



Hooded Grebe | Macá Tobiano | *Podiceps gallardoi*

# The majestic Hooded Grebe

## (5-day tour)

📍 Lago Strobel, Santa Cruz, Argentina



 Available anytime from October to March

 Group size: 2-6

 Tour category: birdwatching



## Trip overview

The Hooded Grebe (*Podiceps gallardo*) is a handsome near-endemic bird to Argentina that breeds exclusively in some basaltic plateaus of western Santa Cruz, Patagonia Argentina. Among them are the Buenos Aires, Strobel, Asador, and Mata Amarilla plateaus. Like other grebes, this species is highly associated with healthy lakes which offer it the support to build its nesting colonies during the austral summer — an aquatic plant called *Myriophyllum sp.* During winter, it migrates to some estuarine areas of southeast Santa Cruz located between the towns of Río Gallegos and Puerto Santa Cruz. There are also some records in Chile from the late 1990s.

Hooded Grebe was discovered by science in 1974 and, at present, its population is estimated at about 800 individuals. Indeed, it has declined by 80 percent in the last 25 years. As a result of this extremely worrying situation and to avoid its imminent extinction, it was declared a protected species of Santa Cruz in 2003 by Law 2582 and currently, it is also categorized as a Critically Endangered species by IUCN/BirdLife International.

Consequently, this grebe is one of the "most wanted" birds of Southern Patagonia and this tour is specially focused on the search for it and some other endemic species and specialties of this region.

## Tour details

### Target birds for the area

Patagonian Tinamou, Flying Steamer-Duck, Silver Teal, Chiloe Wigeon, Ruddy Duck, Lake Duck, Chilean Flamingo, Hooded Grebe, Austral Rail, Magellanic Plover, Tawny-throated Dotterel, Magellanic Snipe, Least Seedsnipe, Andean Condor, Cinereous Harrier, Variable Hawk, Lesser Horned Owl, White-throated Caracara, Buff-winged Cinclodes, Plain-mantled Tit-Spinetail, Rufous-tailed Plantcutter, Tufted Tit-Tyrant, Dark-faced Ground-Tyrant, Cinnamon-bellied Ground-Tyrant, Chocolate-vented Tyrant, Chilean Swallow, Grass Wren, Patagonian Mockingbird, Yellow-winged Blackbird, Patagonian Yellow-Finch, Gray-hooded Sierra Finch and more.

### Number of expected species

70-75

### Mammal highlights

Guanaco, South American Gray Fox, Humboldt's Hog-nosed Skunk, Large Hairy Armadillo.

## **Itinerary<sup>1</sup>**

### **Day 1: Arrival at FTE.**

Welcome to El Calafate. Arrival at El Calafate Airport "Cdte. Armando Tola" (IATA: FTE) and transfer to Laguna Nimez Natural Reserve. Lunch in the field. Visit Redonda Bay and transfer to Hoya del Chingue area with birding stops. Hotel check-in and dinner. Overnight in El Calafate.

### **Day 2: Drive to Strobel Lake area.**

Transfer to Strobel Lake area with birding stops. Check-in and dinner at the lodge. Overnight in Est. La Angostura.

### **Day 3: Adventure & birding in the Strobel Lake area.**

Full-day birding in search of the Hooded Grebe with a box-lunch included. Transfer back to the Lodge. Dinner. Overnight in Est. La Angostura.

### **Day 4: Full day birding in the area.**

Morning birding in the Strobel Lake area. Lunch in the field. Afternoon transfer to La Angostura Ranch and half day birding. Dinner. Overnight in Est. La Angostura.

### **Day 5: Transfer back to FTE. End of the tour.**

Morning birding in La Angostura Ranch. Transfer back to El Calafate with a box-lunch included. Drop-off. End of the tour.

## **Inclusions**

- ✓ Private ground transportations
- ✓ Guided services
- ✓ Spotting scope: Vortex Diamondback HD 65mm
- ✓ Accommodation: Comfortable lodges and 3-star hotel
- ✓ Three meals a day: breakfast, box-lunch and dinner (3-course meal)
- ✓ Drinking water for refill private bottles (in order to avoid plastic pollution and waste)
- ✓ Entrance fees to private areas and natural parks
- ✓ Personal insurances
- ✓ Communication support in remote areas

## **Exclusions**

- ✗ Flight tickets
- ✗ Alcoholic drinks
- ✗ Tips
- ✗ Extra services or anything not mentioned in this brochure

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<sup>1</sup> Itinerary may be changed due to force majeure, accommodation availability, or unforeseen circumstances.

## **More information**

### **Category**

Birdwatching, with good opportunities to take photographs

### **Habitats**

Lakes, lagoons, reedbeds, shrublands and grasslands  
(Patagonian Steppe)

### **Climate**

Cold, semi-arid

### **Max group size**

6 + 1 local guide (ask for larger groups)

### **Physical requirements**

The physical difficulty of this tour is low (easy to moderate terrain). However, it includes several long drives on gravel roads.

### **Recommended equipment**

Woolly hat, cap, sunscreen (+30), polarized sunglasses, layered clothing, waterproof jacket, trekking shoes.

### **Departures**

This tour is available anytime from October to March. It requires prior reservation.

### **Price**

If you want a quote for this tour, please *contact us*.

### **Combined with**

This tour can be combined with:

- Full-day birding in Río Gallegos
- Patagonian forest tour (4 days / 3 nights)
- Puma & wildlife safari (5 days / 4 nights)

## Map

### Hooded Grebe tour

#### Locations



El Calafate



Lago Strobel



Estancia La Angostura

#### 5-day tour

