

Project Update: June 2014

The project's scope greatly expanded geographically from initial study design, from a single site of 4,000 ha ("La Corona", Tacuarembó Department) to multiple sites totaling more than 20,000 ha dispersed over an area of 1,200 km², expanding the study area into Rivera Department. This improved sampling representation and replication of treatments by completing the chronosequence of plantation age classes (from newly planted to pre-harvest stands) and native habitat conditions that are typically found in the Northern Campos grasslands of Uruguay. Treatments included newly planted, mid-rotation and pre-harvest stands of pine and eucalyptus plantations, native lowland and up-hill grasslands, wetlands and cliff and riparian native forests. The project is currently on final stage of field data collection. Bird sampling being concluded, vegetation and habitat sampling is currently being conducted, with expected completion within the next 2-3 weeks. A total of 1,558 10-minute bird point counts were completed within the breeding season (October 2013 to March 2014), over 609 different points. One third of the bird count data have so far been digitized, throwing over 7,000 individuals recorded from 130 different species.



Left: Field bird data acquisition during a 10-minute point count in an open riparian forest condition. Right: Burrowing Owl (*Speotyto cunicularia*), a typical inhabitant of pampean grasslands.



Left: Mosaic view of some of the habitat types considered in this study: mid-rotation pine stands, pre-harvest eucalyptus stands, lowland grasslands, riparian and cliff native forests. **Right:** Riparian forest habitat type. Vertical profile of vegetation was determined using a Nudds board and cover of life forms with the point-line intercept method.