

Sure Signs

16 February 2008

Many times when you see a highway warning sign you never know if they are worth heeding or not.

For instance, down here in Patagonia, if you see a guanaco warning sign, you might, or might not see one.



Photos by Stephanie Hackney

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The same goes for the rhea, you may see the sign, but you might or might not actually see the bird.



Photos by Stephanie Hackney



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And that is certainly true for the fox, you'll rarely see the sign and you will probably never actually see a fox.



Photo by Stephanie Hackney



Photos by Douglas Hackney

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But there is one sign that you don't even have to see to know you are certain to heed its warning.



Down here, the wind blows – hard.

At the bottom of the planet there is a band of ocean encircling Antarctica that runs continuously around the planet. In that band of ocean the wind screams unimpeded, except for the southern cone of South America that hangs down and blocks its path. That southern cone is where we are, Patagonia.

The wind down here very much resents its path being hindered by this land and it seeks its revenge every day. The wind claws at the land, it rips at the land, it blasts at the land, and it ceaselessly, relentlessly, viciously blows – hard.

You might not consider the wind a hazard of the environment. You might not think the wind can grind you down, wear you out and suck the energy out of your being like a hungry alien in a Saturday afternoon B movie. If you think the wind is benign and relatively harmless, you've never been to Patagonia.

Down here, the sure signs are the wind warning signs. Down here it isn't just the flags that are tattered.



Sure Signs

Unless otherwise noted, all photos by Douglas Hackney



Photo by Jorge Valdes

Douglas and Stephanie Hackney are on a two to three year global overland expedition.
You can learn more about their travels at: <http://www.hackneys.com/travel/index.htm>