

Sandwich Bird Tours



ANTARCTIC CRUISE

14th February – 4th March 2013

By

Don Taylor

Participants:

Steve Blasket, Bernard Boothroyd, Michael Brimson, Robert Carr, Graham Crick, Jim Law, Pauline McKenzie-Lloyd, Sue Morton, Brian Summerfield, Don Taylor and John van der Dol

Photos by John van der Dol and Brian Summerfield

Thursday 14th

I joined John van der Dol's group at Heathrow around 3.30pm and Robert Carr, with whom I'm sharing a cabin, arrived shortly afterwards. We flew to Madrid and after at least two hours boarded the flight to Buenos Aires at 12.45pm – local time – and we took off about 45 minutes behind schedule for the eleven-hour flight.

Friday 15th – Buenos Aires

We landed at 9.30am, local time and as we taxied towards the terminal Robert and I could see a **Southern Crested Caracara** in flight. The queues for passport control and security seemed endless, but we did have an interesting chat with a fisherman from Colorado, who keeps bees for a living. There was another wait while other folk going on the cruise were gathered together. We had to leave our suitcases and backpacks in a secure hotel room, as we couldn't get into our rooms until 4pm. Also, at 32°C it was too hot to carry more than our binoculars for an afternoon's birding on the *Reserva Ecologica Costanera Sur*. We set out around 2pm, but walked the wrong way along Belgrano Avenue, eventually taking three taxi's back to the Reserve. It was found to be quite a struggle to identify the locally common species, though we slowly came to sound conclusions for most of what we were seeing. A **Mottle-cheeked Tyrannulet** was identified. Two raptors seen were **Southern Crested Caracara** and **Bay-winged Hawk**. **Picazuro Pigeons** proved to be quite common, as did **Eared Doves** and we saw one **Guira Cuckoo**. We had glimpses of what proved to be a **Grey-necked Wood-Rail**, as it ran along the edge of the marsh and then across the road. A **Green-barred Woodpecker** provided good rear views, **Rufous Horneros** proved to be common but we struggled to identify the streak-breasted passerine perched in an Hornero's nest, which later was confirmed as a **Saffron Finch**. Several **Fork-tailed** and **Streaked Flycatchers** were seen, along with **Great Kiskadees** and **Tropical Kingbirds**. Towards the end of our walk, we had good views of **Monk** and at least five **Black-hooded Parakeets**, a **Narrow-billed Woodcreeper**, a small flock of **Hooded Siskins** and at least three **Red-eyed Vireos**. Several **Gray-breasted Martins**, **Rufous-bellied Thrushes** and **Chalk-browed Mockingbirds** were seen, plus a family party of **Masked Gnatcatchers**. **Double-collared Seedeaters**, were commonly seen, as were **Saffron Finches**, **Shiny** and **Bay-winged Cowbirds**. A lone **European Starling** completed the sightings in this area.

Saturday 16th – Buenos Aires

We were able to enjoy an early breakfast before setting out with Hernan Goui of Seriemas Nature Tours at 7am to visit Reserva Nature Otamendi. Noted such species as **Brown-chested Martin**, **Southern Lapwing**, **Chimango Caracara** and **Rufous Hornero** en route. Started birding on the reserve just after 8.30am, with Hernan playing recordings of particular, more interesting species, which did occasionally respond, some more effectively than others. The list slowly increased, as we ambled along the dirt road – extremely dusty as vehicles drove by – occasionally getting back into our minibus to drive further on. A **Bare-faced Ibis** flew over, a **Glittering-bellied Emerald** provided reasonable views and other species included **Freckle-breasted Thornbird**, **Masked Yellowthroat**, quite reasonable views of a **Plumbeous Rail**, a **Checkered Woodpecker**, **Creamy-bellied Thrush**, **Cliff Swallow**, **Warbling Doradito**, a suitably named **Long-winged Harrier**, **Scarlet-headed Blackbird**, two **Brown-and-yellow Marshbirds**, when others also saw a **White-browed Blackbird**; a male **Ultramarine Grosbeak**, a juvenile **Long-tailed Reed-finch** and a **Masked Gnatcatcher**.

Returned to the bus for a banana and on the track again to get reasonably good views and photographs of a **Rufous-capped Antshrike**, in a Coral tree, with its attractive red flowers – but no hummers – though a short while later I only managed glimpses of one, while identifying a **Bran-coloured Flycatcher**. I struggled to ID, what looked like an all black Tanager high in a tree immediately above us, that Hernan called a **Diademed Tanager**. The bottles of icy cold water that Hernan distributed were a welcome treat, as we left this reserve to head for a lunchtime stop at a cafe.

We left our lunch venue around 1.30pm for an hour-long drive to another Reserve. Several **Bay-winged Cowbirds** greeted us in this dry, scrub habitat with mature trees and lines of Eucalyptus. A **Cattle Egret** flew over and two **Brown Cacholotes** were seen, along with a family party of **Rufous-capped Spinetails**. A **Red-crested Cardinal** perched for all to see, as we endeavoured to identify a Woodpecker, which Hernan was identifying as **White**. In flight on several occasions a Woodpecker showed lightly speckled, all dark wings and upperparts, with a pale rump, while Brian's photos show a **White-fronted Woodpecker**. **Snail Kite** and **Maguari Storks** flew over and a **White-naped Xenopsaris** was seen well.

It was interesting to see a female **Saffron Finch** feeding two juveniles, seemingly with an endless supply of food judging by the amount of time she continually fed one bird. This clarified the ID of the birds associated with an Hornero's nest the previous day. A majestic adult **Savanna Hawk** perched in view for some time as a juvenile called from nearby. I noted the heavily streaked upperparts of a female or juvenile **Chotoy Spinetail**, a **White-faced Ibis** flew over, ID'd by its projecting legs and feet and two **Southern House Wrens** showed close by. A **Cattle Tyrant** flew over, a **Syraca Tanager** was glimpsed and a relatively recently split **Suiriri Flycatcher** was the next species to be identified. I managed to get reasonable photos of a **Stripe-crowned Spinetail**, I missed a **Giant Wood-Rail**, had only brief views of a **Short-billed Canastero** but good views of a **Spot-winged Pigeon** perched on a fence, with a nearby **White Monjita**. Photographed an adult **Brown-chested Martin** feeding a dragonfly to a young bird, perched on a wire and a little later a male **Crowned Slaty-Flycatcher**, with a female and a juvenile. We drove slowly back along the track from 4.15pm, to begin the long two-hour journey back to the Hotel, and had close views of a perched **Great Kiskadee**. A thunderstorm was brewing but it was still dry when we stopped to see the **White Monjita** well, at the same earlier spot – an amazingly white passerine, with just a black line showing on the edge of the primaries. A **Cocoi Heron** was also present, with another female **Vermillion Flycatcher** plus three adult and a juvenile **Red-crested Cardinal** and an **Americian Kestrel** hovered. Off the road, we stopped by a small wetland area, where Pauline drew our attention to a **Purple Gallinule** and close views of a **Snail Kite** were also possible.

Around 5.15pm the skies suddenly opened and cars simply pulled off the road with their lights flashing, such was the quantity of rain accumulating on the hard surface. We were able to continue slowly but safely and it wasn't long before we drove out of it onto perfectly dry roads. We were dropped off at the Hotel shortly before 7.30pm. We met for our evening meal in the lounge and enjoyed our various pizzas and beers, or alternative snacks, though the service was particularly tardy.

Sunday 17th – Buenos Aires

Seven of us were out at 6.30am for a pre-breakfast walk around the *Reserva Ecologica Costanera Sur*. Taxis had been arranged and we were dropped off at the western end, only to find it didn't open until 8am despite pleading with the gatekeeper! However, we soon discovered that there was a good variety of species to be seen immediately outside the reserve fences, commencing with an obliging **Grey-necked Wood Rail**, a **Gilded Hummingbird** and two **Epaulette Orioles**. Elsewhere in this area, we saw at least **15 Bay-winged Cowbirds**, **Rufous-bellied Thrushes** and a juvenile **Creamy-bellied Thrush**, **Masked Gnatcatcher**, **Eared Doves** and a **Pecui Ground Dove**, **Golden-billed Saltator**, **Green-barred Woodpecker** and a **Blue-black Grassquit**.

We spent about 100 minutes within the Reserve, where **Black-hooded Parakeets** outnumbered the **Monk's** on this occasion, early on we saw three **Checkered Woodpeckers** and we also noted such species as **Black-and-Rufous Warbling-Finch**, another **Golden-billed Saltator**, excellent views of another **Green-barred Woodpecker**, another **Glittering-bellied Emerald**, photographed a **Chopi Blackbird** feeding and heard the onomatopoeic calls of a **Great Kiskadee**.

We returned to the Hotel for a late breakfast, settled our account and departed in a coach for the port around noon. Then the 'fun' began and we spent nearly two-hours of queuing before eventually getting onto the ship, the *Celebrity Infinity*, and that was with a little, subtle queue hopping. We were welcomed on board with a glass of champagne and shown to our cabin.

From the ship, we scanned the lawns by the harbour and noted such species as **Southern Crested Caracara**, several **Cattle Tyrants**, **Rufous Hornero**, **Rufous-bellied Thrush**, **Eared Dove**, **Rufous-collared Sparrow**, **Rough-winged Swallow** and a presumed ship-assisted **Common Grackle**.



Southern Crested Caracara

Monday 18th

Awoken by Robert's alarm at 6.30am for a pre-breakfast seawatch. Sailing E in the River Plate, with no sight of land and numerous empty container ships at anchor. It was windy, with a choppy sea and numerous white horses. Started birding just after 7am but nought to see! First **Cory's Shearwater** not until 7.45am, so stopped for breakfast at 8am. Seawatching again from 9.15am, but just another **Cory's Shearwater** for our efforts and took a two-hour break.

Back on deck there had been more activity in our absence. We then saw a **Yellow-nosed Albatross**, **White-chinned Petrels**, **Cory's** and one **Great Shearwater** before we stopped for lunch in the Oceanview Cafe, between 1pm and 2.15pm, when we recommenced seawatching. Another **Yellow-nosed Albatross** and then a small shearwater caused considerable confusion - was it a Little, or maybe a Subantarctic Little. We later started seeing several **Manx Shearwaters** and drew the conclusion that that's what it probably was. Several **Black-browed Albatrosses**, **Cory's Shearwaters** and a few **White-chinned Petrels** appeared, with one **Yellow-nosed Albatross**, small flocks of **White-chinned Petrels** and an adult, tailless **Pomarine Skua**. At 4.20pm from the port side, the sea became alive with birds, with literally 1,000s of **Great Shearwaters** dominating the scene. Another adult **Pomarine Skua**, with spoons, flew by and at 5.15pm a juvenile **Long-tailed Skua** flew parallel to us for some while, then an adult also flew S. It was cooling down by 5.45pm, when I decided to call an end to a most interesting and enjoyable day at sea.

Tuesday 19th

We were out at 7am, under a cloudless sky, with windy conditions but fewer white horses for a while, though the wind became stronger during the morning. Several **Atlantic Petrels** were new for the trip, as was a **Northern Giant Petrel**. Other species included **Black-browed Albatross**, **Great Shearwater**, **White-chinned Petrel** and our first **Snowy (Wandering) Albatross**. Took an hour-long break for a most pleasant breakfast in the Oceanview Cafe, watching an incredibly mobile **Atlantic Petrel**.

Back seawatching by 9.45am to see a presumed **South Polar Skua** flying by, more **Atlantic Petrels**, **Black-browed Albatrosses** – becoming more numerous as we sailed south – **White-chinned Petrels**, **Great Shearwaters**, a probable **Antarctic Prion** – on distribution – and a second **South Polar Skua** among seaweed. Completed this seawatch at 11.45am, as the sea had gone very quiet. Enjoyed a coffee and returned to my cabin to download the morning's photos. Extended this break to include lunch in Oceanview, from where we noted a **Snowy Albatross** and a **Great Shearwater**.

Returned to the cabin to type in today's diary on my laptop, before commencing an afternoon seawatch from 3pm. Switched to the port side at 3.20pm for better light. **Black-browed Albatrosses** continued to increase in number, along with **White-chinned Petrels**, with just a few **Great Shearwaters**. A distant large albatross showed characteristics of an adult **Northern Royal Albatross** but these species can be extremely difficult to separate, with their numerous variations in plumage. A few more **Atlantic Petrels** were also visible. A pod of dolphins was able to be identified as Dusky with the aid of photographs taken.

Decided to seawatch at the stern of the boat from Oceanview and among the quite numerous **Black-browed Albatrosses** was a very pale **Southern Giant Petrel**.

Wednesday 20th

I was on deck by 6.40am, when some cloud cover was present and the sea quite rough. **Black-browed Albatrosses** proved to quite numerous, as did **Antarctic Prions** during the day. A few **Sooty Shearwaters** were noted from time to time and two **Sub-Antarctic Skuas** were noted early in the day, one chasing an unidentified, smaller, grey-brown seabird. It was clouding over by 7.30am and it felt cold in the wind.

Enjoyed a long breakfast 'seawatching' from the Oceanview Café. Commenced seawatching from deck 4 again at 9.45am, with very close views of a **Wilson's Petrel**. A few **White-chinned Petrels** were noted from time to time, a **Northern Royal Albatross** flew towards the stern, which the **Giant Petrels** seemed to favour and both the **Northern** and

Southern species were noted during the day. A couple of **Diving Petrels** were seen in flight but not well enough to separate the two likely species. At least two **Southern Royal Albatrosses** were also seen and the first **Pintado Petrel** of the trip also flew into view for a while. An ocean going trawler was seen some distance from us and literally 1,000s of **Albatrosses** and **Giant Petrels** were associated with it. Two more **Sub-Antarctic Skuas** flew by and one of several Storm-petrels that was observed for a while, showed a clear, broad, pale grey tail and that, with the description of its manner of flight, in Onley & Scofield's Field Guide, confirmed the identification of my first **Grey-backed Storm-petrel**.

In order to leave our telescope on deck, we arranged for two lunchtime sittings. I opted for the second sitting, seeing another **Wilson's Petrel** before going to the Oceanview Café at 2pm. Decided to download and edit the 300 photos I'd taken, ending up with less than 40, from which to select the best. Started seawatching again from 4.15pm for another two hours. Had a short spell on the port side, where the light was better but the cold wind less amenable. Did note a small flock of **Prions** which were considered to be **Slender-billed**, one **Great** and several **Sooty Shearwaters** and a **Diving Petrel** species. Also, Robert identified a **Black-bellied Storm Petrel**.

Back in the sun on the starboard side, a **Northern Giant Petrel** provided photographic views, two and one more **Grey-backed Petrels** were seen and lost in the sun's glare, and another **Southern Royal Albatross** was identified as it flew towards the stern. It is fascinating to note the subtle changes in numbers and species that occur as we sail further south.

Thursday 21st - Ushuaia

Out on deck by 6.30am to find the ship not far from Ushuaia. There were several **South American Terns** flying by, along with a few **Chilean Skuas**, though I was struggling to remember the names of the locally common species! Took an early breakfast and once we were docked there was an opportunity to survey the coastline on the far side of the harbour, beyond which several **100s** of **Imperial Shags** were flying, but I only noted one **Rock Cormorant**. Several pairs of **Kelp Geese** were present, along with a few **Magellanic Oystercatchers**, two juvenile **Black-crowned Night Herons** and a few **Crested Ducks**. A flock of at least 50 Baird's or White-rumped Sandpipers circled round, too distantly to be identified, a distant pair of **Flying Steamer Duck**, a small flock of **Brown-hooded Gulls** and the usual **Kelp** and **Dolphin Gulls** were all noted.

We were allowed off the ship earlier than anticipated and by 9am we'd met our guide, Marcelo and the driver of the small bus that easily accommodated our group of eleven. *En route* to the National Park we stopped briefly to see a small group of **Black-faced Ibis** – apparently recently introduced to the area – reaching *Parque de Nacional Tierra del Fuego* around 9.15am, where we visited a number of localities, most of which were where Marcelo hope to find a Magellanic Woodpecker for us, though they do not usually respond to tape calls post-breeding. The southern beech woodlands were particularly quiet, as are many woodlands in autumn. We commenced very slowly, with a few **Rufous-crowned Sparrows** and **Thorn-tailed Rayaditos**, both quite attractive species, and **White-crested Elaenias**. The next stop produced **Patagonian Sierra-finches** and **Austral Thrushes**, and a distant bird I located turned out to be a juvenile **Austral Pygmy-Owl**.

Marcelo had recently found a snipe with young and when he scanned the area was able to locate an adult **Magellanic Snipe** for us, near the narrow-gauge railway, as steam engines pulled their carriages by. An adult **Austral Pygmy Owl** presented us with fine opportunities for close photographs. We then explored an area by a river, where a **Dark-faced Ground-Tyrant** and a **Ringed Kingfisher** were seen. Several more **Dark-faced Ground-Tyrants** were noted as we returned to the railway line and our bus. A longer walk, into quite dense beech woodland, with wet areas provided the opportunity to see an old Magellanic Woodpecker nest hole, and yet a third **Austral Pygmy Owl**, being harassed by more **Patagonian Sierra-Finches**.

A couple of brief stops *en route* to the next port-of-call produced a family party of **Upland Geese** and a couple of



Austral Parakeets, with their long red tails, were first seen by Pauline. One large lake held a flock of about **20 Black-necked Swans** and two adult **Great Grebes**, with two young. A few **Speckled Teal**, **Crested Duck**, with ducklings, and three **Yellow-billed Pintail** were noted on the different lakes visited. Around 1pm, we stopped for a picnic lunch, with opportunities to sit on fallen trunks in more beech woodland but no woodpeckers – in fact with virtually no birds at all. No woodpeckers were seen during an early afternoon walk along a lake edge, by which time light rain was falling, but the lake provided good views of a pair of **Flying Steamer Ducks**, the duck having a different coloured bill to the orange of the drake, and no upturned tail. At least four **White-crested Elaenias** were noted on the way back. Two Fuegian Red Foxes and a **Chimango Caracara**

provided photo opportunities by the car park at the next locality. Here, a broad walk provided good viewing over a fjord-like lake, where a distant Beaver could be seen swimming and a **Neotropic Cormorant** and a family party of **Crested Duck** were also seen. Both **Fuegian** and **Flying Steamerducks** were present, the former with three ducklings. From

another boardwalk, Robert, Bernard and I heard a **Magellanic Woodpecker** calling from beech woodland above a steep cliff, but it failed to respond later to tape calls. A loose flock of **Rufous-collared Sparrows** was feeding nearby as we returned to the bus.

The rain eased soon after we left the park, at around 5.20pm, and we spent a short but profitable time by the shore of the airport road. This produced an opportunity to compare distinguishing features of **Dark-bellied** and **Grey-flanked Cinclodes**, particularly as one of the latter species concussed itself on the bus window and could be studied in the hand. Waders along the stony shore included both **Magellanic** and **Blackish Oystercatchers** and more pleasingly a flock of about **10 Rufous-chested Dotterel**, including juvenile and non-breeding adults.

The final stop of the day was at the Ushuaia rubbish tip, at the eastern end of the town, where there were impressive numbers of raptors as well as **Kelp** and **Dolphin Gulls**. We saw the main objective, several **White-throated Caracaras**, as well as the usual **Southern Crested** and numerous **Chimango Caracaras**, probably five different **Black-chested Buzzard-Eagles** and a lone **Peregrine** flew over. Flocks of 100 or more **House Sparrows**, several **Black-chinned Siskins** were present and as we left, shortly before 6.30pm, an immature **Black-crowned Night Heron** could be seen in the local river. We were back on board the ship by 7pm.

Friday 22nd

Out on deck before 6am, as we approached Cape Horn in misty conditions, which improved later, as the sun rose. The ship hove to at 6.40am and we remained floating off the Cape for an hour or more. Three presumably – it was still quite dark – Sub-Antarctic Skuas flew S, as we sipped coffee in Oceanview. Back on deck a little later, it was possible to identify a few species on the rocky cliffs of Cape Horn, including Imperial Shag and two Rock Cormorants. There were also rafts of Sooty Shearwaters and Kelp Gulls, numbers of South Atlantic Terns, a few Black-browed Albatrosses, White-chinned Petrel, two Crested Ducks and a Turkey Vulture over Cape Horn. The sea was remarkably calm, with just a light easterly breeze.



Fuegian Fox



Grey-headed Albatross

Took a leisurely breakfast from 7.45am and returned to the cabin to edit photos and catch up with the daily diary, as virtually no seabirds were moving. Robert phoned me from our deck 4 watch area around 10am to report that two **Grey-headed Albatrosses** were flying along side. I went up on deck for a short while to enjoy good views of one bird and a **Pintado Petrel** also flew by.

Went up to the Oceanview Cafe for a coffee and to see the sea; far too calm to encourage the presence of seabirds and just an adult **Southern Royal Albatross** and a **Giant Petrel** were occasionally appearing over the wake of the ship. I went up again for lunch around 1.30pm and later, I went to deck 4 to photograph the unusually calm conditions, which were restricting the birding opportunities, which should normally be good at this latitude. However, I did see another **Grey-headed Albatross** and what was probably a **Grey-backed Storm-Petrel** judging by its manner of flight, but I only had my binoculars with me at that time. I returned, fully equipped for the cold and birding but saw no more birds in the next thirty minutes.

Robert did a watch until dusk, when he was most fortunate to see not only a green spot as the sun disappeared, but followed instantly by a blue spot.

Saturday 23rd – Antarctica, Paradise Bay

Out on deck by 5.50am in misty weather, with a cold wind but only a few white horses, conditions not conducive to finding seabirds. Had a leisurely, early breakfast between 6.30-7.30am in the Oceanview Café, from where Robert saw the first bird of the day, a **Southern Fulmar** at 6.50am and I glimpsed a probable **Grey-backed Storm-Petrel**, a prion species and a probable **White-chinned Petrel**.

The mist began to clear around 9.30am and a few **Southern Fulmars** appeared, along with a few patches of blue sky and our first sight of Antarctica. With the fine weather and barely a white horse to be seen birds were proving difficult to locate – not the “huge numbers, difficult to know which way to look” scenario we’d anticipated. Sadly, this was to be the pattern for our time within Antarctic waters, with the mist coming and going, particularly in the area of converging currents. Our pattern for the day constituted brief seawatches, photo editing and catching up with recording diary notes!

The scenery was breathtaking, quite awe inspiring and close views of mammals like a Leopard Seal and whales blowing, occasionally revealing their flukes, helped to make it an extremely special day. The outstanding bird highlight was seeing my first **Snow Petrel**, which happened to fly into my binocular vision – what a stunning bird, with its all white plumage, as it flew among small ice flows. At other times, we saw **Gentoo Penguins** ‘porpoising’ and on occasion huge rookeries, but invariably very distant.

Sunday 24th – Antarctica, Elephant Island

Made a comfortable, lazy start to the fine day, with another calm sea!! We were sailing north with the most northern islands of the Antarctic Peninsula on our port side. A few very pale-headed **Southern Giant Petrels** and a uniformly dark **Sub-Antarctic Skua** flew by and occasional small groups of seabirds could be seen distantly on the sea. One comprised three pale-headed **Southern Giant Petrels** with a white morph – pure white, with scattered black feathers – plus four **Wilson’s Petrels** feeding, another with at least **10 Wilson’s**



Petrels feeding, and three more **Giant Petrels**. Shortly, groups of penguins were being seen and I saw one distant one, with three **Chinstrap Penguins**.

Stopped for breakfast at 8.15am and from the Oceanview Café noted two **Kelp Gulls** and a few pale-headed **Southern Giant Petrels**. The distant Humpback Whales were being harassed by Orcas, both species were seen blowing. The sea was so calm, I decided to do some more photo editing and when I went up for some fresh air and more seawatching a mist enshrouded the boat. At noon, as we approached Elephant Island, the mist suddenly cleared, so seawatching became the order of the day. This was accompanied from time to time with comments from the bridge regarding the wildlife visible, details of the evolution and behaviour of the glaciers and accounts of the early explorations of Antarctica.

The plumages of the Giant Petrels vary considerably, not only with age, but the distributions suggested by Hadoram Shirihai in his truly excellent *A Complete Guide to Antarctic Wildlife* indicate that we will only be seeing the Southern species here. An impressive white morph **Southern Giant Petrel** flew by but the fog surrounded us again and I returned to our cabin to edit photos. A little later, Robert phoned to say that the mist had lifted and Elephant Island was visible. A dark morph **Southern Giant Petrel** was seen and a good number of Minke Whales were blowing, but not showing.

We were enjoying exceptionally clear weather, with a calm sea, so few birds were being seen. After lunch, I did some more photo editing and diary typing, returning the deck around 4pm, when we were still hove to opposite a lengthy glacier, in front of which an occasional **Imperial Shag** flew. We were underway, at last, just before 5pm and as we sailed by Elephant Island huge rookeries of penguins could be seen and both **Gentoo** and **Chin-strap Penguins** could be identified as they porpoised away from the ship. The sea became a little choppier and in addition to the occasional **Southern Giant Petrel** a few **Wilson’s** and a **Black-bellied Storm-Petrel** were identified. While scanning an isolated island, with numerous rookeries, I managed to see two **Snowy Sheathbills**, as they flew along the shore and up into narrow valleys, alighting occasionally. It was extremely disappointing that they were so distant, particularly for those for whom it would have been a new bird. A **Black-browed Albatross** appeared at 6pm – the first for the day – as we sailed by a large iceberg, on which a few penguins were resting.

Monday 25th

On deck by 7am to meet Pauline but no others foolhardy enough to be there, as the foghorn was booming and there wasn't a white horse to be seen, let alone a bird. We met again for breakfast in Oceanview and not one bird was noted during the next hour. How long can this last?

The mist lifted a little and we went out onto deck 4 for an hour's seawatching from noon and the first birds of the day were two probable **Antarctic Prions**, which sped S at 12.20pm. We met other members in Oceanview, who'd seen three **Atlantic Petrels**.

Following lunch in the Oceanview Café, I went out on deck again just before 2pm, as the visibility seemed to have improved a little, but the sea was still too calm to provide much hope of seeing many, if any seabirds. And so it proved. I took a coffee break at 3pm and returned to the cabin for a while. Later, Robert had a little more success and we both went out at 6pm to see two **Wandering** and four **Grey-headed Albatrosses** towards the stern, plus a **White-chinned Petrel** and I glimpsed a **Magellanic Penguin**, before it dived. The **Wandering Albatrosses** kept reappearing towards the stern, occasionally flying along side, before circling back. I glimpsed a Storm-petrel species, as it rose from the sea and disappeared behind a wave, and a **Black-browed Albatross** flew N. A Pteradroma petrel flew too rapidly S to be identified, but sightings were so few that I called it a day at 7.15pm, as a school of Dusky Dolphins 'porpoised' by.



Tuesday 26th - The Falkland Islands

Numerous Penguins could be seen along the shores, **Imperial Shags** and **Rock Cormorants** were present and distant flocks of ducks proved to be **Chubut Steamer-Ducks** looking quite different to the other two species. Only a short watch was possible, so that an early breakfast could be eaten before gathering in the Celebrity Theatre for our landing instructions at 7.45am. Far too many arrived late and thirty minutes passed before we left the theatre, finally landing in Port Stanley at 8.45am, where we were quickly divided into groups of four and shown to our respective four-wheel drive vehicles. I was with Robert and Bernard, plus Pauline from California – a young lady with plenty of comment and questions, with no real interest in birds, though she was seen setting up her camera to take a picture of herself, with King Penguins in the background.

We drove along a reasonable road for about an hour, which was being resurfaced in areas, so that we were obliged to stop at a temporary traffic light, of which there are none in the Falklands. We were passing across rock-strewn moorland, where we stopped briefly to photograph a **Red-backed Hawk** and did see two **Turkey Vultures**, a **Southern Crested Caracara**, as well as a good number of **Upland Geese** and an occasional pair of **Kelp Geese**. We then learned the benefit of having a four-wheel drive vehicle, with a competent driver, as we drove over rough moorland, quite damp in places, with occasional lakes. Relatively few birds were noted, other than **Dark-faced Ground Tyrants**, though we did stop to photograph a pair of **Falkland Steamer-Ducks** and see another pair of **Crested Ducks**.

We parked, with some sixty or more four-wheel drive vehicles, close to a **King Penguin** colony of some 1,200 pairs, at around 11am for a two-hour stay. Sharing such a magnificent sight with so many others could never compare with being there on one's own but, be that as it may, it was a wonderful spectacle, with a number of other species to enjoy and photograph as well. A little sunshine would have enhanced the situation but it wasn't to be – until we returned to Port Stanley!

Large rookeries of **Gentoo Penguins** were also present but fewer burrow-nesting **Magellanic Penguins** were seen here. It was fascinating to see the troops of **Gentoo Penguins** running from the beach to their rookeries, while the **King Penguins** were far more sedate, as elegant as their name suggests. Adult and juvenile **Two-banded Plovers** provided close

photographic opportunities, but my camera was playing up when it came to photographing the attractive **Long-tailed Meadowlarks**, one of which obligingly sang for us, two female **Black-throated Finches**, another **Dark-faced Ground Tyrant** and a pair of **Ruddy-headed Geese** – subtly different from the female Upland, being slightly smaller, with more orangey rather than yellow legs, the dull ruddy colour confined to the head and neck, compared with the richer, rufous head, neck and breast of the Upland, and a distinctive narrow white eye-ring.



Gentoo Penguins

By the time I looked along the beach, a flock of **White-rumped Sandpipers** had disappeared, numbers of **Kelp** and **Dolphin Gulls** were obvious and a distant group of ducks was eventually identified, with guidance from a warden, to be more **Falkland Steamer-Ducks**.

We returned to our four-wheel drive vehicle shortly before 1pm and ate our picnic lunches, while scanning the surrounding countryside and lakes, without finding anything new. From 1.15pm it took us an hour-and-a-half to reach the serviceable road again, as one Chilean driver, who serves in a local bar, seemed not to have sufficient experience and kept getting bogged down, our group of four vehicles invariably having to tow his vehicle out. We did manage to see two **Correndera Pipits** as we drove, eventually reaching Port Stanley by 3.45pm.

I was back on board by 4.30pm and a small range of species made the slow sail out of the lengthy harbour quite interesting, though we failed to find the local *Cinclodes* on the rocks! Large rookeries of **Gentoo Penguins**, a flock of maybe **50 Falkland Steamer-Ducks**, a number of **Imperial Shags** and **Rock Cormorants** were seen again and **50+ Sooty Shearwaters** were also present. A few more **Magellanic Penguins** swam and dived at close range, two **'Falkland' Skuas** and a **South American Tern** were noted and I was pleased to take a sequence of good photographs of a pod of Pearl's Dolphins.

Wednesday 27th

Out on deck by 6.50am to find a disappointingly calm sea, with just a slight swell under an overcast sky. A few **Southern Giant Petrels** were flying off the stern of the ship and a **Black-browed Albatross** was seen off the starboard bow, where the sun was creating broken cloud along the horizon. I had a glimpse of a **Prion** species and a whale blew but it was miserably quiet. We switched to the port side, when Robert appeared, and a **White-chinned Petrel** flew N and two **Black-browed Albatrosses** could be seen off the stern.

Ate a leisurely breakfast from 7.15am in the Oceanview Café, seeing the occasional **White-chinned Petrel** and a **Sooty Shearwater**. Decided to find a quiet spot, with a table, on deck 4, where I could sit and catch up with my diary. Was able to see the previous two species, occasionally, when I looked up. I joined Robert on deck around 11am and had distant views of three **'Brown' Skuas**, a **Black-browed Albatross** and two distant **Royal/Wandering Albatrosses**.

Had a late lunch at the stern of Oceanview, where probably up to **10 Southern Giant Petrels** were continually following the boat, with numbers of **Black-browed Albatrosses** and **White-chinned Petrels**. I decided to do a seawatch from Deck 4 on the starboard side from 5pm until 7pm. Small flocks of **White-chinned Petrels** appeared on the sea from time to time and numbers were almost continually visible, but often distantly. Similarly, **Black-browed Albatrosses** were behaving in much the same way, though fewer in number, with a maximum flock size of around 10, and it was interesting to photograph an immature bird that showed a grey collar and a black tip to the bill. A total of at least **10 Great Shearwaters** was also noted and at least one **Southern Royal Albatross** was seen and photographed. Just after 6pm the sea appeared to have a few more white horses and a **Prion** species and a dark **Storm-Petrel** appeared and immediately disappeared. A **Southern Royal Albatross** and a probable **Wandering Albatross** were seen a little later, towards the stern and the last bird of the day was a **'Brown' Skua**, which flew rapidly S. I returned to my room at 7pm.



Top: Dark phase Southern Giant Petrel (green tip to bill)
Bottom: Pale phase Northern Giant Petrel (pink tip to bill)

Thursday 28th – Puerto Madryn, Isla de los Pajaros

We docked in Puerto Madryn by 7am, ate an early breakfast, when a **Peregrine** appeared in view. We went ashore just after 8am, to board a shuttle bus, which dropped us by the tourist office, where we couldn't get any information regarding possible arrangements for transport and venues. We were unsure what to do but met a mini-bus driver offering a tour and pointing us to an office, where we eventually arranged to hire his mini-bus at \$60 each for ten of us, with an extra \$20 for entrance to Peninsula Valdes, where we would just visit Isla de los Pajaros. Without realising it, we also had a young guide, Valerie, who had knowledge of the birds in the area and we set out at 9.15am.

It proved to be an excellent arrangement. The driver was good at spotting birds and was keen to stop so that we could exit the bus and see them. The weather was mild, mainly cloudy, with occasional breaks and a moderate E wind. A few **Turkey Vultures** were noted but the first important stop was for a small group of **Lesser Rhias**, which many hadn't seen before. An **American Kestrel** hovered and just after 10am we entered the Valdes Peninsula Wildlife Protected Area. A buteo, with white underparts, pale grey uppers and a white tail may have been a White-tailed Hawk, but it wasn't seen sufficiently well to be confirmed. We next stopped to see and photograph a **Red-backed Hawk** and a hen **Cinereous Harrier** flew by distantly. It was the turn of a group of Guanacos to provide the next stop, as some very light rain fell. We stopped by the museum briefly at 10.40am, to see a flock of at least **12 Long-tailed Meadow-Larks** and view the range of plants that thrive in this terrain.

We then spent a profitable ninety minutes at the small Isla de los Pajaros Reserve, opposite bird island, where, after meeting the warden, we followed him and had excellent views of the aptly named **Elegant Crested Tinamou**, seeing at least two birds in the area. Along the shore were some **50 Chilean Flamingos**, at least four **Chubut Flying Steamer-ducks**, at least two **Crested Ducks**, probably **20 Two-banded Plovers** and one **White-rumped Sandpiper**, two **American**

Oystercatchers, with their brown backs, but a distant flock of 30 or more remained unidentified. There were **Great Egrets** breeding on the island and it was interesting to see how long the adult's bill remained within the juvenile's. Two **Royal Terns** were present and a smaller species caused some ID problems, but my photographs of it in flight showed it to be a **Ceyanne Tern**. A **White-tailed Kite** hovered nearby for a while, another **Long-tailed Meadow-Lark** provided an excellent photo opportunity, an **Austral Thrush** was also present, a few **Chilean Swallows** flew around the area but a Swallow, with all dark uppers, remained unidentified.



Elegant Crested Tinamou

Soon after we left this area, we stopped to look for some passerines, which had flown across the road, and had good views, as well as hearing the song of several **Patagonain Mockingbirds**, Robert and others managed to see a **Plain-mantled Tit-Spinetail** well, which I only glimpsed and I had insufficient views of another small passerine, with rufous flanks or primaries. Photographed yet another **Red-backed Hawk** and also saw a **Southern Martin**, which took a while to identify until it flew.

We returned to Porto Madryn and were back on board by 2.30pm. A few gulls, including **Brown-Hooded** and terns, including one or two **South American**, could be seen, as well as a few Sealions at rest. The ship left the dock around 4.30pm and as we sailed across the length of the harbour, **Manx Shearwaters** proved to be numerous, with a few **Great Shearwaters**, the occasional **Magellanic Penguin** and **Neotropic Cormorant**.

Friday 1st March

With the clocks moved forward an hour, it was 8am before I commenced an hour's seavatch before breakfast, from the port side on deck 4. The principle species proved to be over **100 Great Shearwaters**, usually in ones and twos but occasionally in groups of up to ten, sometimes rising from the sea. One **Black-browed Albatross** was the only other species identified. There appeared to be large numbers of seabirds off the stern, but while eating breakfast on the stern of Oceanview I saw very few. Others, looking to starboard from within Oceanview had noted a wider variety of species.

I returned to the cabin to catch up with my diary for a while, before joining Robert on deck 4 at 11.15am. for about forty-five minutes, when **Great Shearwaters** were again the most obvious of relatively few birds, with three **Manx Shearwaters**, a **Black-browed Albatross** and an adult **Long-tailed Skua**, lacking central tail feathers, but showing a distinct white collar. It was interesting to note the variety of **Great Shearwater** upper wing plumages, suggesting moult. Some showed an almost complete white sub-terminal secondary bar, others patchy, looking more like Pintados.

Robert then discussed with the Concierge the options available for birding in Montevideo, acquiring some maps and information. After further discussion we decided to take the tourist bus, at a cost of \$10, to get off at the Botanic Gardens, board again after two-three hours and visit Parque Rodo for an hour or so, before returning to the port.

Enjoyed a leisurely lunch and returned to the fresh air on the starboard side of deck 4 at 2.45pm. Switching from starboard to port two-three times during the next two-and-three-quarter hours, I totalled just **15 Great Shearwaters**, three **Black-browed** and two **Yellow-nosed Albatrosses**, two **White-chinned Petrels** and two, very distant, possible Pterodroma petrels. The temperature was warm but the gusty wind invariably made identification difficult, causing shaking at the critical second that might have made it possible. At around 3.30pm, a distant fishing vessel attracted numerous seabirds, including albatrosses, but it never came sufficiently close for identification purposes. For a time around 4pm, we could see the coast of Argentina on the horizon.

Saturday 2nd

A wet and windy start to our Uruguay visit, docking in Montevideo. After an early breakfast, we were able to leave the ship by 8.15am and were first to purchase tickets for the Tourist Bus at an inflated price of \$20US. It remained dull and overcast, with occasional light rain, as we visited the Botanic Gardens and Park Rodo. The former produced an interesting variety of species, with two new for the trip, a **White-tipped Dove** and a **White-throated Hummingbird**, seen and photographed in a flowering tree that attracted maybe 10 hummers of at least two species, including several **Glittering-bellied Emeralds**.

As we drove around the town, there were numerous patches of green and well-scattered trees. Even in town a pair of **Southern Lapwings** found sufficient grass to their liking and an **American Kestrel** was seen perched high on a building. Several other doves were noted, including two **Picui Ground Doves**, as well as plenty of **Monk Parakeets**. At least three **Grey-necked Wood-Rails** were seen and a **Green-barred Woodpecker**. A **Southern Crested Caracara** flew over, a pair of **Saffron Finches** was photographed, several **Cattle Tyrants** and two **House Wrens** were noted. A local warden pointed out some palms where two Great Horned Owls were apparently roosting, but we couldn't see any sign of them. We caught the Tourist Bus at noon for a ninety-minute visit to Park Rodo, which proved to be most unproductive, the lake being a dark green and home to domesticated geese and ducks. *En route* we noticed two **Snowy Egrets**. Three **Neotropic Cormorants** were present, along with the usual **Monk Parakeets** and a **Western Great Egret** provided excellent close views, as it fished. A perched hawk was identified as an immature **Red-backed Hawk** and three more **Southern Crested Caracaras** flew over. With a darkening sky, we decided to catch the earlier bus back to the ship, which was most fortunate, as torrential rain fell, flooding the roads. It continued to rain, though less heavily for the 300 metre walk back to the ship, producing very wet trousers and trainers, as far as I was concerned.

Back in our cabin it was time to pack our cases, as they were required by 11pm. As the ship sailed, I was still packing, when others saw three **Magnificent Frigatebirds**. In great contrast to the afternoon's weather, the wind dropped, clouds cleared and it became sunny and warm, with just **Kelp Gulls** following the ship.



“Snowy” Wandering Albatross

Sunday 3rd

Had breakfast at 7.30am, after we'd docked in Buenos Aires, where we noticed just a few species before we left the ship for a Tour of Buenos Aires from around 9.30am. Numerous **Kelp Gulls** were present, a few **Grey-breasted Martins** flew about, a **Bay-winged Cowbird** visited its nest in a light and both **Eared Doves** and **Rufous-collared Sparrows** were seen.

We stopped occasionally during the tour and the guide talked continually about Argentina, its history and politics, as well as pointing out the various areas and buildings. A little monotonous but of some interest and we were able to see the occasional bird species, like a small flock of **Shiny Cowbirds** and one or two **Rufous-bellied Thrushes**. We stopped for a while near the La Boca football stadium, where there was a fine collection of wall paintings. Two **Glittering-bellied Emeralds** were seen, **House Sparrows** were extremely common, several **Picazuro Pigeons** and a **Picui Ground-Dove** were noted, along with the usual **Rufous Horneros**.

We had a lunchtime stop in Puerto Madero, an upmarket area by a canal, where a **Great Grebe** was resting, a **Western Great Egret** flew over, a 'colony' of **Grey-breasted Martins** perched on a building, **Chalk-browed Mockingbirds** were all over the place and a **House Wren** was seen. There was an amazing variety of food available for our buffet lunch and I decided to have my first beer of the trip to drink with my meal. Afterwards, we had about an hour to fill before boarding the coach for the airport and Robert and I walked around the area noting what birds we could. A **Cattle**

Tyrant was the first addition for the day and it was interesting to witness the feeding behaviour of the Mockingbirds – shaking their open wings, seemingly using them like some African herons do to create shade. **Rufous-bellied Thrushes**, **Monk Parakeets** seen eating bread scraps, flocks of **European Starlings** and a pair of **Saffron Finches** were all noted.

On the way to the airport we glimpsed two **Southern Crested Caracaras** and were dropped at the airport by 2.30pm for a flight at 10.25pm. Robert and I decided to explore the local area, leaving Bernard and Jim to mind our bags. A small flooded area held two pairs of **Southern Lapwings**, a **Great Kiskadee**, two **Bay-winged Cowbirds** and two **Brown-chested Martins** were also seen. Elsewhere we noted several flocks of **Starlings** flying over, **Rufous Horneros** and **Chalk-browed Mockingbirds** were frequently noted, along with a few **Rufous-bellied Thrushes**. The bonus was finding a new species for the list, two **Golden-ringed Warblers**.

When we returned to the airport we discovered that the flight had been delayed until 1.50. Later, Robert suggested that Jim might like to take a walk and we went out around 4.15pm for just under an hour. I managed to relocate the **Golden-ringed Warblers** for him and he found a nice adult male **Hooded Siskin** to add to the day's list. During a third walk towards dusk, Robert and I enjoyed watching, at close range, an immature **Bay-winged Hawk** devouring what looked like a rat – tail and all.

On returning around 8pm, we joined the rest of the group in the queue to the check-in desk. It was a real challenge for the check-in clerk, as he had to produce a voucher for our group of 10 to get 'dinner' at a restaurant in the airport, book seats on the Madrid flight, book a hotel for Monday night in Madrid and flights to Heathrow on Tuesday afternoon! He managed it all, but our 'dinner' comprised a soft drink and either a baguette or a toasted sandwich.

Monday 4th

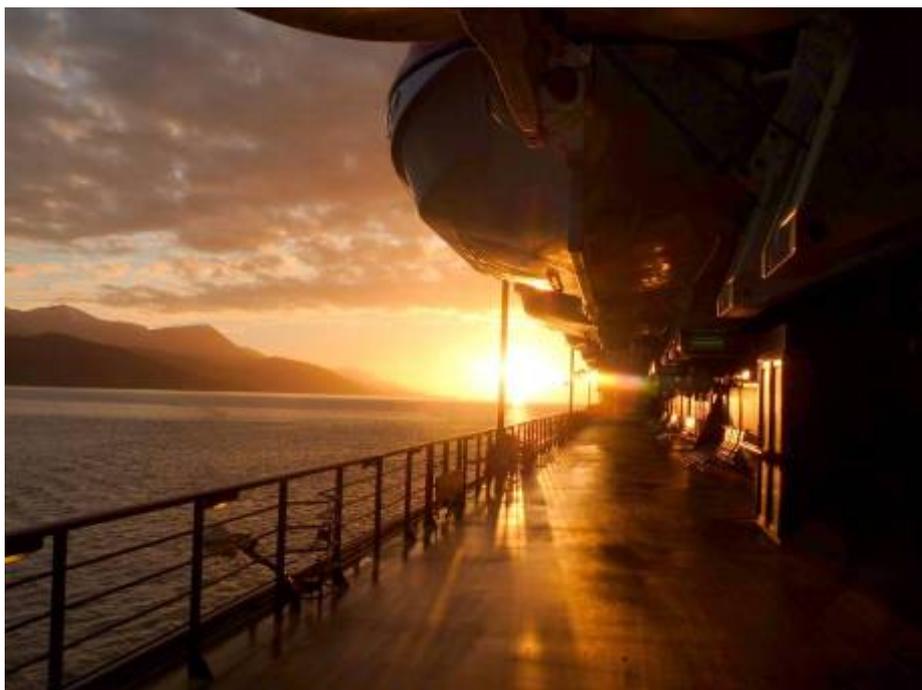
The plane eventually took off at 2am and with a four-hour time difference we touched down in Madrid around 5.30pm. For whatever reason we had to collect our bags and it was some time before we did and then waited for a sufficiently large coach to transport the many delayed passengers to Hotel Melia, where we were all able to book into twin-bedded rooms and have a complimentary evening meal, with a glass of wine, between 8-9pm.

Tuesday 5th

Left the Hotel in a shuttle bus at 9.45am for our 12.40pm flight to Heathrow. It took off about thirty minutes late and we landed at Heathrow around 2.30pm, said our farewells while collecting our bags and I was met and driven home soon after 5pm, for a very welcome cup of tea and slice of cake, as I hadn't eaten since breakfast.

There were many high spots during the holiday, particularly being able to see Antarctica so clearly and being able to land on the Falklands to enjoy the company of **King Penguins**. One of my favourite moments was finding and watching a **Snow Petrel**, as it flew among small ice flows. I managed to see a total of 20 new species for my life list.

Thanks are due to John for drawing my attention to this comparatively inexpensive way to see Antarctica. I would also thoroughly recommend reading Sara Wheeler's *Terra Incognita*, which provides a wonderfully descriptive view of Antarctica, based on her seven month residence there, that includes an account of its exploration and the research being done by the international temporary residents of the region.



Celebrity Infinity at sunset in the Antarctic

Systematic List

The nomenclature and sequence largely follows Gill & Wright's *Birds of the World: Recommended English Names*. An asterisk by the name indicates a new life species; twenty of which were recorded.

Elegant-crested Tinamou *Eudromia elegans*

One was seen extremely well within the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve on the 28th and a second bird was also present.



Darwin's (Lesser) Rhea *Pterocnemia pennata*

By the long straight road to the Valdes Peninsula, a group of about eight was observed on the 28th, with another two at closer range later.

Black-necked Swan *Cygnus melancoryphus*

A flock of 20 was present on a lake within the Tierra del Fuego National Park on the 21st.

Flying Steamer Duck *Tachyeres patachonicus*

A distant pair was seen in Ushuaia harbour on the 21st. Later in the day, one pair was seen well on a lake within the Tierra del Fuego National Park and another, more distantly, on a large fjord-like lake.

Fuegian Steamer Duck *Tachyeres pteneres*

A pair with young was seen distantly on a lake within the Tierra del Fuego National Park on the 21st.

Falkland Steamer Duck *Tachyeres brachypterus*

Distant flocks of this species were present, as we sailed towards Port Stanley on the 26th and one of about 50 was noted as we steamed away from Port Stanley. We also had close views of a pair, during our drive to Volunteer Point.

Chubut Steamer Duck *Tachyeres leucocephalus*

A pair was present on the shore of the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve on the 28th.

Upland Goose *Chloephaga picta*

Several pairs, including a family party were seen within the Tierra del Fuego National Park on the 21st. A good number of pairs, some with young, were also seen on the Falkland Islands on the 26th.

Kelp Goose *Chloephaga hybrida*

A good number of pairs were seen in the Ushuaia area on the 21st, and a few pairs were also noted on the Falkland Islands on the 26th.

Ruddy-headed Goose *Chloephaga rubidiceps*

Two juvenile birds were observed by a King Penguin colony on the Falkland Islands on the 26th. The narrow white eye-ring was a good distinguishing feature, as were the more orangey, rather than yellow legs, and the smaller size, when compared with the similar female Kelp Goose.

Crested Duck *Lophonetta specularioides*

Several pairs were present in Ushuaia harbour, on the 21st, and more were seen within the National Park, including one duck with young. A pair was also seen at Cape Horn the next day, with further pairs on the Falkland Islands on the 26th and on the shore of the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve on the 28th.

Speckled Teal *Anas flavirostris*

Several pairs were observed within the Tierra del Fuego National Park on the 21st.

Yellow-billed Pintail *Anas georgica*

Three were seen on a lake in the Tierra del Fuego National Park on the 21st.

King Penguin *Aptenodytes patagonicus*

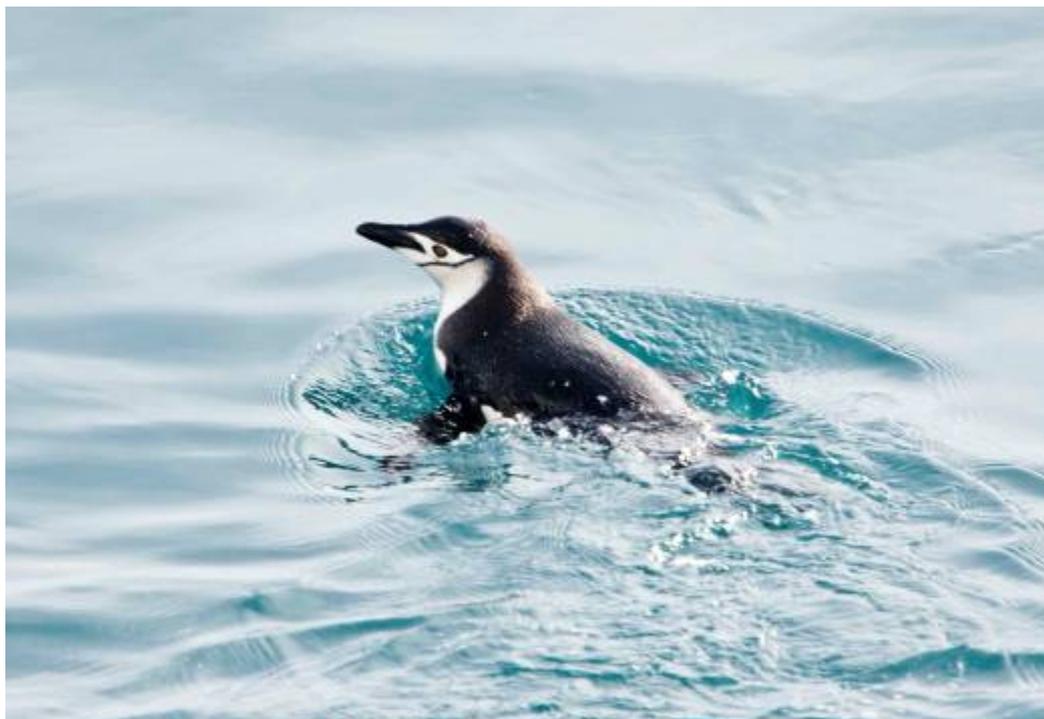
Only seen on the 26th, in a breeding colony at Volunteer Point, on the Falkland Islands, which apparently held some 1,200 adults, as well as quite a number of juveniles – an impressive sight and a photographer's delight.

Gentoo Penguin *Pygoscelis papua*

There were impressive numbers of breeding birds at Volunteer Point, on the Falkland Islands on the 26th. Other rookeries could be seen from the ship, as we steamed away from Port Stanley. Many at sea seen porpoising and large colonies on Elephant Island.

Chinstrap Penguin *Pygoscelis antarcticus*

Three were first seen porpoising in the Bransfield Strait on the 24th, with more off Elephant Island later in the day. Two groups of three, seen porpoising on the 22nd, as we steamed across Drake Passage, may have been of this species, though Rockhopper and Macaroni Penguins could be seen there.



Chinstrap Penguin

Magellanic Penguin *Spheniscus magellanicus*

One was glimpsed on the 25th, as it dived. The next day, numbers of this hole-nesting penguin were seen at Volunteer Point on the Falkland Islands and distant large rookeries could be seen, as well a few swimming and diving, as we steamed away from Port Stanley. Several were also seen as we steamed away from Puerto Madryn on the 28th.

Royal Albatross *Diomedea epomophora*

Southern Royal: two of this form were seen during the morning of the 20th, as we continued to steam S off Argentina, another was seen during the afternoon, as it flew towards the stern. In the calm conditions, one was occasionally seen from the stern, as it followed the ship on the 22nd. In similar calm conditions on the 25th, as we steamed N across Drake Passage, one was occasionally seen off the stern again, when a Wandering Albatross also kept appearing. On the 27th, steaming N off southern Argentina, a similar situation occurred, with a probable Wandering Albatross, and the Southern Royal was photographed at relatively close range.

Northern Royal: one, probably of this form, was seen during the afternoon of the 19th, and one more was seen during the morning of the 20th.

Wandering Albatross *Diomedea exulans*

The first to be seen well, was on the 19th, as we steamed S off Argentina. A second was seen later that morning, off the stern. Steaming N across Drake Passage on the 25th, in calm conditions, two were seen in the late afternoon, and later, one was occasionally seen off the stern again. A probable one was noted on the 27th.

Yellow-nosed Albatross *Thalassarche chlororhyncos*

Only seen on the 18th, as we steamed S, having left the River Plate. The first was around noon and two more singles were seen during the afternoon. In similar latitudes on the 1st, two more were identified.

Grey-headed Albatross *Thalassarche chrysostoma*

Two and one were seen on the 22nd, as we steamed S from Cape Horn. In similar latitudes on the 25th four were seen towards the stern.

Black-browed Albatross *Thalassarche melanophrys*

Several were seen on the 18th, as we steamed S off Argentina, and during the 19th and 20th sightings became increasingly more frequent, with day totals in excess of 100. A few were present off Cape Horn on the 22nd and one was seen on the 23rd, as we sighted the Antarctic Peninsula. Another appeared on the 24th, as we sailed N from Elephant's Island, and one was also seen on the 25th. As we sailed N from the Falkland Islands on the 27th, small flocks of about 10 were occasionally seen. On the 1st, two singles were noted during the morning and three more in the afternoon, during our last day at sea.



Black-browed Albatross

Light-mantled Sooty Albatross *Phoebastria palpebrata*

A single was seen by just two of the group in the southern oceans. It appeared briefly in a clear patch between two fog banks.

Southern Giant Petrel *Macronectes giganteus*

The first, a pale form individual, was seen during the afternoon of the 19th, with at least 10 individuals the next day, showing a variety of plumages. One was seen following the ship for a while on the 22nd but the highest numbers were seen in the Bransfield Strait on the 24th, when at least 25 were totalled, among which was a magnificent looking white morph. Three sightings may or may not have involved different individuals. As we steamed away from the Falkland Islands on the 26th, a few more were seen and on the 27th up to 10 or more were seen following the ship.

Northern Giant Petrel *Macronectes halli*

The first one was identified early on the 19th, with at least two the next day, one providing good photographic opportunities. At least three were identified again on the 28th, by others in the group, as we sailed N from Puerto Madryn, at similar latitudes.

Southern Fulmar *Fulmaris glacialisoides*

One was seen by RC on the 22nd and my first was seen early on the 23rd, as we approached the Antarctic Peninsula, followed by twos and threes, and by the end of the day some 30 or more had been recorded.

Cape Petrel *Daption capense*.

Surprisingly few were seen, the first being on the 20th, off southern Argentina, another as we sailed S from Cape Horn on the 22nd and the final two the next day, as we approached the Antarctic Peninsula.

Snow Petrel *Pagodroma nivea*

A total of three was noted on the 23rd, while cruising along the Gerlache Strait. My first suddenly appeared in my binocular vision, a magnificent sight, as it flew over broken-ice floes.

Prions

They are notoriously difficult to identify at sea. However, the breeding distribution indicates which is the more likely. **Slender-billed** breeds in huge numbers on the Falklands (Las Malvinas!) and are usually seen only to the north of the Antarctic Convergence. **Antarctic** breeds in even larger numbers on South Georgia (estimated. a few years ago at 22 million pairs), which is below/within the Convergence where they are more usually to be seen at sea.

(Antarctic Prion *Pachyptila desolata*)

Two which sped S on the 25th, as we steamed N across Drake Passage, are more likely to have been of this species.

Slender-billed Prion *Pachyptila belcheri*

The first, seen on the 19th, was probably of this species, one which was photographed during the next afternoon was certainly of this species, and about 50, seen during the 20th, were more likely to also have been of this species.

Atlantic Petrel *Pterodroma incerta*

The first were seen early on the 19th, when the day total exceeded 50. The only other record concerned a probable one on the 25th, as we steamed across Drake Passage, though others in the group did see three.

Soft-plumaged Petrel *Pterodroma mollis*

One, photographed by Brian Summerfield on the 19th, was the only confirmed record.



Slender-billed Prion

White-chinned Petrel *Procellaria aequinoctialis*

Small numbers, including a few flocks, were noted on the 18th, with fewer than 20 or more the next day and about 10 on the 20th. At least three were present near Cape Horn on the 22nd, with one in the Schollart Channel on the 23rd and one more as we crossed Drake Passage on the 25th. At least 50 were recorded for the 27th, as we sailed N, off the southern Argentine coast again, and the last three were seen on the 1st, as we steamed N from Puerto Madryn.

Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea*

A few were seen early on the 18th

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

Several were seen on the 18th but there were no more sightings until the 28th, when 100s were seen, as we sailed away from Puerto Madryn.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

At least 10 were seen on the 20th, as we sailed S off southern Argentina. Rafts of several 100s were present off Cape Horn on the 22nd. As we left Port Stanley on the 26th, at least 50 could be seen, but only one was noted the next day..

Great Shearwater *Puffinus gravis*

During the afternoon of the 18th, the sea suddenly became alive with seabirds, including literally 1,000's of this species, which dominated the scene. There were scattered sightings on the 19th, totalling at least 15 birds, but only two the next day. The next sightings weren't until the 27th, as we sailed N off the southern Argentine coast, where at least 10 were seen in the late afternoon, followed by at least five, as we steamed away from Puerto Madryn. At a similar latitude to that on the 18th, this species was again the most dominant and 100s were seen, often in small flocks of 10 or more. It was interesting to note the variety of upper-wing plumages, suggesting moult. Some showed an almost complete white sub-terminal secondary bar, others patchy, looking more like Cape Petrels.

Wilson's Storm-Petrel *Oceanites oceanicus*

At least four individuals were seen on the 20th, with larger numbers as we sailed along the Antarctic Peninsula, where small groups were occasionally seen producing day totals of at least 20 on the 23rd and 15 or more on the 24th. At least 15 were also noted, as we steamed N from the Falkland Islands on the 27th.

Grey-backed Storm-Petrel *Garrodia nereis*

First seen on the 20th, as we sailed S off southern Argentina, where one, was followed by two together and another single. One, almost certainly of this species, was also seen on the 22nd, as we steamed S across Drake Passage.

Black-bellied Storm-Petrel *Fregatta tropica*

One, first identified in the Bransfield Strait on the 24th, was seen feeding with about 10 Wilson's Storm Petrels and three Southern Giant Petrels on the water. Late in the day at least 10 more were seen, a few providing opportunities for photographs.

Magellanic/Common Diving Petrel *Pelecanoides magellani/urinatrix*

I was unable to confirm the identification of two in flight and of one that dived on the 20th, though Magellanic breeds in that region. Another was only glimpsed before it dived, as we left Port Stanley.

Great Grebe *Podiceps major*

Two adult and two juvenile birds were seen on a lake in the Tierra del Fuego National Park on the 21st. At least four were seen by other group members on the 2nd, at Puerto Madryn. One was also present in Puerto Madero, Buenos Aires on the 3rd.

Silvery Grebe *Podiceps occipitalis*

Two were noted, by others in the group, at Puerto Madryn on the 2nd.



Northern Royal Albatross

Chilean Flamingo *Phoenicopterus chilensis*

About 50 were present at the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve on the 28th



Maguari Stork *Ciconia*

maguari

Three different birds were seen during the afternoon of the 16th, when we visited the Ceibas Reserve, in Entre Rios province.

Black-faced Ibis *Theristicus melanopis*

Five were seen near Ushuaia, as we drove towards the Tierra del Fuego National Park.

Bare-faced Ibis *Phimosus infuscatus*

Seen only on the 16th, when one was present on the Ceibas Reserve.

White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi*

Seen only on the 16th, when two singles flew over the Ceibas Reserve.

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Two juvenile birds were present in Ushuaia harbour on the 21st, when one was also seen along the river by the tip. One or two in Port Stanley harbour.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Only seen in the Ushuaia area on the 16th, when a total of at least 50 was noted.

Cocoi Heron *Ardea cocoi*

Seen only on the 16th, when one was present within the Ceibas Reserve.

(Western) Great Egret *Egretta alba*

On Bird Island, opposite the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve, on the 28th, five or more pairs were nesting and it was fascinating to see just how long one adult kept feeding its youngster, their bills seemed to be locked together for ever. One was observed, as it fed in a small pond in Park Rodo, Montevideo on the 2nd. One was also seen flying over Puerto Madero on the 3rd.

Whistling Heron *Syrigma sibilatrix*

One was seen at the Otamendi Reserve near Buenos Aires on the 16th.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*

A lone bird was identified from the coach, as we drove from the airport to the Inter Continental Hotel in Buenos Aires on the 15th. Two were also seen in Montevideo on the 2nd, close to Rodo Park.

Neotropic Cormorant *Phalacrocorax brasilianus*

Just one was noted in Ushuaia on the 21st and a few were present in Port Stanley harbour on the 26th. At least two were noted in Puerto Madryn and three were present on the lake in Park Rodo, Montevideo on the 2nd.

Rock Shag *Leucocarbo magellanicus*

At least one was present in Ushuaia harbour on the 21st and two could be seen on Cape Horn the next day. On the 26th literally hundreds could be seen in the breeding colonies around Port Stanley harbour

Imperial Shag *Leucocarbo atriceps*

At least 100 were seen flying across Ushuaia harbour on the 21st. One was identified distantly at Cape Horn on the 22nd and a few were seen, as we steamed along the Antarctic Peninsula on the 23rd and 24th. Large breeding colonies were visible around Port Stanley harbour on the 26th.

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*

One was seen flying over Cape Horn on the 22nd. At least five were present on the Falkland Islands on the 26th and about five were also seen on way to the Valdes Peninsula on the 28th.

White-throated Caracara *Phalacrocorax albogularis*

Seen only on the tip at Ushuaia on the 21st, when at least two adults and a juvenile were present.

Southern Crested Caracara *Caracara plancus*

Seen quite frequently in the Buenos Aires area, with three on the 15th, which included one as we landed at the airport and two within the Costenera Sur Reserve. At least five were noted on the 16th, during visits to the two reserves. Two were also seen from the *Celebrity Infinity* before we sailed on the 17th. In the Ushuaia area on the 21st, at least 10 were totalled. Just one was seen on the Falkland Islands on the 26th and in Montevideo, one flew over the Botanic Gardens, followed by three over Rodo Park.

Chimango Caracara *Milvago chimango*

At least 15 were seen during our visits to the Otamendi and Ceibas Reserves, not far from Buenos Aires, on the 16th, but 50 or more were seen in the Ushuaia area on the 21st.

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius*

Four singles were seen on just three dates. The first during our afternoon visit to the Ceibas Reserve, near Buenos Aires on the 16th. Two were noted between Puerto Madryn and the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve on the 28th and the fourth in Montevideo.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

One flew over the Ushuaia tip on the 21st and another was seen from the docked ship in Puerto Madryn on the 28th.

White-tailed Kite *Elanus leucurus*

One was seen as it hovered over the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve on the 28th.



Chimango Caracara

Snail Kite *Rostrhamus sociabilis*

Two individuals were seen on the 16th, during an afternoon visit to the Ceibas Reserve, in Entre Rios province.

Long-winged Harrier *Circus buffoni*

One was present at the Otamendi Reserve, near Buenos Aires on the 16th.

Cinereous Harrier *Circus cinereus*

One was seen distantly on the 28th, from the long straight road to the Valdes Peninsula.

Savanna Hawk *Buteogallus meridionalis*

An adult and a juvenile were seen well on the 16th, during an afternoon visit to the Ceibas Reserve..

Harris's (Bay-winged) Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus*

One was identified at the Costenera Sur Reserve on the 15th. An immature bird was observed near the Buenos Aires airport on the 3rd, as it totally devoured, what was probably a rat, tail and all.

Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle *Geranoaetus melanoleucus*

Only seen at the tip near Ushuaia on the 21st, where at least five birds, adults and immature, were present.

Roadside Hawk *Buteo magnirostris*

One was heard calling and seen at the Otamendi Reserve, near Buenos Aires on the 16th.

Variable (Red-backed) Hawk *Buteo polyosoma*

A perched individual was seen not far from Port Stanley, as we were driven towards Volunteer Point on the 26th. At least three, probably five different birds were seen on the 28th, on the way to and from Isla de los Pajaros. An immature bird was also seen in Rodo Park, Montevideo on the 2nd.

Grey-necked Wood-Rail *Aramides cajanea*

Singles were seen in the Costenera Sur Reserve on the 15th and 17th, with at least three present in the Botanic Gardens, Montevideo on the 2nd.

Plumbeous Rail *Pardirallus sanguinolentus*

One was seen on the Otamendi Reserve on the 16th.

Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio martinicus*

One was observed on a roadside marshy pool, during the return journey to Buenos Aires, from the Ceibas Reserve, on the 16th.

Snowy Sheathbill *Chionis alba*

Two were seen distantly, as we steamed along Bransfield Strait on the 24th.

Magellanic Oystercatcher *Haematopus leucopodus*

At least five were present in Ushuaia harbour on the 21st and three were seen on Cape Horn the next day. At least four were present on the Falkland Islands on the 26th, with a possible flock, which was feeding too distantly along the shore at the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve to be identified, on the 28th.

Blackish Oystercatcher *Haematopus ater*

One was present by the road to Ushuaia airport on the 21st.

American Oystercatcher *Haematopus palliatus*

Two were seen at relatively close range on the shore at the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve, on the 28th.

Southern Lapwing *Vanellus chilensis*

Surprisingly urbanised, with pairs being seen quite often on any grassy areas, in Montevideo and Buenos Aires, where two pairs were also seen near the airport on the 3rd. A day total of 20 or more was noted in the Buenos Aires area, including the Otamendi and Ceibas Reserves on the 16th and 10 or more were present around Ushuaia on the 21st and in the Botanic Gardens and Rodo Park in Montevideo on the 2nd. I noted just one pair during the day out from Puerto Madryn on the 28th.

Two-banded Plover *Charadrius falklandicus*

On the Falkland Islands, two pairs with full grown young provided good photographic opportunities, on the 26th, and a flock of about 20 fed on the shore at the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve, on the 28th.

Rufous-chested Dotterel

Charadrius modestus

A small flock of at least 10 adults and juveniles was present by the Ushuaia airport road on the 21st.

South American Snipe

Gallinago paraguaiiae magellanica

An adult of this southern race was observed at rest in a grassy area of the National Park, near Ushuaia, on the 21st.

White-rumped Sandpiper

Calidris fuscicollis

A flock of about 50 peeps seen in flight over the Ushuaia harbour on the 21st may have been of this species, though Baird's also occurs here. On the Falkland Islands, a flock of about 30 was

seen by other members of the group, on the shore at Volunteer Point on the 26th and one was identified on the shore at the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve on the 28th.



Dolphin Gull *Leucophaeus scoresbii*

Literally 100s were present around Ushuaia on the 21st, not only around the harbour but also at the tip, with scores during the visit to the Falklands on the 26th.

Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus*

Not one was noted until we arrived at Ushuaia on the 21st, when literally 100s were present, not only around the harbour but also at the tip. There were large rafts of these gulls off Cape Horn on the 22nd, with 20 or more, as we steamed along the Antarctic Peninsula on the 23rd, though only two were noted on the 24th. Scores were present during the visit to the Falklands on the 26th, and 100s were again noted on the 28th, when we visited Puerto Madryn and the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve. Around Montevideo on the 2nd and finally, on the 3rd in Buenos Aires, 100s were again noted.

Brown-hooded Gull *Larus maculipennis*

A flock of at least 50 was present in Ushuaia harbour on the 21st, 30 or more were seen in the Puerto Madryn area on the 28th and about a dozen in Montevideo on the 2nd.

Ceyanne Tern *Sterna eurygnatha*

A non-breeding adult was photographed satisfactorily in flight on Feb 28th off the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve.

Royal Tern *Sterna maxima*

Two were present on the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve on the 28th.

South American Tern *Sterna hirundinacea*

Most commonly seen in Ushuaia harbour, where 100s were present. Off Cape Horn on the 22nd at least 20 were seen, with just one noted in Port Stanley harbour on the 26th and at least five were seen on the 28th, off the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve.

Antarctic Tern *Sterna vittata*

On the 23rd, as we steamed along Schollart Channel, into Paradise Bay and later along the Gerlache Straight, a total of maybe 50 or more was noted.

Chilean Skua *Catharacta chilensis*

At least two were seen in Ushuaia harbour on the 21st.

Subantarctic Skua *Catharacta antarcticus lonnbergi*

I considered all the *Catharacta* skuas we saw, apart from the two Chilean above, to be of this species.

The first two were seen on the 19th, as we steamed S, well off the Argentinian coast, with two 'pairs' the next day. Three were seen off Cape Horn, at dawn on the 22nd, at least 15 were totalled on the 23rd, and another five or more on the 24th, within the Antarctic Peninsula waters. Two, as we sailed away from Port Stanley on the 26th, were presumably of the Falkland race *C.a.antarcticus*. Three and one on the 27th were 'Brown' Skuas not specifically identified.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

On the 18th, as we steamed S, well off the Argentinian coast, a tailless adult was seen around mid-afternoon, followed by two adults with 'spoons' a little later. Another tailless adult was seen on the 1st, as we sailed N at similar latitudes.

Long-tailed Jaeger *Stercorarius longicaudus*

A juvenile, seen flying S on the 18th, kept parallel to the ship for some time. A little later, an adult also flew S. A total of five birds were seen.

Picazuro Pigeon *Patagionas picazuro*

Commonly seen in and around Buenos Aires, with at least 20 noted on the 15th and 16th, with about half that number during an early morning visit to the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve. Similarly, at the end of the visit, at least 10 were noted during our visit to Montevideo on the 2nd, with a few more during the coach tour of Buenos Aires on the 3rd.

Spot-winged Pigeon *Patagionas maculosa*

One was seen well on the 16th, within the Ceibas Reserve.

Eared Dove *Zenaida auriculata*

With a similar distribution as the Picazuro Pigeon, virtually all the records were on the same dates in the Buenos Aires area, with minimum totals of five on the 15th, 20 on the 16th and 10 on the 17th. Apart from one in Puerto Madryn on the 28th, at least three were seen in Montevideo on the 2nd and probably 50 or more during the coach tour of Buenos Aires on the 3rd.

Picui Ground-Dove *Columbina picui*

The first one was present in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 17th, two were seen in the Montevideo Botanic Gardens on the 2nd and one during the coach tour of Buenos Aires on the 3rd.

White-tipped Dove *Leptotila verreauxi*

One was seen in the Montevideo Botanic Gardens on the 2nd.

Nanday (Black-hooded) Parakeet *Nandayus nenday*

Only seen in Buenos Aires, in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve, where at least five were noted on the 15th and probably 100 or more on the 17th.



Nanday Parakeet

Austral Parakeet *Enicognathus ferrugineus*

At least six were seen during the visit to the Tierra del Fuego National Park on the 21st.

Monk Parakeet *Myiopsitta monachus*

Very much associated with urban areas and parks. Day totals of at least 25 were noted in Buenos Aires on the 15th, 16th and 17th, with 10 or more on the 3rd. Also commonly seen in the Montevideo Botanic Gardens, where at least 30 were present.

Guira Cuckoo *Guira guira*

The only one recorded was by the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 15th.

Austral Pygmy Owl *Glaucidium nanum*

Three different individuals were seen in the Tierra del Fuego National Park on the 21st, including an obliging adult, which was photographed again and again.



Austral Pygmy Owl

Glittering-bellied Emerald *Chlorostilbon aureoventris*

This proved to be the most frequently seen hummingbird, with one in the Otamendi Reserve on the 16th, two singles in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 17th, at least five in the Montevideo Botanic Gardens on the 2nd and a total of three during the coach tour of Buenos Aires on the 3rd.

Gilded Sapphire *Hylocaris chrysur*

One was identified in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 17th.

White-throated Hummingbird *Leucochloris albicollis*

One was seen well and photographed in the Montevideo Botanic Gardens on the 2nd.

Ringed Kingfisher *Ceryl torquata*

Two were seen during the visit to the Tierra del Fuego National Park on the 21st.

Green-barred Woodpecker *Chrysoptilus melanochloros*

Singles were seen in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 15th and on the Otamendi/Ceibas Reserve on the 16th, with two within the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve again on the 17th, with one in the Montevideo Botanic Gardens on the 2nd.

White-fronted Woodpecker *Melanerpes cactorum*

One was photographed by Brian Summerfield on the 16th, during the visit to the Ceibas Reserve.

White Woodpecker *Leuconerpes candidus*

Hernan Goni pointed one out during our visit to the Ceibas Reserve on the 16th.

Checkered Woodpecker *Picoides mixtus*

The first was seen on the Otamendi Reserve on the 16th, with three in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 17th.

Magellanic Woodpecker *Campephilus magellanicus*

Only heard calling on the 21st, within the Tierra del Fuego National Park.

White-naped Xenopsaris *Xenopsaris albinucha*
The only record concerned one on the 16th in the Ceibas Reserve.

White-crested Elaenia *Elaenia albiceps*
At least four were seen on the 21st, within the Tierra del Fuego National Park.

Chaco Suiriri *Suiriri suiriri*
One, a species recently split from Suiriri Flycatcher, was identified on the 21st, within the Ceibas Reserve.

Warbling Doradito *Pseudocolopteryx flaviventris*
One was seen during the visit to the Otamendi Reserve on the 16th.

Bran-coloured Flycatcher *Myiobobus fasciatus*
At least four were noted, during the visit to the Otamendi Reserve on the 16th, and a juvenile was photographed on the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 17th.

Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus*
Three females, or juveniles, were seen on the 16th, during the visit to the Ceibas Reserve.

Yellow-browed Tyrant *Satrapa icterophrys*
One was seen and photographed on the Otamendi Reserve on the 16th.

Dark-faced Ground Tyrant *Muscisaxicola maclovianus*
At least 10 were present within the Tierra del Fuego National Park on the 21st, with at least two on the 26th, on Volunteer Point, Falkland Islands.

White Monjita *Xolmis irupero*
This amazingly white passerine was seen well on the 16th, during the visit to the Ceibas Reserve.

Cattle Tyrant *Machetornis rixosa*
Two were seen in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 17th, with about five on the 3rd, during the coach tour of Buenos Aires.

Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus*
Commonly seen on the three reserves visited in the Buenos Aires area, with one on the 15th and at least five on both the 16th and 17th, and three or more on the 3rd. At least five were also seen in the Montevideo Botanic Gardens on the 2nd.

Streaked Flycatcher *Myiodynastes maculatus*
Only noted in the Buenos Aires area, with up to three in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 15th and 17th, and one or two on the Otamendi Reserve on the 16th.

Crowned Slaty Flycatcher *Grisotyrannus aurantioatrocristatus*
A pair and a juvenile were seen in the Ceibas Reserve on the 16th.

Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus*
Seen quite commonly in the Buenos Aires area, with up to five or more in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 15th and 17th, and at least 10 on the Otamendi and Ceibas Reserves on the 16th. About eight were noted in the Montevideo parks.

Fork-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus savana*
Three were seen in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 15th, with at least two on the Otamendi Reserve the next day.

Rufous-capped Antshrike *Thamnophilus ruficapillus*
One was seen well and photographed on the Otamendi Reserve on the 16th.

Grey-flanked Cinclodes *Cinclodes oustaleti*
Two or three were seen on the shore by the airport road in Ushuaia on the 21st, including one that was initially studied in the hand, as a result of having flown into our mini-bus.

Dark-bellied Cinclodes *Cinclodes patagonicus*

One was found on the beach in the same place as the previous species. Photographs confirm both species present.

Rufous Hornero *Furnarius rufus*

Commonly seen in the Buenos Aires area and on the reserves visited on the 15th, 16th, 17th and 3rd, when day totals in excess of 20 were noted. This species appeared to be particularly common in the Montevideo Parks and around the town, with 50 or more noted for the 2nd.

Thorn-tailed Rayadito *Aphrastura spinicauda*

A total in excess of 15 was noted on the 21st, within the Tierra del Fuego National Park.

Plain-mantled Tit-Spinetail

Leptasthenura aegithaloides

One was seen by the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve, on the Valdes Peninsula, Puerto Madryn on the 28th.

Short-billed Canestero

Asthenes baeri

The only record concerned one on the 16th, within the Ceibas Reserve.



Thorn-tailed Rayadito

Chotoy Spinetail *Schoeniophylax phryganophilus*

A female, or juvenile, was identified within the Ceibas Reserve on the 16th.

Rufous-capped Spinetail *Synallaxis ruficapilla*

A family party was seen on the 16th, within the Ceibas Reserve.

Stripe-crowned Spinetail *Cranioleuca pyrrhophia*

One of two was photographed on the 16th, within the Ceibas Reserve.

Yellow-chinned Spinetail *Certhiaxis cinnamomea*

One was identified by Hernan and seen by others during our visits on the 16th.

Brown Cacholote *Pseudoseisura lophotes*

At least two were seen on the 16th, within the Ceibas Reserve.

Freckle-breasted Thornbird *Phacellodomus striaticollis*

One was seen within the Otamendi Reserve on the 16th.

Narrow-billed Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes angustirostris*

One was seen well in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 15th.

Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus*

A group of three was present in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 15th.

Chilean Swallow *Tachycineta meyeni*

At least one was seen in the Ushuaia area on the 21st and on the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve on the 28th.

Grey-breasted Martin *Progne chalybea*

At least five were noted on the 15th, mainly within the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve, with two there on the 17th. Commonly seen on the 3rd, with maybe 30 or more during the coach tour around Buenos Aires.

Southern Martin *Progne elegans*
One was seen within the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve on the 28th.

Brown-chested Martin *Progne tapera*
Commonly seen on the 16th, during the visits to both reserves. Within the Ceibas Reserve in the afternoon an adult was photographed as it fed a juvenile, the latter photographed with a dragonfly in its bill. Also seen in Montevideo on the 2nd and back in Buenos Aires on the 3rd.

Southern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*
One was identified within the harbour at Buenos Aires on the 17th.

American Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*
Five or more were present at the Otamendi Reserve on the 16th.

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*
Ones and twos were seen in wide-ranging areas, including two on the Ceibas Reserve on the 16th, one the next morning within the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve, another in the Tierra del Fuego National Park on the 21st, two on the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve on the 28th and finally one on the 3rd, by Puerto Madero.

Masked Gnatcatcher *Poliophtila dumicola*
Only noted in the Buenos Aires area during the 15th – 17th, with about five within the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the first date, two there on the 17th and one on the Otamendi Reserve on the 16th.

Chalk-browed Mockingbird *Mimus saturninus*
Quite commonly seen in the Buenos Aires area, with day totals of up to 15, on the reserve visits during the 15th-17th and during the coach tour on the 3rd. Also common in Montevideo, with at least 10 noted on the 2nd.

Patagonian Mockingbird *Mimus patagonicus*
At least three were seen and heard singing on the 28th, along the road to the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve.

Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*
One was seen in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 15th, two were noticed in Ushuaia on the 21st and several small flocks, totalling maybe 100, were present around Puerto Madero on the 3rd.

Rufous-bellied Thrush *Turdus rufiventris*
Up to 10 or more were seen in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 15th and 17th, with at least two on the Ceibas Reserve on the 16th. Totals of five or more were also noted on the 2nd and 3rd, in the Montevideo Botanic Gardens and during the tour of Buenos Aires respectively.

Austral Thrush *Turdus falcklandii*
Commonly seen on the 21st, in the Tierra del Fuego National Park, where about 15 were noted. A few were also noted on the Falkland Islands, at Volunteer Point, on the 26th and one was seen on the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve on the 28th.



Rufous-bellied Thrush

Creamy-bellied Thrush *Turdus amaurochalinus*
An adult was seen on the Otamendi Reserve on the 16th, with a juvenile the next day in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve. About five were seen during our visits to the two parks in Montevideo on the 2nd.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*
Ten or more were noted on the 15th and 17th, some in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve. Day totals of 50-100 or more were noted in Ushuaia on the 21st, in Montevideo on the 2nd and Buenos Aires again on the 3rd. The only other record was of a pair in Port Stanley on the 26th.

Black-throated Finch *Poephila cincta*

Two hen birds were identified at Volunteer Point, on the Falklands on the 26th.

Correndera Pipit *Anthus correndera*

Two were seen and song was heard on the 26th, as we crossed the moorland from Volunteer Point to Port Stanley.

Hooded Siskin *Carduelis magellanica*

In the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve, a flock of at least seven was seen on the 15th, followed by just one on the 17th. One was also seen in the partially wooded area near Buenos Aires airport on the 3rd.

Black-chinned Siskin *Carduelis barbata*

A small flock was present near the Ushuaia tip on the 21st.

Masked Yellowthroat *Geothlypis aequinoctialis*

One was seen on the Otamendi Reserve on the 16th.

Stripe-crowned Warbler *Basileuterus culicivorus*

Two were discovered in a small wood near Buenos Aires airport on the 3rd.

Epaulet Oriole *Icterus cayanensis*

Two were observed feeding and another was photographed, as it fed on attractive seeding reed heads, on the 17th in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve.

Scarlet-headed Blackbird *Amblyramphus holosericeus*

Two were seen on the Otamendi Reserve on the 16th.

Brown-and-yellow Marshbird *Pseudoleistes virescens*

At least two were present in the Otamendi Reserve on the 16th.

Baywing *Agelaioides badius*

Seen daily from the 15th-17th, with three noted in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the first date and at least 20 there on the last. On the 16th at least 10 were present in the Ceibas Reserve. Finally, two or more were seen in the open, partially wooded area by the Buenos Aires airport on the 3rd.

Shiny Cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis*

At least two were noted in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 15th, with over 20 in the two Montevideo parks on the 2nd and about 15 during the tour of Buenos Aires on the 3rd.

Common Grackle *Quiscalus quiscula*

One, seen within the harbour at Buenos Aires on the 17th, had presumably had an assisted passage.

Long-tailed Meadowlark *Sturnella loyca*

About a dozen were seen near Volunteer Point on the Falklands on the 26th. A flock of about a dozen was seen near the museum on the Valdes Peninsula road on the 28th, when another was seen well and photographed in the Isla de los Pajaros Reserve.

Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis*

A few were noted in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 15th and 17th, at least 20 were seen in Ushuaia on the 21st, ten or more in Montevideo on the 2nd and another five or more back in Buenos Aires on the 3rd.

Red-crested Cardinal *Paroaria coronata*

At least five were seen in the Ceibus Reserve on the 16th.

Sayaca Tanager *Thraupis sayaca*

One was glimpsed in the Ceibus Reserve on the 16th.

Diademed Tanager *Stephanophorus diadematus*

One, identified by Hernan on the Otamendi Reserve on the 16th, was seen very poorly.

Patagonian Sierra Finch *Phrygilus patagonicus*

At least five were seen in the Tierra del Fuego National Park on the 21st.

Long-tailed Reed Finch *Donacospiza albifrons*
One was seen and photographed in the Otamendi Reserve on the 16th.

Black-and-rufous Warbling Finch *Poospiza nigrorufa*
One was identified within the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 17th.

Saffron Finch *Sicalis flaveola*
Three-four were seen in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 15th and 17th, and in the Ceibas Reserve on the 16th, a female was observed feeding two juveniles. Single pairs were noted in the Montevideo Botanic Gardens on the 2nd and near Puerto Madero on the 3rd.

Double-collared Seedeater *Sporophila caerulescens*
At least 10 were seen in the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 15th, and about five were seen the next day during our reserve visits.

Golden-billed Saltator *Saltator aurantiirostris*
One was seen well within the Costanera Sur Nature Reserve on the 17th.

Ultramarine Grosbeak *Cyanocompsa brissonii*
An adult male was seen within the Otamendi Reserve on the 16th.

A total of 189 species was recorded.

MAMMALS

Long-beaked Common Dolphin
Bottle-nosed Dolphin
Dusky Dolphin
Peale's Dolphin
Orca
Antarctic Minke Whale
Humpback Whale
Fin Whale
South American Sea-Lion
Crab-eating Seal
Leopard Seal
Antarctic Fur Seal
Southern Elephant Seal
Canadian Beaver
Fuegian Red Fox
Bunny Rat
Guanacho



