

Importance of native bamboo for understory birds in Chilean temperate forests

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In South American temperate rainforests, five endemic understory birds (four Rhinocryptidae and one Furnariidae) are often associated with the main understory plant, the native bamboo *Chusquea valdiviensis* (Poaceae: Bambusoideae). We studied the effects of bamboo cover on species abundance and richness of those understory birds and explored the functions of bamboo as food resource and escape cover. In Chiloé Island (42°S), southern Chile, we selected four old-growth forest patches >100 ha and in each patch conducted bird surveys in six plots with >70% understory cover. Three plots were dominated by native bamboo and three plots had a sparse bamboo cover. Bird abundance (point counts) was significantly correlated with both total understory cover and percentage of bamboo cover but was not correlated with other kinds of understory plant cover. Bird species richness was positively correlated with bamboo cover and negatively correlated with other kinds of understory cover but unrelated to t