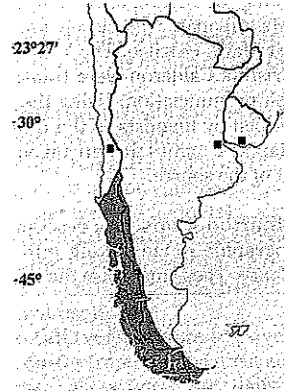


Yahgan: **Lána**, Lana, Kanára
 Mapudungun: **Kurüpütriu**, Concona, Concoma, Rere, Pitigüe
 Spanish: **Carpintero negro**, **Carpintero gigante**
 English: **Magellanic Woodpecker**
 Scientific: *Campephilus magellanicus*

The Magellanic Woodpecker is the largest woodpecker species in South America and, probably, the world. It belongs to the same genus (*Campephilus*) as the two largest known species of woodpeckers, the Imperial Woodpecker (*C. imperialis*) and the Ivory-Billed Woodpecker (*C. principalis*). Both species inhabited forests of the Northern Hemisphere and are presumed to be extinct today. The Magellanic Woodpecker is endemic to the *Nothofagus* forests of southern Chile and Argentina. It is so specialized in its habitat requirements that it nests solely in trees of the genus *Nothofagus* in whose trunks it excavates rounded cavities. These holes



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provide nesting sites not only for woodpecker families, but also for numerous other cavity-nesting birds, such as the Austral Parakeet (*Enicognathus ferrugineus*) and the Austral Pygmy Owl (*Glaucidium nanum*). This woodpecker creates homes for a variety of birds and is, therefore, a keystone species in the austral forest ecosystems.



Magellanic Woodpeckers also require old trees to obtain the insect larvae it digs out from rotten wood with its strong beak and tongue. To find appropriate trees to feed upon and live in, this woodpecker requires large territories, in addition, it nests mainly in the interior of old-growth forests, more than 100 m away from forest edges. For these reasons, Magellanic Woodpeckers are very sensitive to the degradation of the austral temperate forests and their replacement by exotic plantations of *Eucalyptus* and pine (*Pinus radiata*). Therefore, they require special conservation measures if they are to avoid becoming extinct like their congeneric species from the Northern Hemisphere temperate forests. Fortunately, it is not too late to save the Magellanic Woodpecker. Although it is a severely endangered species in Chile, it is still possible to observe males moving around with their bright-red, long crests and to listen to woodpecker families calling and pecking in the dense and remote forests that are still intact.

In territories that preserve large expanses of austral forests there will almost always

be small families of woodpeckers marking their presence with the loud drumming-noise of their pecking. On Chiloé Island, where the woodpecker is known as *rere* or "rooster of the mount," their "wood cutter's" drumming echoes throughout the mountains. This intense sound is associated with the chopping of the mythic *trakco's** hatchet. The Magellanic Woodpecker also receives the Mapudungun name of *kuriipütriu*, which describes it as a black (*kuri*) carpenter (*pütriu*).

The large Magellanic Woodpecker or *rere* reaches the most southerly distribution of all the woodpeckers in the world, inhabiting even the forests of the Cape Horn Archipelago, where the Yahgan know it as *lana*. The name *lana* derives from the Yahgan word *lan* that means tongue, referring to the long and strong tongue that the woodpecker uses to extract the larvae. The Yahgan grandmother Úrsula Calderón remembers that when she was a little girl, she very much admired the skill with which the

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woodpeckers, or *lana*, pecked holes and extracted grubs or white larvae with their tongues, which they swallowed throwing

their heads back. Her father, Juan Calderón, told her that woodpeckers were descended from humans.



Yahgan story. The Magellanic Woodpecker or *lana* in the forests of the Cape Horn Archipelago accompanied the Yahgan women when collecting *dihueñes* in the forests. A Yahgan grandfather, Juan Calderón, said the origin of this beautiful bird of the austral forests goes back to ancestral times when birds were still humans.

In those remote times, a brother fell in love with his own sister and tried every kind of trickery to be with her and sleep together. His sister noticed this intention and eluded her brother each time to avoid taboo relations, but in the end she was of two minds: half of her wanted her brother and half of her did not.

The brother, who continued thinking of pretexts to bring her away from the *akar*, or hut, discovered one day giant, red *chaura* or Prickly Heath (*amai*, *Gaultheria mucronata*) berries in a forest gap and quickly went to tell his sister, "I have found enormous *chauras* in a place in the forest. You should go there and collect them." The sister took her basket and went into the forest, while her brother followed without anyone noticing and hid himself in a place where his sister had to pass. When she came sufficiently close, he embraced her, and they fell to the ground giving course to their love.

When they stood up, they converted into birds and flew like *lana*. Since that time, they live together in the forests, and the brother carries over his head a red crest that reminds one of the color of those big *chaura* fruits.

* The *trauco* is a small mythic inhabitant of the forests of Chiloé Island. He has a human figure and dresses with branches of the vine *Luzuriaga radicans*. He carries a stone hatchet that he uses to gather fruits and vegetables, and glean food from rotten trunks. He walks through the forests pecking with the hatchet, like a *rere*.

Yahgan: **Túto**, Tútu

Mapudungun: **Tiftifken**, Churin, Chercan, Chircan, Chochif

Spanish: **Churrín**, Churrín andino, Pa' atrás

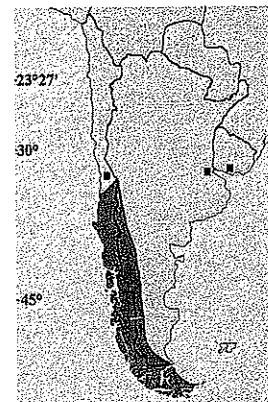
English: **Magellanic Tapaculo**, Andean Tapaculo

Scientific: *Scytalopus magellanicus*

From far away, the tiny Andean or Magellanic Tapaculo is heard when it emits its intense territorial call "*churin, churin, churin*." The Mapudungun name *churin* echoes the call, and has been adopted by Spanish-speaking Chileans. As the *Lafkenche* poet Lorenzo Aillapan explains, "because of the regularity of the *churin*'s vocalization it calls to mind a pocket-watch." Therefore, the *Lafkenche* have metaphorically named this little bird the *tiftifken* or "pocket-watch bird".

The Magellanic Tapaculo is dark and difficult to see because, like the Chucao Tapaculo and the Black Throated Huet-Huet, it lives immersed in the dense understory vegetation of the austral forests, preferably near streams of water. However, in contrast to its relatives, it sometimes ventures forth to the margins of the forest and even is found in dense brush habitat, especially on the islands in the southern channels. Perhaps because of its ability to live in diverse habitats, the Magellanic Tapaculo is the only Rhynocryptidae to reach the world's southernmost forests. Although the Tapaculo family is tropical in origin, the Magellanic Tapaculo was first described based on a specimen collected in Tierra del Fuego in the 18th century; for this reason, *magellanicus* is its species name.

The Magellanic Tapaculo feeds on



insects while it moves among the lower branches and the ground. In the understory, in trunk cavities or between large branches, it carefully builds its nest with fibers, roots, brackens, lichens, and mosses. Its unique ability to build these nests contrasts with the other tapaculo species of the austral forests. Perhaps, the skill of the Magellanic Tapaculo inspires the Yahgan story that honors this bird, *túto*, with its terrestrial lifestyle and poor flying capacity, for inventing the *anans*, or canoes. These canoes were made of *shapea* bark, or Magellan Evergreen Beech (*Nothofagus betuloides*), and allowed the Yahgans to navigate through the channels, bays and fjords of the Cape Horn Region.