

Chile

From 01/12/2013 till 22/12/2013

Mammals trip report.

Michel Watelet.



Puma

Participants: André Cornet and Michel Watelet (michel.watelet@scarlet.be).

Itinerary:

30-11: Flight Brussels to Santiago. Take off at 19h10.

01-12: Landing at Santiago at 9h45 am, Arturo Merino Benitez Airport. Rent a car. We live the airport around 1pm, after problems with customs and queue for passport!

Drive to San Antonio. Observations at Maipo estuary (3 to 6 pm) and after at Laguna El Peral (close). Night at Quintero (into the car).

02-12: Boat trip in the morning, meeting at 6h45 with Rodrigo (birdwatchingchile@gmail.com), start at 7h10 until 12h. After, we drove to Campana National Park, Sector Palmas de Ocoa (North).

Birding Campana National Park late afternoon (3 to 8:30 pm): Dusky-tailed Canastero, Moustached Turca, White-throated Tapaculo,...

Night in the park (into the car).

03-12: Birding Campana National Park early morning until 9 am.

After, « Laguna Estero Lampa » for South American Painted-Snipe.

Drive to Arturo Merino Benitez Airport and flight to Arica. 17h45 – 21h30 (with a stop at Iquique). Rent a car and night at Arica harbor (into the car).

04-12: Boat trip in the morning. Meeting at 6 am with Raul Herrera (tel: 096825005 chinchorroexpediciones@gmail.com), start at 6:30 am until 1 pm.

After lunch, drive to Putre (3 to 5 pm). Birding late afternoon East of Putre.

Night at Putre in the Terrace Lodge (nice place, info@terracelodge.com, <http://www.terracelodge.com>).

05-12: Breakfast at 8 am. Birding Lauca National Park (start at 8:45 am and come back to Putre at 5 pm): Lago Chungara, Parinacota, Flamingos site ...

Installation at “La Chakana lodge” (basic). Birding in the “wet gorge”, close to the lodge (5:30 to 7:50 pm).

06-12: After birding around the lodge, breakfast and we went to Lauca National Park at 8:30 am. We began by “Las Cuevas”, the site for Diademed Sandpiper-Plover. After we took a track south of the main road and we drove maybe 60 km, we found again the main road close to the Lago Chungara.

Installation in a “lodge” at Parinacota. Night drive after dinner (nothing except Viscacha!).

07-12: Road Parinacota (8:30 am) to Arica. Visit the Hummingbird sanctuary in the Azapa Valley.

Birding the coast north of Arica. Hotel at Arica.

08-12: Get up at six and after breakfast, birding south of Arica. Chaca Valley for Chilean Woodstar, Copda and come back to Arica.

Flight to Santiago at 11:50 pm.

09-12: Landing at Santiago 02:25 am.

Flight to Punta Arena 05:55 – 09:20 am. Rent a car (4X4).

Drive to the place for Hooded Grebe (bird of the trip!) and after for Magellanic Plover and drive to Torres del Paine National Park.

I found my first Puma after 45 minutes in the park, a big male! After meeting with José Vargas, we saw 2 young Pumas eating a Guanaco. José is the man for Puma at Torres del Paine. He doesn't speak English (wayajapuma@hotmail.es).

Night at Refugio Torre Norte.

10-12: Torres del Paine National Park, day with José Vargas. Lago Sarmiento, Lago Pehoé, Lago Grey,... We saw 3 Pumas with José, a mother with 2 cubs.

Night at Refugio Torre Norte.

11-12: Torres del Paine National Park. Get up at 7:30 am!

We went to Hotel Las Torres and we walked to Campamento Torres in the morning. Afternoon, we drove to Cascada Paine, Porteria Lago Sarmiento (Austral Rail), Laguna Los Cisnes. I found the 2 cubs we saw the 9-12, but with the mother. One "curious" big cub came at 5 meters of us!

After dinner at 8:45 pm, we did a night drive and saw one big Puma.

Night at Refugio Torre Norte.

12-12: We got up at 5:30 am and lived Torres del Paine National Park. We went to Puerto Natales and after to Marro Chico where we took the track 405. We took the ferry to terra del fuego. We drove to Porvenir where we found a nice place to stay, hotel Espana (tel: 2580160, info@hotelespana.cl).

13-12: We started our day by booking our ferry to Punta Arena. We went to the King Penguin colony (S53° 27.380 W69° 18.141) and we came back at 2 pm at Porvenir to take the Ferry at 4 pm. We arrived at Punta Arena around 6:30 pm. We took the road south of Punta Arena along the coast. At the end it was a very bad track, we saw a big Puma at the front of the car! When it was impossible to continue, we come back to Punta Arena where we find a place to stay (hotel Ayelén 061-2242413, basic).

14-12: We took the road north of the airport direction west. We went to the RF Magallanes, where we walked during 1:30 hour. After we visited the Pinguineria Seno Otway. We drove to Kimiri Aike and we came back to Punta Arena where we stayed in the same hotel.

15-12: Early in the morning we went to RF Laguna Parillar. At 7:45 just before entering in the reserve, we saw a big Puma at the front of the car crossing the track! We walked 1:30 hour in the reserve.

After we went in the Reserva Nacional Magallanes, (west of Punta Arena) where we walked 1 hour and drove in the park. We went to the Airport where we arrived at 4:30 pm.

Flight to Puerto Montt, 19:10 – 21:20. Rent a car. Drive to Pargua, the place to take the ferry to Chiloé Island. Night in the car.

16-12: Ferry to Chiloé Island. Birding in Estacion Biologica Senda Darwin, Caulin Bay, Ancud. After that, we went to Chepu. We met Amory and Fernando, the owners of the Chepu Adventures Lodge. It was very friendly and the place is fantastic Lodge (www.chepuadventures.com). Birding around the lodge and search for River Otter. Night at Chepu Adventures.

17-12: Get up at 5:30 am and at 6 am we went to search River Otter by Kayak until 9h30 am. At 10 am we took a little boat to try to find the Otter until 1 pm. No Otter!!! I was a little bit disappointed.

After a breakfast-lunch, we went to Punihuil by a very bad road. I found quickly one Marine Otter. We took a little boat to go to see the Penguins. From the beach, I saw the blow of some whales, we asked to go to try to see whales with a boat but the price was very expensive. The people weren't very friendly and we decided to stay in Chepu Adventure the next day to try again the Southern River Otter. I called Amory and Fernando to have the boat at 6 am, it was ok.

18-12: Get up at 5 am and go to Chepu by Ancud (better road). We arrived around 6:30 am and we went by boat trying the Otter. It was foggy and we didn't see anything except Coypu and some birds, on the return I found a Southern River Otter! We saw it close and we took a lot of pictures.

After a good "Breakfast-Lunch" (thanks Amory) we went to PN Puyehue. Birding on the El Pionero trail. After we took the track to Antillanca by car and came back. Night in the car.

19-12: Birding Puyehue National Park, El Pionero trail, Anticura and road to the Argentine border. After we came back to the Lago Puyehue where we stayed (La Valentina cabanas).

20-12: Get up at 8:30 am! After breakfast, we went to Puerto Montt airport by the Volcan Osorno.

Flight to Santiago afternoon 15:15 to 17:05 pm. Rent a car and road to Talca and Vilches (enter of the RN Altos de Lircay), where we slept in the car.

21-12: Reserve National Altos De Lircay in the morning (Magellanic Woodpecker, Chestnut-throated Huet-huet, ...). After we went to Colbun Lake for Burrowing Parrot. We drove to Santiago and San José de Maipo, where we found a place to stay (cabanas). After that, we went to Embalse El Yeso, it was very windy and birding was difficult.

22-12: Get up early in the morning. We went to the PN La Campana in first, sector Granizo. We walked a little bit but it wasn't very nice. We decided to go to Laguna El Peral (it was closed when we visited it the 1-12). After we went to the Arturo Merino Benitez Airport late afternoon.

23-12: Take off at 00:10 and



Southern River Otter

