

## VIITH NEOTROPICAL ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS

**Dates.**—The VIIth Neotropical Ornithological Congress will take place from Sunday, 5 October through Saturday 11 October 2003. Working days will be Monday 6, Tuesday 7, Wednesday 8, Friday 10, and Saturday 11 October 2003. Thursday 9 October 2003 will be a congress free day. After the last working session on Saturday 11 October, the congress will end with a banquet, followed by traditional Chilean music and dance.

**Venue.**—Congress Center, in Puerto Varas, Xth Region, Chile (about 10 km N of Puerto Montt, an easy to reach and well-known travel destination in Chile. The Congress Center, with its meeting rooms and related facilities, perched on a hill overlooking Puerto Varas, is only an 800-m walk from downtown where participants will lodge and dine in their selection of hotels, hostels, and eating facilities.

**Host City.**—Puerto Varas is a small, friendly, and picturesque city of about 35,000 people in Chile's beautiful Lake District. The spectacular Volcanoes Osorno (2652 m) and Calbuco (2015 m) can be seen across the Lake from the city and the Congress Center. Puerto Varas has a wide range of accommodations, from modest hospedajes to luxurious 5-star hotels; it has seven banks (obtaining money from your home bank is very easy through conveniently located ATM's). Most residents speak only Spanish, or Spanish and German, although they know a few English words and attempts to communicate by non-Spanish speakers will result in a meaningful exchange. Puerto Varas has several outstanding restaurants (including sea food, several more ethnic kinds of food, and, of course, Chilean fare). In spite of its small size, Puerto Varas is quite a cosmopolitan town, with a well-marked European influence. There are shops, boutiques, and other stores, including sporting goods stores. Congress participants will be able to choose from a variety of lodging alternatives ranging from luxury five-star establishments to ultra-economical hostels. Because our meeting will be during the "off" season for tourists, participants will be able to enjoy the town's tourist-wise facilities and amenities (e.g., the several cybercafes, competitive money exchange businesses, and the many local tour offerings) without paying typical tourist prices.

Puerto Varas is only 18 km from Puerto Montt's El Tepual Airport, a modern facility with several daily flights to and from Santiago, Chile's capital,

only about 1 h and a half away. Several car rental companies operate offices at the airport. Puerto Montt, the nearest large city, with about 150,000 people, is only 10 km away by a new divided highway. Public bus service between Puerto Montt and Puerto Varas is frequent, convenient, and cheap. The administrative seat of Chile's Xth Region, Puerto Montt has excellent hospital facilities, many shops, banks, and restaurants. Its waterfront faces the beautiful Seno de Reloncaví, the northernmost point of the famous Chilean channels, with a grand backdrop of snow capped Andean peaks. Puerto Montt's harbor, Angelmo, is the place to visit for local and superbly fresh seafood, and shops that sell a great assortment of locally knit woollens and leather objects. Early October is spring in the Lakes District of Chile, and plants blossom everywhere in the mild weather. Much of the lushness of southern Chile is due to its rainfall, and so you might expect occasional showers. A raincoat and jacket are recommended. For those interested in becoming acquainted with the area's geography, people, and natural history, we will provide a list of books, maps, and other publications, and relevant web sites on our Congress Meeting web page (under construction). A thorough and reputable tour book (in Spanish) for Chile that we recommend is *TurisTel 2001 (or 2002) Chile*, ISBN [for the 2001 edition] 956-7264-70-8, published and distributed by Turismo y Comunicaciones, S.A., Ave. Santa Maria 0120, Providencia, Santiago, Chile; e-mail: info@turistel.cl.

**Congress Languages.**—English and Spanish will be the working languages of the congress. Translators will be provided for most, if not all sessions.

**Organization.**—The VIIth Neotropical Ornithological Congress of the Neotropical Ornithological Society will be held in conjunction with the VIIth Congreso Chileno de Ornitología of the Unión de Ornitólogos de Chile (UNORCH).

#### Neotropical Congress Officers

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**Scientific Program.**—The scientific program will include plenary lectures, concurrent symposia sessions, oral papers, poster sessions, and round-table discussions. In addition, special evening sessions with talks and films are planned. Details about the Scientific Program will be announced in future issues of *Ornitología Neotropical*, in the NOS webpage (<http://www.neotropicalornithology.org>), and in the VIIth Neotropical Ornithological Congress webpage (the webpage address will appear in the next issue of *Ornitología Neotropical*).

**Proceedings.**—The proceedings of the VII Neotropical Ornithological Congress will be published after the congress as a special issue or supplement of *Ornitología Neotropical*. This publication will be peer-reviewed and edited (see Proceedings Committee, above) and will include the full texts of the plenary lectures and of the symposia papers.

**Ornithological Tours.**—Tours of ornithological interest will be offered during the congress free day, Thursday 9 October 2003, in the environs of Puerto Varas (native forest, lake, estuarine, wetland, and seashore habitats). Highlights might include *Podiceps major*, *Spheniscus magellanicus*, *Theristicus caudatus*, *Merganetta armata*, *Rallus sanuolentus*, *Limosa haemastica*, *Sterna trudeaui*, *Columba araucana*, *Enicognathus ferrugineus*, *Colaptes pitius*, *Cinclodes patagonicus*, *Sylviorthorhynchus desmursii*, *Aphrastura spinicauda* (the emblematic species on the cover of *Ornitología Neotropical*), *Scelorchilus rubecula*, *Phytotoma rara*, and *Phrygilus patagonicus*. A variety of Pre- and Post-congress Tours, each 3-5 days in duration, will be offered to allow congress participants to enjoy a wide array of habitats and birds in Chile, that 4000

km (2500 mile)-long country. These excursions will range from the Atacama desert and high Andes in the far north (hoping to see species such as *Tinamotis pentlandii*, *Phoenicoparrus andinus* and *Phoenicoparrus jamesi*, *Chloephaga melanoptera*, *Vultur gryphus*, *Fulica cornuta*, *Attagis gayi*, *Geositta punensis*, *Muscisaxicola albifrons*, *Conirostrum tamarugense*, and *Phrygilus atriceps*), to the Patagonian steppe and *Nothofagus* forests of the archipelagic zone of the far south (with such birds as *Pterocnemia pennata*, *Diomedea melanophris*, *Fulmarus glacialis*, *Pelecanoides magellani*, *Chloephaga hybrida*, *Tachyeres patachonicus*, *Pluvianellus socialis*, *Geositta Antarctica*, and *Sicalis lebruni*), including the central area with its Mediterranean-type climate (with the possibility of sighting *Phegornis mitchellii*, *Chilia melanura*, *Pteroptochos megapodius*, *Scelorchilus albicollis*, *Tachuris rubrigastra*, *Mimus thenca*, and *Phrygilus gayi*). Details about these excursions will be published at a later date.

**Official Host.**—The host organization in Chile is the Unión de Ornitólogos de Chile (UNORCH), the national ornithological society of Chile. Founded in 1987, it was incorporated as a non-profit organization under Chilean law in 1989. UNORCH promotes the development of ornithological research in Chile, supports the conservation and protection of birds and their habitats, and diffuses ornithological knowledge and education throughout Chile. UNORCH publishes a journal, *Boletín Chileno de Ornitología*, which includes the results of scientific research on Chilean birds, and a newsletter, *Boletín Informativo*, which includes ornithological news and information about events and publications on the birds of Chile and other parts of South America. Street address is: UNORCH, Avenida Providencia 1108, Local 32, Providencia, Santiago, Chile; mailing address: UNORCH, Casilla 13.183, Santiago-21, Chile; e-mail: unorch@entelchile.net.