Eagle-Eye Tours



Patagonia Wildlife Safari Trip Report 2025

Link: Patagonia Wildlife Safari Trip Report 2025

Day 1: Buenos Aires

The tour began in Buenos Aires with a nice walk to the Rio Dique restaurant zone where the group had a delicious dinner. On the way we watched a Monk Parakeet building a nest in a crane, saw Gray-breasted Martins flying over the river, and saw and heard our first chingolos (Rufous-collared Sparrows) of the trip. We also enjoyed our first bottle or two of famous Argentinian Malbec.

Day 2: Costanera Sur and flight to Trelew

While some of us rested after our long flights, a few of us took a pre-breakfast walk to the west side of Costanera Sur reserve where we saw Rosy-billed Pochards, Southern Screamers and more. We then had a short ride to the local aeroparque and boarded our flight to Trelew. We headed directly from the airport to start birding at Parque de Los Ornitólogos, a large lagoon where we found hundreds of dancing Chilean Flamingos and a few species of ducks. From there we made our way north to our seaside hotel in Puerto Piramides where we enjoyed a delicious pizza dinner at an iconic local spot.



Chilean Flamingos © Phil Chaon

Day 3: Valdes Peninsula

Our first stop of the morning was the South American Sea Lion colony at Punta Piramides. We watched dozens of these pinnipeds on the rocks while Snowy Sheathbills milled about and giant petrels zoomed by on the strong winds. While we waited for our morning whale watch, we tracked down a handsome Tufted Tit-tyrant, who sat happily singing on a telephone wire before returning to the scrub. Following that, we took a boat ride to see Southern Right Whales. Despite the high winds yesterday and predicted for the following days, we had a window of nice weather and were able to get great views of a cow and calf as well as a few others. After our amazing whale experience we got in a van with our local guide Carina and took a grad tour of the Valdes Peninsula with stops of observe Magellanic Penguins, Guanacos, and the bizarre Patagonian Maras.



Tufted Tit-Tyrant © Phil Chaon



Southern Right Whale © Phil Chaon

Day 4: Valdes Peninsula

D4, 10/29: We took a morning walk around the scrub near the hotel finding Patagonian Mockingbirds, Mourning Sierra Finches, and Chiguanco Thrushes. The stunning and abundant Long-tailed Meadowlarks were a crowd favotire. We made a couple of stops on the way south and, despite

the strong winds, we had nice looks at Diuca Finches. After a delicious lunch overlooking the Atlantic, we dropped our bags at the hotel then took a nice walk through the nearby scrub seeing a nest-building Sharp-billed Canastero, Burrowing Parakeets, and a Lesser Shrike-Tyrant.



Patagonia Mara © Phil Chaon

Day 5: Playa Isla Escondida

After a stop at the big dinosaur (Patagotitan) statue, we drove a long empty road to the beautiful Playa Isla Escondida. There on the beach we spent time with a number of Southern Elephant Seals including a big beach master. We also saw Lesser Horned Owls, Two-banded Plovers, several flightless White-headed Steamer-Ducks and others. Taking advantage of the calm weather and sunshine, we opted for a picnic right on the beach. In the afternoon we took a flight to Ushuaia, trading the sunny and arid Monte for temperate Magellanic Rainforest and snow-capped mountains.



Elephant Seal pup © Phil Chaon



White-headed Steamer Duck © Phil Chaon

Day 6: Ushuaia

Our morning boat trip down the Beagle Channel took us past the Faro de Los Eclairs, am island where a Blackish Cinclodes flew out to the boat to drink from tiny puddles of fresh water. The rocks around the lighthouse were draped with young sea lions and hundreds of Imperial and Magellanic

Cormorants adorning the rocks. After navigating the channel and admiring the graceful passage of Southern Fulmars and Black-browed Albatross we reached our final destination, a small island home to the only South American Colony of Gentoo Penguins! Among the dozens of Gentoo we also saw several Magellanic Penguins and a single, wayward, King Penguin presiding over the congregation. In the afternoon we took a short walk to look for birds and appreciate the scenery around Glacier Martial. At night we were delighted by the festive costumes of local kids as they paraded around town for Halloween.



Blackish Cinclodes © Phil Chaon



Southern Fulmar © Phil Chaon



Southern Elephant Seal © Phil Chaon

Day 7: Tierra del Fuego National Park

Our excursion this morning took us into the misty, moss laden forests of Tierra del Fuego National Park. After a bit of searching among the older stands of Southern Beech in the park we came across one of the most emblematic species from Patagonia, the Magellanic Woodpecker. After seeing several other southern temperate forest specialties such as White-throated Treerunner, we hit the road again after lunch to meet our shorebird guide Agustin. The high tide had concentrated the birds on a narrow strip of beach and we were able to watch hundreds of Hudsonian Godwits roosting with Magellanic Oystercatchers and Red Knots.



Magellanic Woodpecker © Phil Chaon

Day 8:

In the morning we headed out in 50-mph plus winds to look for Magellanic Plovers. The wind made the searching tricky (and the walking wasn't easy either!) but we finally found a single plover that stuck around long enough for all to see it. A flock of geese near the estancia headquarters turned up a few rare Ruddy-headed Geese among the more common Upland and Ashy-headed. Saying goodbye to Agustin, we crossed the border into Chile to see if the King Penguin colony would be open in the high winds. Unfortunately, the winds kept the colony closed but we were to see the large penguins from the road.



Magellanic Plover © Phil Chaon

Day 9:

The first order of business on this day was crossings the Strait of Magellan. Luckily morning winds were not as extreme as predicted for later in the day and we made it across with no problems. Our drive to the Pali Aike area had one of the highest concentrations of guanacos we'd seen on the trip and we also encountered new birds such as Chocolate-vented Tyrants and Tawny-throated Dotterel. With Pali Aike closed on Mondays we were content to bird the nearby fields that held a nice diversity of birdlife including some beautiful Rufous-chested Dotterels. On our drive in the afternoon we spotted our first Andean Condor of the trip making a low pass right over the road.



Rufous-chested Dotterel © Phil Chaon



Guanaco © Phil Chaon



Our group after seeing a condor © Adam Kent

Day 10: Puerto Natales to Torres del Paine

We had a restful morning in Puerto Natales with a walk to the coast near our hotel to see Black-necked Swans with cygnets. We then drove to Torres del Paine National Park, stopping to take in our first looks at this world-famous landscape. We had lunch near Lago Grey and after we took a

nice walk across an old terminal moraine to see this impressive glacier, admire the stunning lake and get some up close looks at crystal clear glacial ice. Having had some fresh air and a nice walk, we returned for an early night sleep to get rested for our pre-dawn morning tomorrow.



Torres del Paine © Phil Chaon



Long-tailed Meadowlark © Phil Chaon



Ashy-headed Goose © Phil Chaon

Day 11: Pumas

This was a very early morning to optimize our chances of finding a puma. Upon meeting our puma tracker guide at 5:15 am we were immediately informed of the good news - a puma had been sighted not far away! This individual, a large male named Virgo, was resting when we first arrived, then walked up the hill a bit and we were able to see how huge he was. Our next stop of the morning was at Cascada del Paine – a truly scenic place to admire an equally handsome Torrent Duck. While watching the duck our tracker was radioed that another puma had been spotted nearby. We quickly made it to the spot and this time had even better looks than earlier at a very close puma. This young female strolled right by, barely giving us a second glance. After making sure everyone had long, satisfying views of Puma, we turned our attention to birds. A pair of Spectacled Ducks at point-blank range was a highlight for everyone, taking time to appreciate details, like their iridescent wing panels shifting from emerald to fuchsia in the changing light. We followed a memorable morning with a lunch overlooking the water and towering peaks, a well deserved rest in the afternoon, and a short walk near the lodge in before dinner.



Puma © Phil Chaon



Spectacled Duck © Phil Chaon



Torres del Paine and Flying Steamer Duck © Phil Chaon

Day 12: Torres del Paine

We spent this day drinking in the spectacular vistas and searching for species that had yet eluded us. A stroll along a small lake turned up a localized Patagonian Canastero and great looks at displaying White-tufted Grebes and Andean Ducks. We took a short walk near our lunch restaurant and found an Austral Pygmy-Owl hunting, completely unbothered by our presence. Less than a hundred meters away, a pair of Austral Parakeets were busy excavating a nest cavity, again, not giving us a second glance. We ended the day with a long walk along the river, enjoying the perfect weather and some of the charismatic species we had already spent time with.



Austral Negrito © Phil Chaon



Austral Parakeet © Phil Chaon



Our group © Adam Kent

Day 13: Punta Arenas

In the morning on our way back to Punta Arenas we stopped to look at birds in an area with lots of Chilean Fire Bushes with red flowers. While we were too early in the year for hummingbirds, we did see an Austral Pygmy-Owl with a host of birds nearby mobbing it. From the owl stop, we made our way to the Milodon Cave where we took a short walk. Saving one more fantastic wildlife sighting for the end – a Lesser Grison crossed the road on the way out of the park. This seldom seen member of the weasel family was a new animal for everyone on the bus – including the guides and the driver! We had a nice lunch stop in Puerto Natales where everyone finally found some quality souvenirs, then we continued to Punta Arenas where we had some fresh local fish and a few locally brewed beers near the sea before saying our farewells.



Austral Pygmy-Owl © Phil Chaon



Black-faced Ibis © Phil Chaon

[Patagonia Wildlife Safari eBird list (2025)]