

## Project Update: October 2009

The first part of the field work has successfully finished. Between the 6<sup>th</sup> and the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2009, we have traveled 1500 km of national highways and provincial complementary looking for trails of the species. We have found sites with recent activity, sites with ancient activity where cattle are present and historic sites where the species was present and currently not found. The actual population of *Ctenomys magellanicus* is divided by a natural geographic barrier, the Rio Grande River. In this first field work, we captured 22 individuals (11 from the north of the Rio Grande and 11 from the south) from which samples were taken for DNA extraction at the laboratory. We have also visited the farms of the area where we conducted a small survey to determine the presence/absence of the species to compare the old distribution of the species with the current distribution.

In the lab, the next step will be the DNA extraction and the amplification of D-loop and microsatellites of these samples. In December 2009 we will continue with the fieldwork, to collect more samples from other localities and to study the old and the actual distribution.

