

The ONE and ONLY
birdwatching expedition
in Tierra del Fuego



under
sail

Aboard
S/Y SELMA EXPEDITIONS
led by Krzysztof Konieczny

From Ushuaia to Ushuaia
12 days, 11 nights

start: 7.11.2011 end: 18.11.2011

Great value for an Adventure at the end of the world!

See movie <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QZ0pVLpoHdg>



*Krzysztof Konieczny
experienced
birding leader*

Tierra del Fuego Islands the most southern tip of South America.

Extremely picturesque with an abundance of fjords and surrounded by steep mountain slopes. The lower parts are overgrown by dense forest. The peaks are covered by snow and glaciers flow into the channels. Here we find an abundance of wild flora and fauna. We have been sailing around this waters for a number of years and come to know the area well. We love it over here!

So, we teamed up with Krzysztof Konieczny and want to invite you for a magical sailing/birding trip to discover these wild places. Our skipper Piotr Kuzniar, who is also a biologist, will take you from Ushuaia, situated on the Beagle Channel to the edge of the Pacific Ocean and back.

Here are the main attributes of travelling on our sailing yacht:

- a completely self-sufficient way of travelling
- the freedom to go to places that are not visited by cruisers and local organizers
- an escape from „civilization“
- living with nature 24 hours a day
- the unique and intimate atmosphere on our expedition yacht

Please remember that sailing experience and the possession of personal sailing gear is not necessary.

We must emphasise that the order of visiting places depends strongly on the weather.

Final decisions will be taken by the skipper.





Tierra del Fuego – the end of the world

Arrival in Ushuaia.

The members will be met by one of our team at the airport. From there we will be going to the yacht. She will be waiting for us at the Afasyn Yacht Club in Ushuaia. On the same day it will be possible to visit the Tierra del Fuego National Park.

Ushuaia – Puerto Williams

Leaving Ushuaia early morning to Puerto Williams to follow the immigration and custom procedures in Chile. After obtaining clearance from the Chilean authorities we will step down onto the stony peninsula surrounding Puerto Williams from the North. Here on the rocky banks we will meet **Black-faced Ibis** (*Theristicus melanopsis*), which will surround us with its loud trumpeting. Further down on the dry patches of the mud flats nests **Blackish Oystercatcher** (*Haematopus ater*), **Magellanic Oystercatcher** (*Haematopus leucopodus*) and **Black-faced Ibis** (*Theristicus melanopsis*). What a surprise for us as Europeans to see the familiar **Night Heron** (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) standing on the water's edge. The peninsula is also a home for nesting Gulls: the **Kelp Gull** (*Larus dominicanus*) and the **Dolphin Gull** (*Larus scoresbii*). In the small harbour itself we will certainly be welcomed by the loud **Dark-bellied Cinclodes** (*Cinclodes patagonicus*) and the beautiful **Ringed Kingfisher** (*Ceryle torquata*) which will sit on the boat spreaders.



Ushuaia, photo: K. Konieczny



Ringed Kingfisher (*Ceryle torquata*), photo: K. Konieczny

Caleta Olla

Take the time to linger a little longer in this peaceful bay. A glacier tongue reaches down to a lake, emerging from the rain forest which covers the high mountains. The moraine flows down towards vast beaver land, crisscrossed by canals and beaver lodges. It is the perfect spot for observing birds of prey. **Andean Condor** (*Vultur gryphus*) sit on the barren rocks and beaches. They fly, circling closely to trekkers walking around the glacial lake.

They are joined by **Turkey Vultures** (*Cathartes aura*), and together they watch for carrion. Often, the latter can be seen patrolling the berthing spaces in search of food debris.

Once the anchor has been dropped, the **Caracara Southern Crested** (*Caracara plancus*) and the Chiamango Caracara appear on the beach. **Rufous-chested Plover** (*Charadrius modestus*) sprint along the rocky beaches. Whilst wandering around extensive beaver colony, we may meet the **Speckled Teal Duck** (*Anas flavirostris*), which leads its chicks here. **South American Snipe** (*Gallinago paraguaise*) and **Fuegian Snipe** (*Gallinago strickle*) wade in the drying channels of the mud flats. In the undergrowth white orchids (*Codonorchis*) and yellow orchids (*Gavilea lutea*) grow.



Andean Condor (*Vultur gryphus*), photo: T. Žak

Off to the Seno Garibaldi to spend the whole day there.

Whilst sailing towards the Garibaldi glacier, keep an eye on the splitting waves on the bow, where you may be lucky enough to spot **Peale's Dolphin** (*Lagenorhynchus australis*) and a small **Rookery of Magellanic penguins** (*Spheniscus magellanicus*). In the bay, observe the cormorants nesting on the high rocks. If the ice pack is not too dense we can take the dinghy to visit the colony of **Rock Shag** (*Phalacrocorax magellanicus*) and **Imperial Shag** (*Phalacrocorax atriceps*). We will encounter the **Kelp goose** (*Chloephaga hybrida*) along the craggy banks, its sexual dimorphism immediately evident. The male snowy white, the female black as coal with white flecks. One could easily mistake them for different species.



Kelp goose (*Chloephaga hybrida*), photo: K. Konieczny

We will sail from Seno Garibaldi to Canal Balenero

where we will meet the Pacific. Moving westwards to the open waters of the Pacific we will begin to look for albatrosses and other procellariiformes. Certainly here we will see the **Blackbrowed Albatross** (*Thalassarche melanophiris*) and we will attempt to read its bird bands. Maybe we will discover something new about our air-borne friends, their long journeys ahead of them, their homelands, our wish to connect and understand them. Here we have a chance also to see the **Grey-headed Albatross** (*Thalassarche chrysostoma*), as well as the huge **Wandering Albatross** (*Diomedea exulans*) and in the advent of favourable weather there is a chance to spot a beautiful **Light-mantled Sooty Albatross** (*Phoebastria palpebrata*). Whilst luring albatrosses we are likely to attract the **Southern Giant Petrel** (*Macronectes giganteus*) and the **Northern Giant Petrel** (*Macronectes halli*). The **Chilean Skua** (*Catharacta chilensis*) will be our constant companion and will beg us for our last biscuit crumb... And yet more surprises await us: little petrels, terns and all the sea birds that will arrive on the unknown winds.



Chilean Skua (*Catharacta chilensis*), photo: T. Žak

Return to Seno Coloane (one day)

Sailing from Canal Balenero to Puerto Wiliams

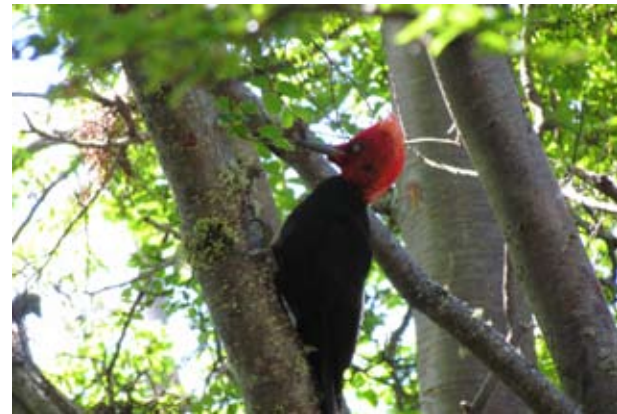
Sailing along the Beagle Channel, we will look into the small bays, where sea ducks dominate – the **Flying Steamer-Duck** (*Tachyeres patachonicus*), patrolling its coastline stretches and the Flightless **Steamer-Duck** (*Tachyeres pteneres*) tooting proudly on the border of water and rocks. Above the giant mountains look for the mysterious, great predator, the **Black-chested Buzzard - Eagle** (*Geranoaetus melanoleucus*). When we reach the Estancia Yendegaia we will forge ahead, crossing slopes covered with thick bushes in search of **Austral Negrito** (*Lessonia rufa*), a beautifully coloured bird, whose feeding grounds are next to small buildings. We will check to see if the tiny Thorn-tailed Rayadito are nesting again in a small hollow, and that the beautiful **Patagonian Sierra-Finch** (*Phrygilus patagonicus*) forages among inaccessible spiked Berberises.



Austral Negrito (Lessonia rufa), photo: K. Konieczny

Puerto Wiliams to Ushuaia.

Back to immigration and customs, but continuing the exciting field trips. On the open meadows around the PW and USH we will see grazing the **Ashyheaded Goose** (*Chloephaga policephala*) and, defending their territories, the beautiful **Southern Lapwing** (*Vanellus chiliensis*). Loud, strikingly coloured lapwings will leave the nest faking injury to provide a decoy from nesting sites, and if we accidentally come too close, they will not hesitate to attack us.



Magellanic Woodpecker (Campephilus magellanicus), photo: K. Konieczny

The Rufous-collared (*Sparrow Zonotrichia capensis*) and more rare Long-tailed Meadowlark with its exotic red breast will creep carefully in the grazed grass. A trip to the forest in Puerto Wiliams not to be missed! Forests with trees of the genus Nothofagus are havens for the **Magellanic Woodpecker** (*Campephilus magellanicus*). Among the old dead trees, woodpeckers appear like ghosts quietly hammering looking for insect larvae. In the valleys we may see walking amongst the trees the Ashy-headed Goose, little **White-throated Treerunners** (*Pygarrhichas albogularis*), and **Sedge Wrens** (*Cistothorus platensis*) and the **House Wrens** (*Troglodytes Aedon*) in the undergrowth.

Ushuaia, bus trip to the Estancia Harberton, to walk with penguins.

Can penguins nest in burrows? You have to see the incredible **Magellanic penguin** (*Spheniscus magellanicus*) colony. We will take a close look at the penguins which were once studied by Charles Darwin. There are also a few pairs of **gentoo penguins** (*Pygoscelis papua*) – the only rookery in continental Argentina.





Krzysztof Konieczny

– iKris-born 1974 in Poland, naturalist, ornithologist, author of various articles. His day to day work is with (Polskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Przyrody (Polish Society of Friends of Nature) „Pro Natura” in Poland.

He is the recipient of a scholarship for his work with Ashoka.

<http://www.ashoka.org/fellow/4380> and finalist in the Whitley Award Foundation and Rufford Small Grants.

<http://www.ruffordsmallgrants.org/rsg/Projects/KrzysztofKonieczny>

He devotes much of his time to the study of birds and nature conservation and is the author and co-author of many projects in the fields of species and habitats. Krzysztof's aim is to find connections between today's development of the countryside and an understanding of the value of nature.

In nature conservation he engages prisoners, government officials, farmers, firefighters, power engineers and anyone else who can still delight in the simple beauty of the natural world.

In his spare time he photographs his surroundings, preferably from small aircraft and under water. His observations are through a modern day lens or the pinhole of a camera obscura. He has a panoramic world view. He is the author of a number of photographic exhibitions: "Horizontally", "Black Sheep", "Condemned to nature protection", "Lisboa Obscura".

His curiosity of the wider world has taken him almost to the ends of the earth, joining the team on s/y Selma Expeditions, observing the flora and fauna of Antarctica and Tierra del Fuego.

Krzysztof is on a constant quest for knowledge and he is truly a man of the countryside.

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Trip price includes:

- accommodation on board the boat-in double cabins (bunk beds)
<http://www.selmaexpeditions.com/jacht.php?lang=2>
- delicious food served from our galley
- immigration and permission fees to enter the Chilean and Argentinean waters
- guide fees

Trip price excludes:

- domestic and international flights
- on land connections- to and from airports, National Park etc.
- food and drinks on land.
- alcoholic drinks onboard the yacht
- entrance fees to the „Tierra del Fuego National Park,,
- travel insurance including sailing trip
- usage of the satellite telephone on board the boat (except emergency health calls).
- However there is the possibility of using sat-phone at additional cost.
- anything else of purely personal nature
- visit to the rookery of Magellanic Penguins

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