

Central Zone

Andean Birds



Mountain Caracara

The Andes Mountains are very young, as you can deduce from their steep slopes and sharp snow covered peaks. In Chile's central region the mountains are particularly craggy and the valleys are narrow and normally defined by narrow rivers. In winter, the Andes of central Chile are completely covered by snow and only a few species, like the Andean Condor and the Mountain Caracara, remain there. The majority of the birds migrate to the north. Some of them even reach the Peruvian Andes. Other species merely descend to a lower altitude so as to avoid the snow.

But in spring, life starts afresh and many birds return to take advantage of the various environments offered by the Andes. This is the best season to watch them from fields, ravines, fertile lowlands, lakes and grasslands, where recently returned species start their reproductive period and raise their young.

PROGRAM

Day 1. Welcome to Chile

Arrival and reception of passengers at Santiago International Airport and transfer to the hotel. After check-in, the passengers will have a few hours of spare time to settle in and take a rest from the flight. If some people were interested in spending their spare time bird watching, we could take an interesting trip into the Andes around Santiago. We will meet in the evening in order to get acquainted, have dinner and talk about our forthcoming trip. Overnight stay in Santiago.

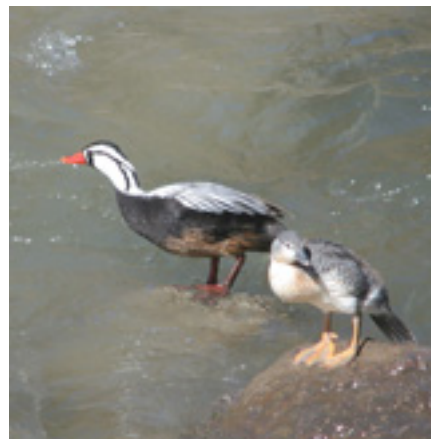
Day 2. Farellones

On the first day, we will make a trip to the mountains that surround the city of Santiago. We will go to Farellones, a well-known ski resort located at an altitude of 2,500 m (8,200 ft) above sea level. Along the road, we will look out for birds common to the central valley and the Andean foothills, and we will later focus on mountain birds. We will try to spot birds like the endemic Chilean Tinamou, Dusty-tailed Canastero, Moustached Turca and Chilean Mockingbird, and also the Andean Condor, Mountain Caracara, White-sided Hillstar, Scale-throated Earthcreeper, Slender-billed Canastero, Cordilleran Canastero and Ochre-naped Ground-Tyrant. Overnight stay in Santiago.



Day 3. El Yeso

Early in the morning we will leave for El Yeso, located deep in the Andes. Here we will visit diverse mountain environments such as fertile fields, lakes, rivers and high altitude grasslands. Each location will provide us with different species, namely the Crested Duck, Speckled Teal, Torrent Duck, Diademed Sandpiper-Plover, South American Snipe, Gray-breasted Seedsnipe, Crag Chilia (endemic), Greater Yellow-Finch and three species of Ground-Tyrants (White-browed, Black-fronted, Ochre-naped). Overnight stay in Santiago.



Day 4. End of the programme

After a good night's rest and a nice breakfast, the trip will end with check out and transfer to the airport, if requested.