Paraguay designates another Ramsar Site in the Chaco

20 August 2004

Paraguay

Following Laguna Chaco Lodge, listed in October 2003, Laguna Teniente Rojas Silva in Boquerón department joins the Ramsar List as of 14 July 2004 as the 6th Ramsar Site in the country. Fundación DeSdelChaco was instrumental in supporting the designation and preparing the Ramsar Information Sheet. As described by Ramsar's Iván Dario Valencia, based upon the Ramsar Information Sheet, the Laguna Teniente Rojas Silva (8,470 hectares, 22°38′S 059°03′W) is part of the watershed of the Riacho Yakaré Sur in the Paraguayan Chaco and alternates between freshwater and brackish conditions. It supports colonies of Southern cattail Typha dominguensis, Tropical duck-weed Pistia stratiotes and West Indian marsh grass Hymenachne amplexicaulis, amidst a landscape of xerophytic forest, subhumid forest, seasonally flooded shrubs and forests and savannah. The site hosts several endangered and protected species such as the greater Rhea Rhea americana, the Coscoroba Swan Coscoroba coscoroba, the Chilean Flamingo Phoenicopterus chilensis, the Giant Brazilian Otter Pteronura brasiliensis and the Southern Three-Banded Armadillo Tolypeutes matacus. The indigenous shrub Lophocarpinia aculeatifolia and the Jacare Caiman yacare are other noteworthy species of the site. The area is part of a private estate whose owners are committed to wetland conservation. Small scaled agriculture and cattle ranching, as well as local hunting by indigenous people, are the main human uses of the site, while its greatest threats are salinisation and desertification, which have already occurred in neighboring areas. Ramsar Site No. 1390.