

# Central Zone

## Andes and Pacific Ocean



Rufous-tailed Plantcutter

The central region of Chile is very narrow, between 90 and 170 km wide. In this region, the high, snow-capped Andes mountain range coexists with the rivers and estuaries that form the valleys used for agriculture, and with the coast. The cold Humboldt Current flows through the Pacific Ocean. In this diversity of environments we find a great variety of birds ranging from species specially adapted to mountainous regions to those who fly tirelessly over the waves of the Pacific Ocean. In the valleys and hillsides of the Andean foothills we find Mediterranean birds, including some very interesting endemic species. The coastline also has migratory species from North America, which, come to the South American coast during the northern winter to gather the energy they require for next season's reproduction cycle.

This trip will give you a fairly complete overview of the birds of Chile, since most of the species present in Chile can be found in this region, with the obvious exception of the species found exclusively in the north or in the south of the country.

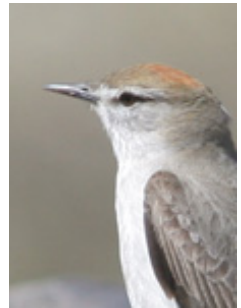
### PROGRAM

#### 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. Introduction to the Central Andes

On the first day, we will make a trip to the mountains that surround the city looking for birds of the central Andes. We will head for Farellones, a ski resort located in the Andes. We will be looking for birds that inhabit the foothills like the endemic Chilean Tinamou, Dusky-tailed Canastero, Moustached Turca, and Chilean Mockingbird. As we climb higher, we will see Andean birds like the Andean Condor, the national bird of Chile, Mountain Caracara, Grey-breasted Seedsnipe, White-sided Hillstar, Scaled-throated Earthcreeper, three different Ground-Tyrants (White-browed, Rufous-naped, and Black-fronted) and Greater Yellow-Finch among others. Overnight stay in Santiago.



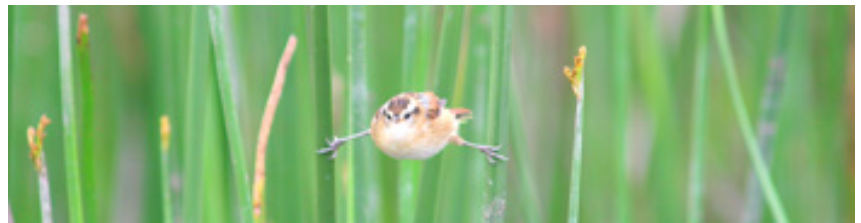
#### Day 3. El Yeso Reservoir

On our second morning, we will leave for El Yeso Reservoir, located deep in the Andes Mountains. Here, we will observe the different environments of the central Chilean Andean range: high altitude bogs, lakes, rivers and grasslands. We will be looking for birds that inhabit the foothills and the mountains, like the Crested Duck, Speckled Teal, Torrent Duck, Diademed-Sandpiper- Plover, South American Snipe, Gray-breasted Seedsnipe, Crag Chilia (endemic), and White-browed Ground Tyrant among others. Overnight stay in Santiago.

#### Day 4. Wetlands and Coastal birds

We will dedicate this day to waterfowl and other coastal birds, and a long trip will be necessary.

We will visit wetlands near Santiago and many lagoons on the coast, one of which is the well-known natural sanctuary "Laguna El Peral". At various specific points on the road we will also try to spot shorebirds and waterfowls like the White-tufted Grebe, Silvery Grebe, Great Grebe, Black-necked Swan, Stripe-backed Bittern, Black Vulture, Plumbeous Rail, South American Painted-Snipe, American Oystercatcher, Grey Gull, Warbling Doradito, Wren-like Rushbird and Many-colored Rush-Tyrant. Overnight stay in Vina del Mar.



#### Day 5. Trip to Humboldt Current and its birds

We will start our expedition early and leave the hotel at about six in the morning in order to sail the waters of the Humboldt Current. This is one of the marine currents with the highest biological productivity, and originates in Antarctica. It is very cold and very rich in nutrients; this attracts many sea birds as well as marine mammals to the South American Pacific coast. We will find birds like the Northern Royal Albatross, Black-browed Albatross, Buller's Albatross, Salvin's Albatross, Southern Giant Petrel, Southern Fulmar, Juan Fernandez Petrel, White-chinned Petrel, Westland Petrel, Pink-footed Shearwater, Elliot's Storm-Petrel, Peruvian Diving-Petrel and Humboldt Penguin among others. After our sail, we will drive to a Humboldt Penguin colony and will see other birds like the endemic Seaside Cinclodes. Overnight stay in Santiago.

#### Day 6. 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.