones and this time we spent considerable time looking for Creamy-rumped Miner, until I finally found a nesting pair. The weather was beautiful and we headed down towards La Parva, where we were lucky to pick up a small flock of Yellow-rumped Siskins and mega views of a territorial Hillstar. The rest of the afternoon was spent at even lower altitudes at Zerba Loca, until we eventually rounded off the day back in Santiago at 18.00.



25/11



We were up early for a grueling red-eye flight at 5.10. Two hours later we arrived at Calama in the very north part of Chile. We swiftly picked up the robust 4x2 jeep and drove straight to San Pedro de Atacama. 1.5 hours later we had still not seen one single bird and hardly any living organism at all. This ultimate desert was completely devoid of anything organic. In SPdA we eventually found our hotel, although it took us a run-around. Not that SPdA is a big place, but there are loads of hotels and we realized that it was a real back-packer tourist trap, although we felt it was completely in the sticks of South America. At a minimarket we stocked up on packed brunch plus lots of water and set off east and uphill towards the Argentinian border. The landscape was astonishingly beautiful. Beyond the highest pass we found the target Red-backed Sierra-Finch and later we came upon a few bogs along the road. These contained three species of Flamingo and I was especially happy about the Andean such, as it concluded the Flamingo family. The third wanted lifer was Horned Coot of which we found several nesting. At Salar de Pujsa at ca 5000 masl (ca 85 km east of SPdA) we bagged the forth and last of my target birds; Puna Miner, so then the pressure for me was off. Way out at Salar de Pujsa we got seriously stuck in the sand with our jeep and for some moments it got somewhat exciting, given the complete remoteness combined with extreme altitude and stark sun. We tried to find the stream that was supposed to hold Diademed Sandpiper-Plover, but could not find even the stream. Eventually we gave up and returned to SPdA around 20.00 for a late and delicious dinner. Next we had to fill up the car, which took some time as the only gas station in town had a huge queue, which took us 45 minutes to work through in spite of being midnight.



26/11



Left SPdA at 5.40 for a drive back to Salar de Pujsa. Having checked Google Earth about streams, we were now geared up for a bit of a hike. 3.5 hours later, having walked probably some 12 km (which is a bit exhausting at 5000 mas!!) we came out empty-handed for DSP. It would not have been a lifer, but a bird I wanted to photograph, as my slides from 1988 in Peru were stolen.



On the way back to SPdA we took the opportunity to sneak around at the border post in Bolivia. Due to the area being completely devoid of anything birdlike, the Bolivian list still stands at zero.

By 13.00 we were back in SPdA and had picnic brunch along the roadside. Our second stop yielded Tamarugo Conebill, which was a lifer for SUS. Extremely few other signs of birdlife were observed, so we drove back to Calama. This time we managed to even see one bird along the way, which was another lifer for SUS. Later we returned the rental car at Calama airport and caught the flight back to Santiago. Fernando greeted us and we headed off to Valparaiso where we arrived 1.5 hours later. Quite an altitude drop from >5000 masl to sea-level in just a few hours! After a quick check-in at the small hotel we went for a typical dinner at one of Fernando's favorite restaurants. This part of the city was quite spectacular with narrow streets and houses clinging on the steep hillsides.

27/11



We were up early and arrived at the harbor well in time for the 6.30 pelagic departure. There was very little wind and only moderate swell, so everything was set for a fantastic day. We briefly follow the shoreline but soon headed off due west to reach deep waters. The area was completely packed with an excellent selection of pelagic birds, even not that far from shore. In fact we never went further than being able to distantly see the mountains. The entire trip lasted 6 hours, although we could easily have stayed longer. Masatierra Petrel was my only lifer, but from photos I could retrospectively identify an Antipodean Albatross. Loads of albatrosses of a total of six species were seen during the day! Magic!

After returning to Valparaiso we had lunch and then drove north along the coast to Reñaca for Chilean Seaside Cinclodes. Later in the evening we drove back to Santiago for final dinner.

28/11

SUS was up early for his return flight to Sweden, whereas I had a lie-in and late morning taxi to airport for my flight to Panamá.

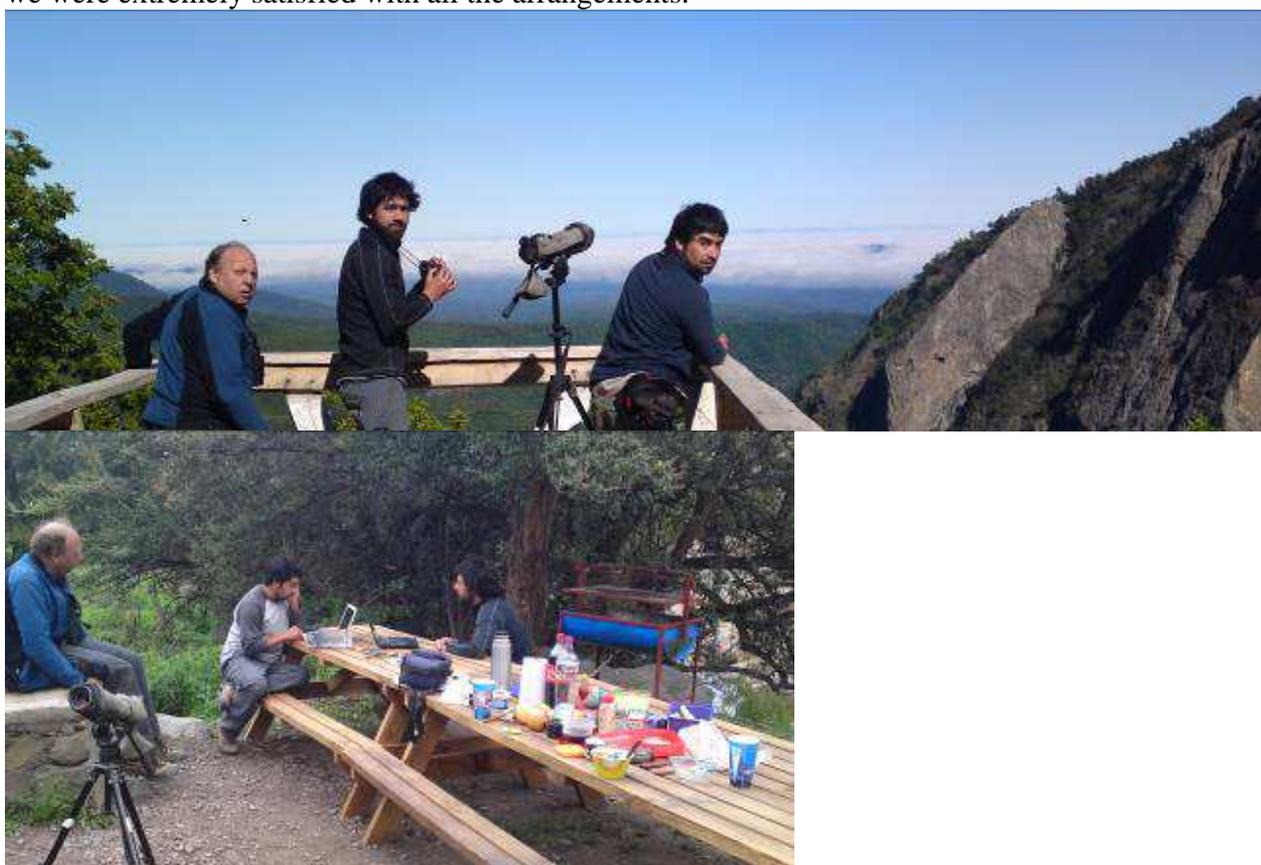
Weather

The weather was nothing short of wonderful. Most of the days were sunny and clear. In the lowlands the temperatures were very comfortable, whereas in the high Andes like Farellones and San Pedro de Atacama it was rather cold in the mornings. Sun protection at high altitudes is highly recommended, as well as on the pelagic.



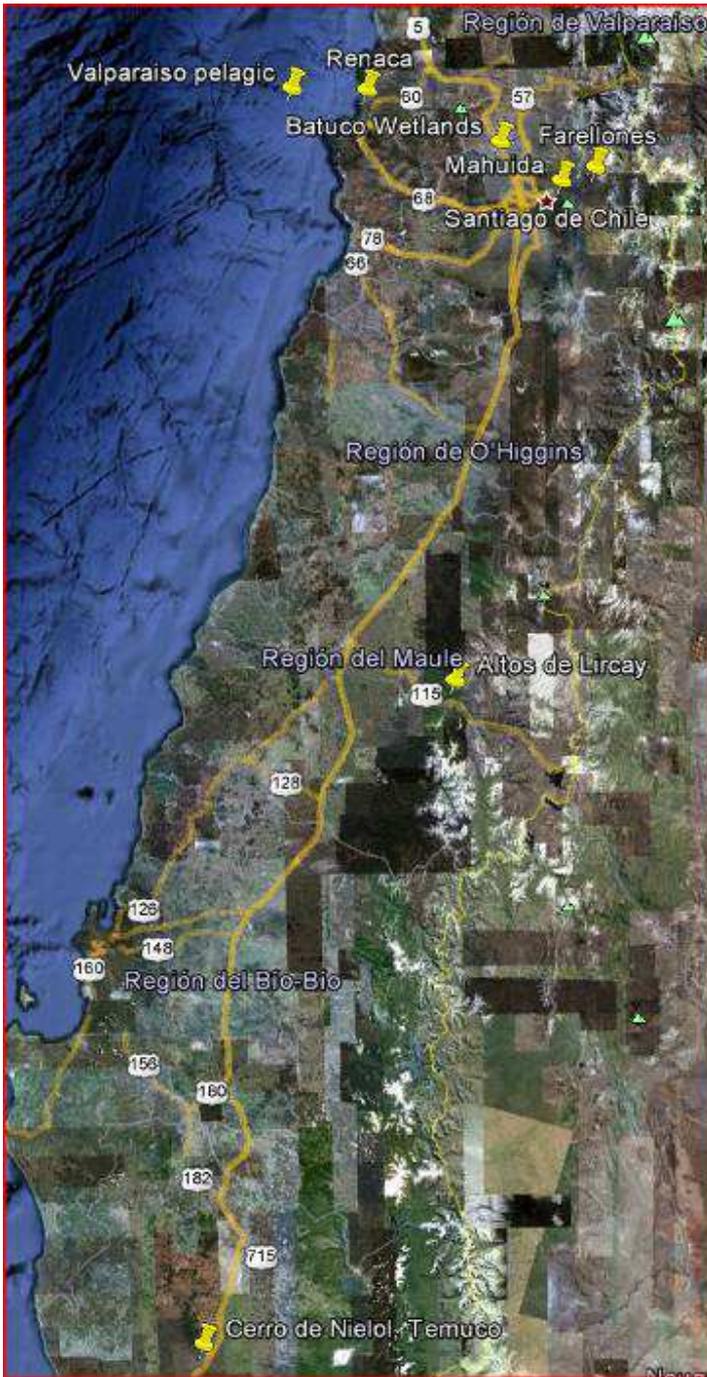
Logistics

The entire trip was excellently arranged by Fabrice Schmitt, a professional bird guide living in Santiago, www.Birding-In-Peru.com, <http://www.flickr.com/photos/fabrice-schmitt/>. As Fabrice was out for other commitments during our visit, he arranged for Fernando Diaz to take us around. Fernando had great knowledge about the key birds and together with the driver Rodrigo (also a birder), they were fantastic company and being very flexible in order for us to nail down all our target birds. In order to cut down on cost, we did the northern part of the trip on our own, but with detailed gen received from Fabrice. All in all, we were extremely satisfied with all the arrangements.

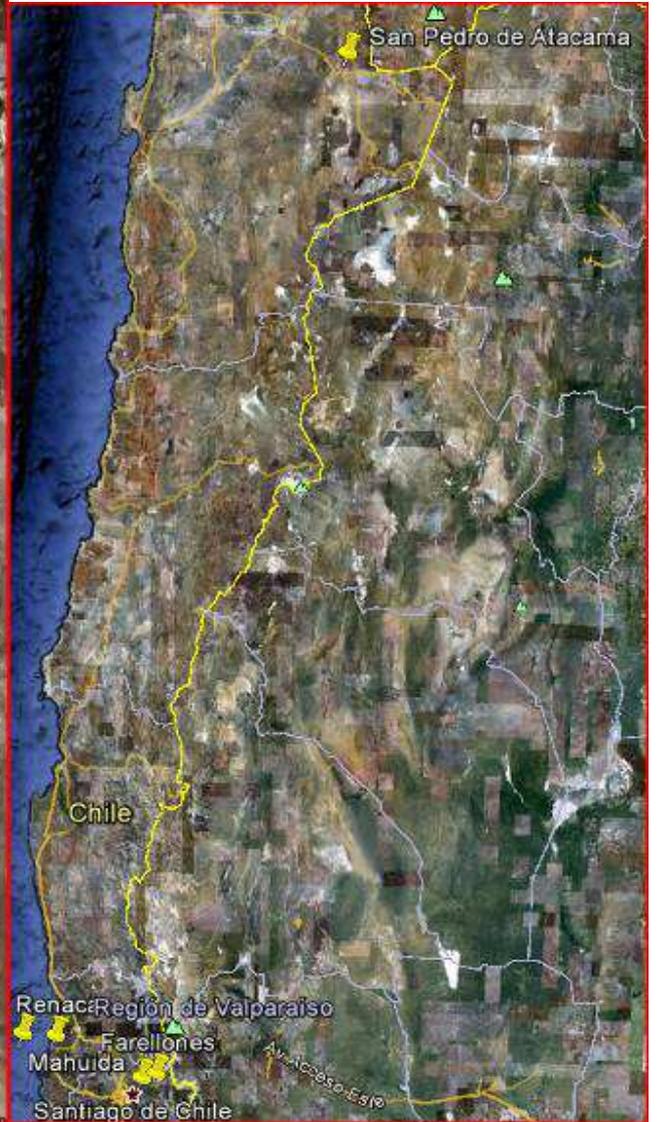


Site descriptions

Below follows a brief description of the sites we visited. For the birding in the immediate vicinity of Santiago it is highly recommended to read the excellent and detailed article by Fabrice Schmitt in *Neotropical Birding* 6 (2010). During this short trip we unfortunately had to ditch Chilean Woodstar in the extreme north, the new(?) Storm-Petrel at Puerto Montt (that we did not have full gen on when planning the trip), as well as the two “islands” Juan Fernandez and Rapa Nui. Well, several good reasons to go back to this wonderful country.



Chile to the south of Santiago



Chile to the north of Santiago

Mahuida

Parque Mahuida is located just 10 km east of the city centre of Santiago. It holds key species such as Chilean Tinamou, Chilean Mockingbird, Dusky-tailed Canastero, Moustached Turca, White-throated Tapaculo, Green-crowned Firecrown and Austral Pygmy-Owl. Most of the habitat we visited were rather dry scrubby hillsides and grassy areas.

Farellones

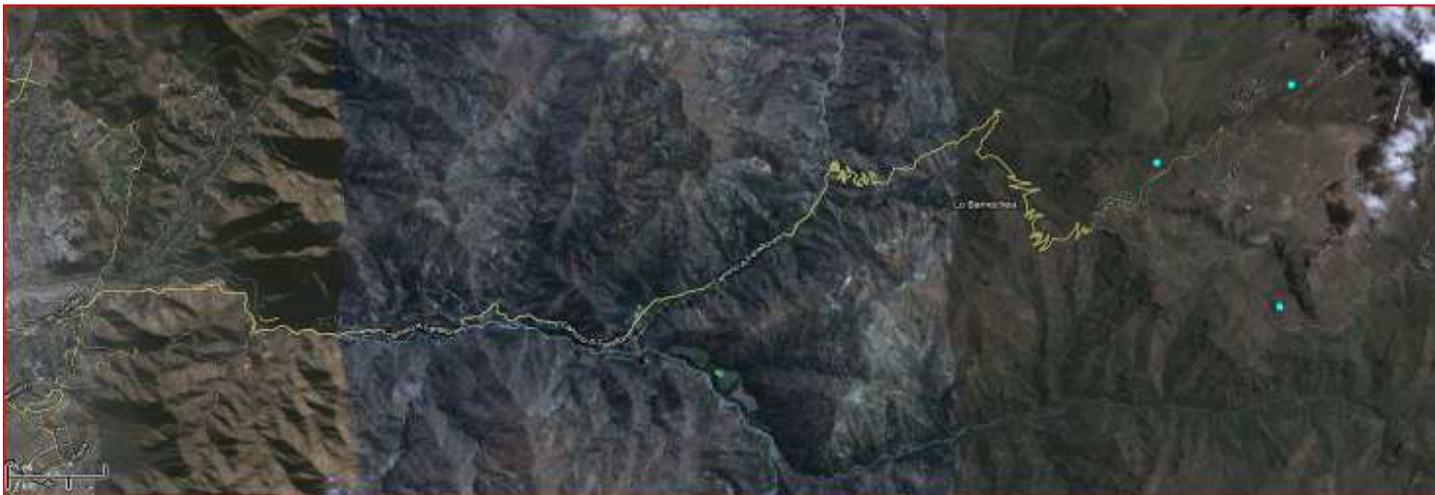
This is one of the real key birding sites near Santiago. A good, paved and winding road runs up the Andes and eventually stops at a ski resort at Los Nevados. Several key birds are found in this area such as Chilean Tinamou, White-sided Hillstar, Rufous-banded and Creamy-rumped (rarer) Miners, Crag Chilia, Moustached Turca, White-throated and Magellanic Tapaculos, Black-fronted Ground-Tyrant, Yellow-rumped Siskin, Greater Yellow-Finch, Chilean Flicker, et al. Besides, the high Andean scenery is absolutely fantastic.



La Parva at Farellones



Los Nevados at Farellones



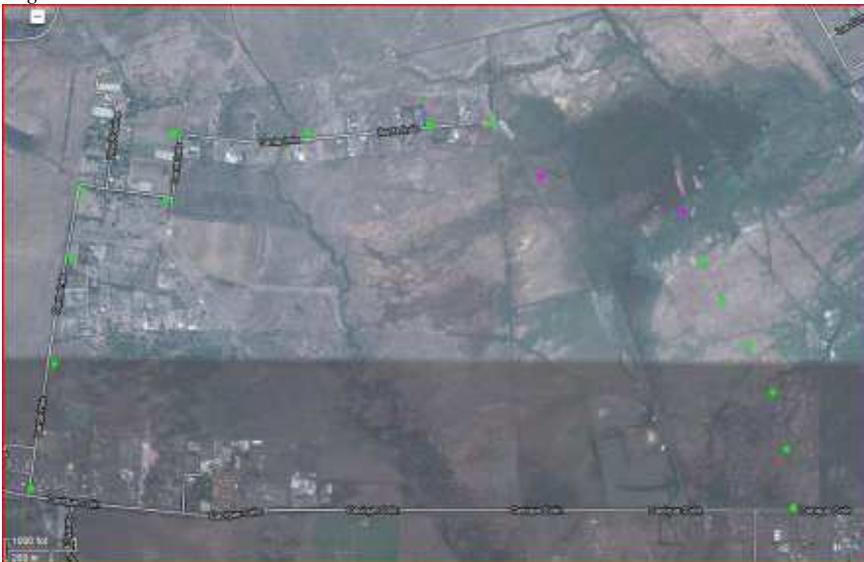
Blue dots marking the key sites we visited at Farellones

Batuco Wetlands

There are two larger marshes/lakes in this general area, of which we visited both. The area is located on a plain just northwest of Santiago and north of the airport. The key birds for us were Ticking Doradito, which we eventually saw nicely perched in the reed-beds, and Black-headed Duck of which we saw five in the second lake. The first marsh we visited held extensive reeds and wet grasslands (South American Painted Snipes), whereas the second place was more of a proper lake with lots of ducks.



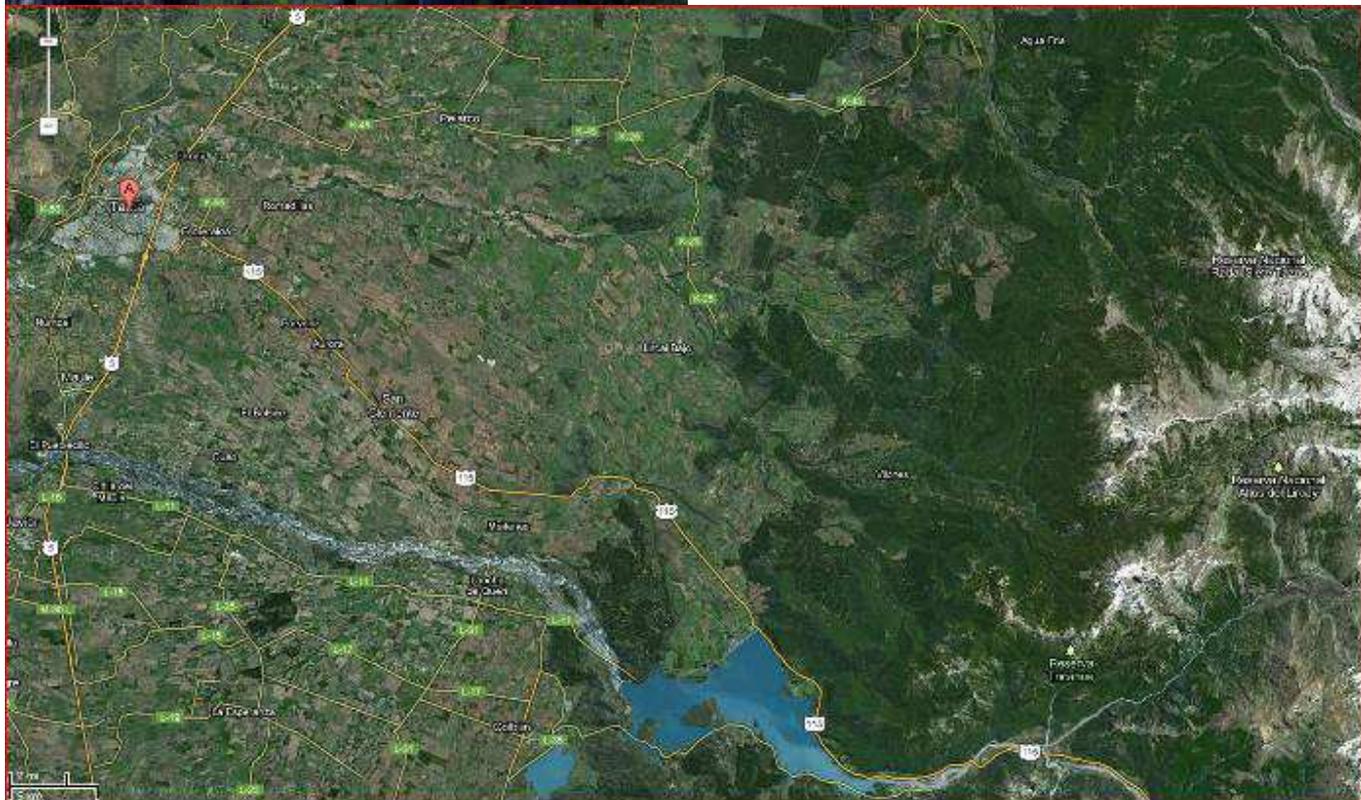
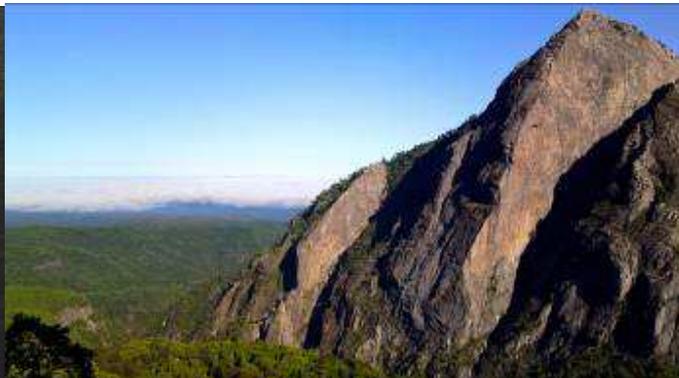
Laguna Batuca



Santa Ines (top map and lower red circle) and Laguna Batuca (right map and top red circle), two areas that I combine as Batuco Wetlands.

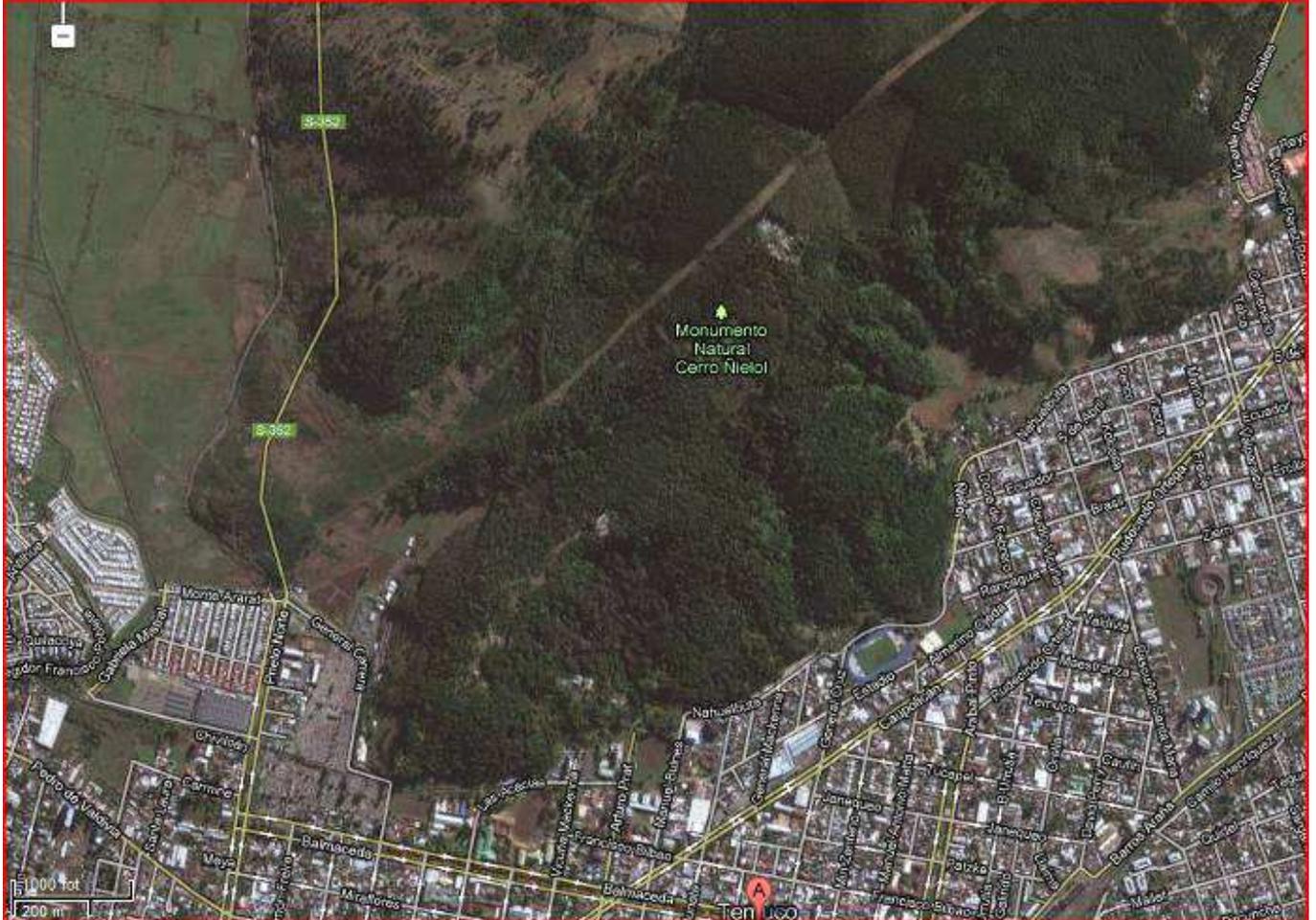
Altos de Lircay

Altos de Lircay is yet another extremely scenic area with a selection of Chilean “must-see birds”. The habitat consists of rather dense forest, where the tapaculos play hide and seek. Key birds are Chestnut-throated Huet-huet, Chucao Tapaculo, Green-backed Firecrown, Chilean Pigeon and Patagonian Tyrant (rare), Rufous-legged Owl and Austral Pygmy-owl, Austral Parakeet.



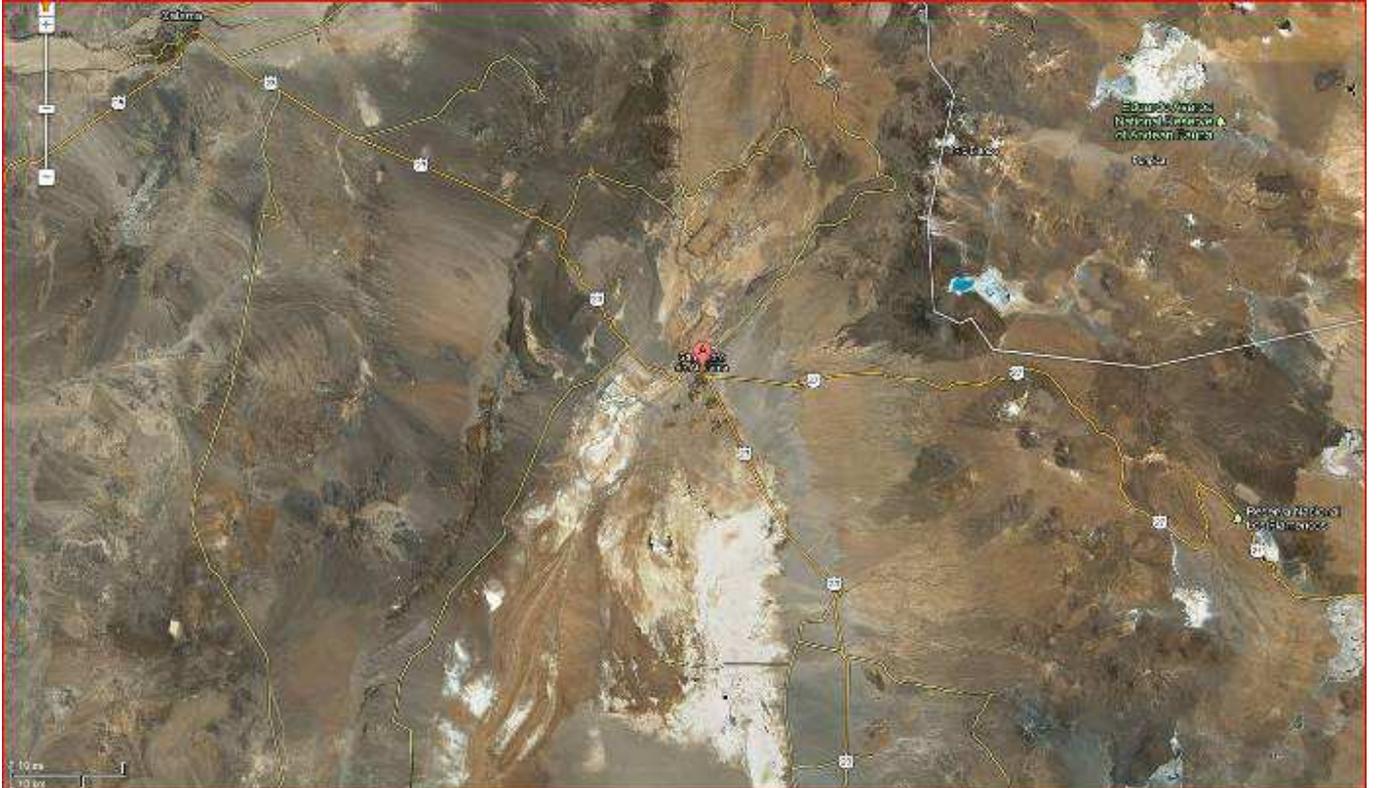
Cerro Nielol, Temuco

We had three reasons for driving all the way south to Tamuco, namely Slender-billed Parakeet, Rufous-tailed Hawk and Black-throated Huet-huet. The parakeets were easy enough as there were regular flocks flying around one of the view points. The Huet-huet was frequently heard, but took us quite some time to nail down. The Hawk was actually nesting and we were fortunate to immediately see one of the birds perched right near the nest. The entire area is rather small and mainly consists of a forested hill just above the town. It was actually possible to hear a Huet-huet just outside our hotel room.

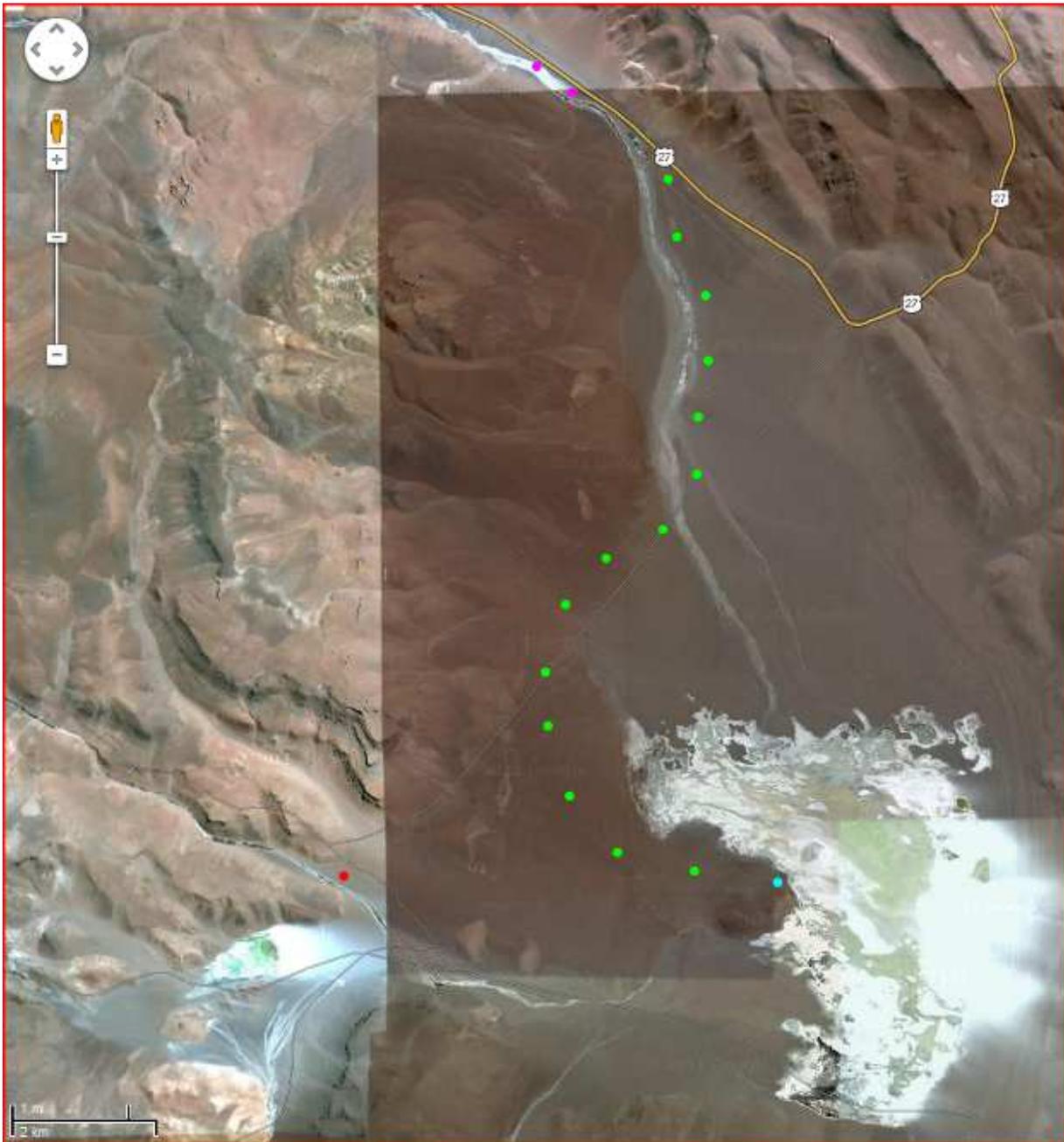


San Pedro de Atacama

In the very far north(-east) Chile, close to the border with Argentina and Bolivia is San Pedro de Atacama (SPdA). By air it's easiest to access via Calama that has direct flights from Santiago. Car rental at Calama airport is easy and the roads in the area are very good. However, when driving off-road it is highly recommended to have a 4WD. The entire area is made up of barren desert and it is generally very poor for birds, with the exception of some of the high altitudes streams, bogs and lakes. Around the small settlements there are some larger trees (Tamarugo Conebill being a specialty just south of SPdA) and in parts of the desert there are low bushes. Some areas are on the other hand actually so dry that we could not find any living organisms at all, e.g. between Calama and SPdA. The landscape is nothing but superlative, and this also pulls tourists to the area, which facilitates the logistics in terms of hotels and restaurants. From a birding perspective the area is well worth a visit as it holds several high Andean desert and saline lake specialties, e.g. Red-backed Sierra-Finch, Diademed Sandpiper-Plover, three species of Flamingo, Andean Avocet, Horned Coot, Puna Miner.



Map of Calama (upper left), San Pedro de Atacama (center) and Salar de Pujsa (lower right)



Map of Salar de Pujsa

Lime – Wheeltracks to get to the lake

Pale blue – Hill, good viewing point for flamingos, Puna Miner et al

Red – areas we searched for Diademed Sandpiper-Plover. We walked along the stream (upwards/west), but probably not far enough.

Pink – streams/ponds along the main road for ducks, flamingos. Red-backed Sierra-Finches occasionally seen further west along the main road towards SPdA

Valparaiso (pelagic and coastal cliffs at Reñaca)

The cold waters off Valparaiso are well-known for the numbers and diversity of pelagic birds. We had a boat arranged for ourselves plus one local birder to share the cost. The boat was excellent as it had a completely open back, which allowed easy maneuvering when photographing. We did not need to go far off-shore before albatrosses and petrels surrounded us and at the furthest point we could still barely see the mountains. These waters provide possibly the easiest place to see Masatierra (Defilippe's) Petrel and we saw six species of albatross. Other specialties are Westland Petrel, Pink-footed Shearwater, Chilean Skua, plus several "Peruvian" species like Peruvian Diving-Petrel, Pelican and Booby plus Inca Tern and Humboldt Penguin.

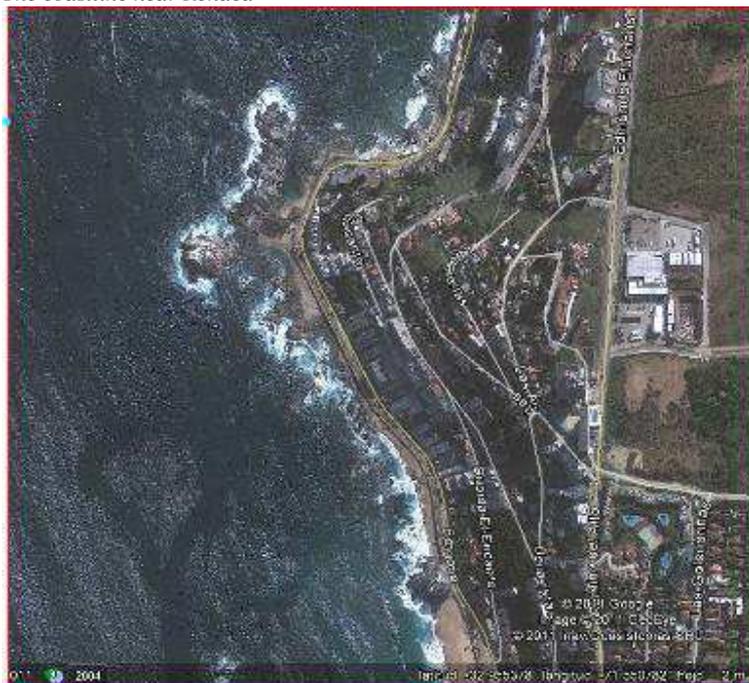
Just north of Valparaiso is the small town of Reñaca, which is a good site for Chilean Seaside Cinclodes, Humboldt Penguin and a small colony of Inca Terns.



Valparaiso harbor and the boat we used



The coastline near Reñaca



Map of Reñaca

Birds

Chilean Tinamou, *Nothoprocta predicarí*

A few heard and a pair flushed at Mahuida, three along the highway roadside south of Santiago, and a few seen and heard at Zerba Loca below Farellones.

Humboldt Penguin, *Spheniscus humboldti*

One adult in inshore waters at the Valparaiso pelagic and two immatures at Reñaca.

White-tufted Grebe, *Rollandia rolland*

A few at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands).

Great Grebe, *Podiceps major*

A few at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands).

Silvery Grebe, *Podiceps occipitales*

Three at a small pond around 80 km east of San Pedro de Atacama.

Antipodean (Wandering) Albatross, *Diomedea [exulans] antipodensis*

One subadult at the Valparaiso pelagic. It was identified through photos, as it was initially dismissed as a Southern Royal. The form normally considered to occur in Chilean waters is Antipodean.



Southern Royal Albatross, *Diomedea epomophora*

2-4 at the Valparaiso pelagic.



Northern Royal Albatross, *Diomedea sanfordi*

10-15 at the Valparaiso pelagic.



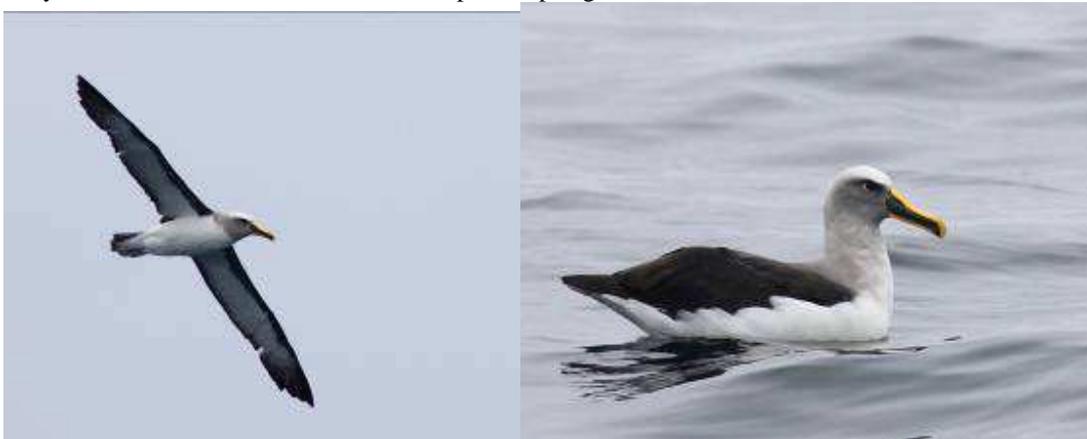
Black-browed Albatross, *Thalassarche melanophris*

The second most numerous albatross at the Valparaiso pelagic and many were in constant view.



Buller's Albatross, *Thalassarche bulleri*

Only one or two adults identified at the Valparaiso pelagic.



Salvin's Albatross, *Thalassarche cauta*

The most common albatross at the Valparaiso pelagic, and many were constantly in view.



Antarctic Giant Petrel, *Macronectes giganteus*
At least 20 at the Valparaiso pelagic.



Hall's Giant Petrel, *Macronectes halli*
Two or three at the Valparaiso pelagic.



Cape Petrel, *Daption capense*
5-8 at the Valparaiso pelagic.



Defilippe's (Masatierra) Petrel, *Pterodroma defilippiana*
Two of this wanted species were seen on the return journey at the Valparaiso pelagic. There was also another unidentified *Cockilaria* seen distantly, most likely this species.

White-chinned Petrel, *Procellaria aequinoctialis*
Approximately 30-50, at the Valparaiso pelagic.



Westland Petrel, *Procellaria westlandica*
Approximately 30-40, at the Valparaiso pelagic.



Pink-footed Shearwater, *Puffinus creatopus*
Approximately 50 at the Valparaiso pelagic.



Sooty Shearwater, *Puffinus griseus*
Many, many at the Valparaiso pelagic, sometimes forming swarms. Mostly in inshore waters.

Wilson's Storm-Petrel, *Oceanites oceanicus*
Approximately 50-80 at the Valparaiso pelagic. This is the form *chilensis* with pale under-wing bar and small pale patch on belly, similar to Elliot's Storm-Petrel. Taxonomic status remains unclear.



Peruvian Diving-Petrel, *Pelecanoides garnotii*
A few in inshore waters at the Valparaiso pelagic.

Peruvian Pelican, *Pelecanus thagus*
Many along the coast around Valparaíso and many also quite far out at the Valparaíso pelagic.



Peruvian Booby, *Sula variegata*
Several at the Valparaíso pelagic.

Neotropic Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax brasilianus*

One at Colbun Dam near Lircay, many along the coast at Valparaiso.



Guanay Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax bougainvillii*

Smaller numbers in inshore waters at the Valparaiso pelagic.

Cocoi Heron, *Ardea cocoi*

A few at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands).

Great Egret, *Ardea alba*

A few at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands).

Snowy Egret, *Egretta thula*

A few at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands).

Western Cattle Egret, *Bubulcus ibis*

Many at Batuco Wetlands and between Santiago and Valparaiso.

Black-crowned Night-Heron, *Nycticorax nycticorax*

One at Reñaca .

Black-faced Ibis, *Theristicus melanopis*

Three at Farellones, a few at Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco.



Chilean Flamingo, *Phoenicopterus chilensis*

Five at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands), several at the Salinas east of San Pedro de Atacama although it was the least numerous of the three species.



Andean Flamingo, *Phoenicopterus andinus*
At least 50 in the salinas east of San Pedro de Atacama.



Puna (James's) Flamingo, *Phoenicopterus jamesi*
In Salar de Pujsa, this was very numerous and it was the only site we saw this species.



- Coscoroba Swan, *Coscoroba coscoroba*
One pair at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands).
- Andean Goose, *Chloephaga melanoptera*
A few in the salinas east of San Pedro de Atacama incl Salar de Pujsa..
- Chiloe Wigeon, *Anas sibilatrix*
Four at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands), one at Colbun Dam near Lircay.
- Speckled Teal, *Anas flavirostris*
One at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands).
- Crested Duck, *Anas specularioides*
Many at the Salinas east of San Pedro de Atacama.



- Yellow-billed Pintail, *Anas georgica*
Many at Batuco Wetlands, many at Colbun Dam near Lircay.
- White-cheeked Pintail, *Anas bahamensis*
One at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands).

Cinnamon Teal, *Anas cyanoptera*

Several at Batuco Wetlands.

Red Shoveler, *Anas platalea*

Several at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands).

Black-headed Duck, *Heteronetta atricapilla*

Five at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands).

Lake Duck, *Oxyura vittata*

Two at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands).

Black Vulture, *Coragyps atratus*

A few south of Santiago and one at Reñaca .

Turkey Vulture, *Cathartes aura*

Two at Reñaca .

Andean Condor, *Vultur gryphus*

Three at Farellones first visit and a handful of sighting the second visit.



Cinereous Harrier, *Circus cinereus*

One female at Santa Ines (Batuco Wetlands) and one male at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands).

Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle, *Geranoaetus melanoleucus*

Three together at Zerba Loca below Farellones.



Red-backed Hawk, *Buteo polyosoma*

A few at Mahuida and Farellones, a few at Altos de Lircay, one at Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco.



Rufous-tailed Hawk, *Buteo ventralis*

One male near a nest at Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco. This is only the sixth nest ever found of this rare and restricted range species.



Rufous-tailed Hawk in the bare tree bottom left...

Mountain Caracara, *Phalco boenus megalopterus*

A few at Farellones on both visits.

Chimango Caracara, *Milvago chimango*

Two at Mahuida, many at Batuco Wetlands, many along the road south to Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco and to Valparaiso. South of Concepcion the birds are described as darker.

American Kestrel, *Falco sparverius*

One at Batuco Wetlands, a few at Farellones the second visit.

Aplomado Falcon, *Falco femoralis*

A pair at Farellones.

California Quail, *Callipepla californica*

Many at Mahuida, one pair at Altos de Lircay, a few around Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco, many at lower altitudes at Farellones.



Plumbeous Rail, *Pardirallus sanguinolentus*

A few heard at Santa Ines (Batuco Wetlands).

White-winged Coot, *Fulica leucoptera*

Several at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands).

Andean (Slate-colored) Coot, *Áulica ardesiaca*

Two at a small pond ca 80 km east of San Pedro de Atacama.

Red-gartered Coot, *Fulica armillata*

Many at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands).

Red-fronted Coot, *Fulica rufifrons*

A few at Batuco Wetlands.

Horned Coot, *Fulica cornuta*

About 20 in a small pond ca 80 km east of San Pedro de Atacama. Also one in a marsh ca 75 km east of San Pedro de Atacama.



American Painted-snipe, *Rostratula semicollaris*

Four at Santa Ines (Batuco Wetlands).

American Oystercatcher, *Haematopus palliatus*

Two at Reñaca.

Blackish Oystercatcher, *Haematopus ater*

Two at Reñaca.



White-backed Stilt, *Himantopus melanurus*

Many at Batuco Wetlands.

Andean Avocet, *Recurvirostra andina*

One pair in a marsh ca 75 km east of San Pedro de Atacama.



Southern Lapwing, *Vanellus chilensis*

One at Farellones, many at Batuco Wetlands, many in most agricultural areas.

Puna Plover, *Charadrius alticola*

Several at the salinas east of San Pedro de Atacama, incl Salar de Pujsa.

South American Snipe, *Gallinago paraguaiiae*

Five at Batuco Wetlands.

Greater Yellowlegs, *Tringa melanoleuca*

One at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands).

Lesser Yellowlegs, *Tringa flavipes*

Many at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands).

Ruddy Turnstone, *Arenaria interpres*
Ten at Reñaca.



Baird's Sandpiper, *Calidris bairdii*
30 at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands), many at the Salinas east of San Pedro de Atacama, incl Salar de Pujsa.
Interesting to see that they find tundra like bogs for their wintering grounds.



Red Phalarope, *Phalaropus fulicarius*
Several at the Valparaíso pelagic.

Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe, *Attagis gayi*
Many around the marshes and salinas east of San Pedro de Atacama, incl Salar de Pujsa.



Gray-breasted Seedsnipe, *Thinocorus orbignyianus*
A pair at Valle Nevado, Farellones.

Least Seedsnipe, *Thinocorus rumicivorus*
Many at Salar de Pujsa east of San Pedro de Atacama, especially along the DSP stream.



Chilean Skua, *Stercorarius chilensis*

One at the Valparaiso pelagic.

Gray Gull, *Larus modestus*

A few in inshore waters at the Valparaiso pelagic and a few at Reñaca.

Kelp Gull, *Larus dominicanus*

Two immatures at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands), two at Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco, many along the coast at Valparaiso and at the Valparaiso pelagic.



Brown-hooded Gull, *Larus maculipennis*

Many at Batuco Wetlands.

Andean Gull, *Larus serranus*

A few in the marshes and Salinas east of San Pedro de Atacama, incl Salar de Pujsa.



Franklin's Gull, *Larus pipixcan*

Many at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands) and many along the coast at Valparaiso and at the Valparaiso pelagic.



Sabine's Gull, *Xema sabini*

One at the Valparaíso pelagic.

Elegant Tern, *Sterna elegans*

A few at the Valparaiso pelagic.

South American Tern, *Sterna hirundinacea*

Many in inshore waters at the Valparaiso pelagic.

Inca Tern, *Larosterna inca*

A few in inshore waters at the Valparaíso pelagic and many at Reñaca.



Chilean Pigeon, *Patagioenas araucana*

Many at Altos de Lircay, mostly below the national park, several at Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco.



Eared Dove, *Zenaida auriculata*

Many at Mahuida, many along the road going south from Santiago, a few at Calama.

Pacific Dove, *Zenaida meloda*

One in San Pedro de Atacama.

Picui Ground-Dove, *Columbina picui*

A few at Batuco Wetlands.

Black-winged Ground-Dove, *Metriopelia melanoptera*

Two at Zerba Loca below Farellones.



Burrowing Parrot, *Cyanoliseus patagonus*

20-25 at Colbun Dam near Lircay.

Austral Parakeet, *Enicognathus ferrugineus*

A few at Altos de Lircay.

Slender-billed Parakeet, *Enicognathus leptorhynchus*

Many at Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco, where singles and small flocks of up to 30 were regularly seen, especially during evening and morning. Lacks the reddish belly-patch of Austral and has an obviously long upper mandible, visible even in flight.



Barn Owl, *Tyto alba*

One heard twice on the return trip in the evening from Farellones and one in the evening west of Santiago when driving to Valparaiso.

Magellanic Horned Owl, *Bubo magellanicus*

One at a day roost at Farellones.



Rufous-legged Owl, *Strix rufipes*

One responded to random playback and was seen at Altos de Lircay.

Austral Pygmy-Owl, *Glaucidium nahum*

One at Mahuida, two heard at Altos de Lircay.

Burrowing Owl, *Athene cunicularia*

Four at Santa Ines (Batuco Wetlands).



Short-eared Owl, *Asio flammeus*
One at Santa Ines (Batuco Wetlands).



Band-winged Nightjar, *Caprimulgus longirostris*
One heard post dusk below Farellones, one heard at Altos de Lircay.

White-sided Hillstar, *Oreotrochilus leucopleurus*
One male showed off nicely at Farellones on both visits and also another male at Zerba Loca below Farellones.



Giant Hummingbird, *Patagona gigas*
One at Zerba Loca below Farellones and one between Valparaiso and Santiago.

Green-backed Firecrown, *Sephanoides sephanioides*
One at Mahuida, three at Altos de Lircay.

Striped Woodpecker, *Picoides lignarius*
Two at Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco.

Chilean Flicker, *Colaptes pitius*
One heard at Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco and one at Zerba Loca below Farellones.



Common Miner, *Geositta cunicularia*
One ca 50 km east of San Pedro de Atacama.

Puna Miner, *Geositta punensis*

A few around Salar de Pujsa, east of San Pedro de Atacama.



Rufous-banded Miner, *Geositta rufipennis*
Many at Farellones.



Creamy-rumped Miner, *Geositta isabellina*

Eventually we found a nest-building pair several hundred meters above the ski resort at Valle Nevado at Farellones during our second attempt.



Scale-throated Earthcreeper, *Upucerthia dumetaria*
Several at Farellones.



Crag Chilia, *Chilia melanura*
One at Bend 21 at Farellones.



Chilean Seaside Cinclodes, *Cinclodes nigrofumosus*
Two photogenic pairs at Reñaca.



Gray-flanked Cinclodes, *Cinclodes oustaleti*
Two at Farellones on both visits.



Buff-winged Cinclodes, *Cinclodes fuscus*
Many at Farellones.



Des Murs' Wiretail, *Sylviorthorhynchus desmursii*

One at Colbun Dam near Lircay and several at Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco. The bird looks really tiny, as the few thin tail-feathers are sometimes very difficult to see when it moves through the vegetation.

Thorn-tailed Rayadito, *Aphrastura spinicauda*

Several at Altos de Lircay, a few at Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco.



Plain-mantled Tit-Spinetail, *Leptasthenura aegithaloides*

A few at Mahuida, one at Altos de Lircay, one at Zerba Loca below Farellones.

Wren-like Rushbird, *Phleocryptes melanops*

A few heard at Santa Ines (Batuco Wetlands).

Lesser Canastero, *Asthenes pyrrholeuca*

One at Farellones on each visit.



Dusky-tailed Canastero, *Asthenes humicola*

Several at Mahuida.



Cordilleran Canastero, *Asthenes modesta*

A few at Farellones and one ca 30 km east of San Pedro de Atacama.

White-throated Treerunner, *Pygarrhichas albogularis*

Several at Altos de Lircay.

Black-throated Huet-huet, *Pterotochos tarnii*

Many heard throughout the day at Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco. Two were even heard calling just outside our hotel. It took us however 6 hours to finally see one, as they did not respond to playback and were in general apparently very shy.

Chestnut-throated Huet-huet, *Pterotochos castaneus*

One seen three times and a few heard at Altos de Lircay.

Moustached Turca, *Pterotochos megapodius*

A few at Mahuida and several at Farellones on both visits.



White-throated Tapaculo, *Scelorchilus albicollis*

One heard at Mahuida and one seen and photographed at Bend 21 at Farellones.



Chucaco Tapaculo, *Scelorchilus rubecula*

One seen and a few heard at Altos de Lircay, several heard at Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco.



Ochre-flanked Tapaculo, *Eugralla paradoxa*

Three seen and another heard at Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco. The yellow legs and strange bill and forehead shape, made it a very distinctive birds.

Magellanic Tapaculo, *Scytalopus magellanicus*

One showing off in a non-*Scytalopus* fashion at Farellones, one heard at Altos de Lircay, four heard at Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco and one at Farellones during the second visit.

Dusky Tapaculo, *Scytalopus fuscus*

One heard at Colbun Dam near Lircay and one seen well at Zerba Loca below Farellones.



Rufous-tailed Plantcutter, *Phytotoma rara*

Two at Farellones on the second visit.

White-crested Elaenia, *Elaenia albiceps*

A few at Mahuida, many at Altos de Lircay, a few at Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco, several at Farellones.



Tufted Tit-Tyrant, *Anairetes parulus*

Several at Mahuida, one at Altos de Lircay.



Many-colored Rush-Tyrant, *Tachuris rubrigastra*

Two at Santa Ines (Batuco Wetlands).

Ticking Doradito, *Pseudocolopteryx citreola*

One seen well as it responded to playback at Santa Ines (Batuco Wetlands).

Patagonian Tyrant, *Colorhamphus parvirostris*

One pair at a stake-out at Altos de Lircay.



Fire-eyed Diucon, *Xolmis pyrope*

One at Farellones, a few at Altos de Lircay.

Great Shrike-Tyrant, *Agriornis livida*

One pair at Zerba Loca below Farellones.



Spot-billed Ground-Tyrant, *Muscisaxicola maculirostris*

One ca 10 km north of San Pedro de Atacama.

Rufous-naped Ground-Tyrant, *Muscisaxicola rufivertex*

One near Salar de Pujsa, east of San Pedro de Atacama.

White-browed Ground-Tyrant, *Muscisaxicola albilora*

Many at Farellones.

Ochre-naped Ground-Tyrant, *Muscisaxicola flavinucha*

Many along the road and around the marshes and salinas east of San Pedro de Atacama.

Black-fronted Ground-Tyrant, *Muscisaxicola frontalis*

Several at Farellones.



Andean Negrilo, *Lessonia oreas*

A few in the marshes east of San Pedro de Atacama.

Chilean Swallow, *Tachycineta meyeri*

Many at Mahuida, many at Altos de Lircay, many at Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco.

Blue-and-white Swallow, *Notiochelidon cyanoleuca*

Several at Farellones, many at Zerba Loca below Farellones and a few at Reñaca .

Barn Swallow, *Hirundo rustica*

A few at San Pedro de Atacama.

Correndera Pipit, *Anthus correndera*

Many at Batuco Wetlands.

Hellmayr's Pipit, *Anthus hellmayri*

One seen very well in a field east of Tamuco. This is a recently found site for the taxon *dabbenei*.

House Wren, *Troglodytes aedon*

One at Mahuida , one at Farellones, several at Altos de Lircay.

Chilean Mockingbird, *Mimus thenca*

Many at Mahuida and a few at Farellones, several near Altos de Lircay, several along the road south through Chile.



Chiguanco Thrush, *Turdus chiguanco*
Two in gardens in San Pedro de Atacama.



Austral Thrush, *Turdus falcklandii*
Several in Santiago, several at Farellones, many at Altos de Lircay, many at Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco, many at Zerba Loca below Farellones.



House Sparrow, *Passer domesticus*
Many in towns and villages both in central and northeast.

Black-chinned Siskin, *Carduelis barbata*
Many at Farellones, many at Altos de Lircay, a few at Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco and several east of Tamuco.



Black Siskin, *Carduelis atrata*
A few along the road ca 30 km east of San Pedro de Atacama.

Yellow-rumped Siskin, *Carduelis uropygialis*
Eight at Farellones was a nice find after screening through multitude of Black-chinneds.



Tamarugo Conebill, *Conirostrum tamarugense*

Three together ca 2 km south of San Pedro de Atacama in the high trees with small yellow flowers.

Gray-hooded Sierra-Finch, *Phrygilus gayi*

Many at Farellones, a few at Zerba Loca below Farellones.



Patagonian Sierra-Finch, *Phrygilus patagonicus*

A few heard at Altos de Lircay.

Mourning Sierra-Finch, *Phrygilus fruticeti*

A few at Mahuida, a few at Farellones, one at San Pedro de Atacama.

Plumbeous Sierra-Finch, *Phrygilus unicolor*

Many near Salar de Pujsa, east of San Pedro de Atacama.

Red-backed Sierra-Finch, *Phrygilus dorsalis*

Two separate birds seen along the roadside east of San Pedro de Atacama. One was at ca 50 km and the other at ca 60 km east of San Pedro de Atacama.



Band-tailed Sierra-Finch, *Phrygilus alaudinus*

One at Farellones, one at Colbun Dam near Lircay.

Common Diuca-Finch, *Diuca diuca*

Many at Mahuida, a few at Farellones, a few at Colbun Dam near Lircay, several at Zerba Loca below Farellones.



Grassland Yellow-Finch, *Sicalis luteola*

One at Mahuida, many at Batuco Wetlands, one at Colbun Dam near Lircay, many at the fields east of Tamuco.

Bright-rumped Yellow-Finch, *Sicalis uropygialis*

Many along the road and around marshes and salinas east of San Pedro de Atacama.

Greater Yellow-Finch, *Sicalis auriventris*

Many at Farellones (both at La Parva and at Valle Nevado).



Rufous-collared Sparrow, *Zonotrichia capensis*

Many at Mahuida, many at Farellones, many at Batuco Wetlands, many in villages in the northeast.

Yellow-winged Blackbird, *Agelasticus thilius*

Many at Batuco Wetlands.

Long-tailed Meadowlark, *Sturnella loyca*

Several at Mahuida, several at Batuco Wetlands, a few along the road going south through Chile, one at Zerba Loca below Farellones.



Shiny Cowbird, *Molothrus bonariensis*

A few near Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco and a few at San Pedro de Atacama.

Austral Blackbird, *Curaeus curaeus*

Several at Mahuida, a few at Cerro Ñielol outside Tamuco, several at Zerba Loca below Farellones.

Mammals

Culpeo (Fox), *Pseudalopex culpaeus*

One below Farellones. One unidentified fox photographed ca 30 km east of San Pedro de Atacama. Black tail tip.

Hare, *Lepus* sp

Two at Farellones. *Lepus europaeus*?

European Rabbit, *Orytolagus cuniculus*

Several at Mahuida

Common Degu ("Rat"), *Octodon degus*

One at Mahuida.

Coypu (Nutria), *Myocastor coypus*

A few at Laguna Batuco (Batuco Wetlands).

Coruro (Dusky Rat), *Spalacopus cyanus*

One at Valle Nevado, Farellones.

Vicuña, *Vicugna vicugna*

Many at the altiplano east of San Pedro de Atacama.

Southern Sea-Lion, *Otaria flavescens*

A few at the Valparaiso pelagic and many at Reñaca.

