



American Birding
ASSOCIATION

ABA-Endorsed Tours

Enjoy Very Special Birding

2004 - 2005

Short Trips for Target Species

Dovekie, Alcids, and Boreal species: This trip focuses on finding Dovekies in harbor or other sheltered site where they can be well seen. On some winters we have had many other Atlantic alcids; we may find boreal passerines, too, if snow conditions permit observation in the forests. From Halifax, Nova Scotia. Blake Maybank leads. 6-10 January 2005.

Yellow Rail, Whooping Crane, and Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl: The trip works the Texas coastal plain from Houston. We wade the brackish marshes for the rail, take a boat ride for the cranes, and visit a ranch where the owls reside. P.D. Hulce is the leader. 12-16 January 2005.

Rufous-bellied Hummingbird, White-collared Seedeater, and "LRGV" Specialties: we cover the lower Rio Grande Valley from the Gulf to San Ygnacio in the Chihuahuan Desert country of Texas. The trip usually gets all of the Valley specialties and a vagrant species or two from Mexico, as well. From McAllen, Texas, led by P.D. Hulce. 17-23 January 2005.

Colorado Chickens: White-tailed Ptarmigan, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Greater Sage Grouse, Gunnison Sage Grouse, Lesser Prairie-Chicken, Greater Prairie-Chicken. Most are seen on leks at good range. Three rosy finches at feeders. Blue Grouse is usually seen, as well. From Denver with Nick Komar leading. 8-14 April and 16-22 April 2005.

Black-capped Vireo, Golden-cheeked Warbler: Travel into the Texas Hill Country for the two target birds at the time of year when they are vocalizing and the fields are ablaze with wildflowers. We usually get some "Valley" species such as Cave Swallow. From San Antonio. P.D. Hulce leads. 17-20 April 2005.

Collina Warbler, Gray Vireo, Montezuma Quail, Common Black-Hawk: Travel through Big Bend National Park and on to the Davis Mountains for the target species plus Lucifer Hummingbird and Varied Bunting. From Midland-Odessa, Texas, led by P.D. Hulce. 20-24 April 2005. Bob Odear at OBServ Tours, Inc., 3901 Trimble Road, Nashville, TN 37215; (615) 292-2739; observ@bellsouth.net; www.observtours.com.

North Dakota Prairie Birds: Le Conte's, Baird's, Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows; Sprague's Pipit, six species of grebes, and woodland songbirds such as Mourning Warbler and grosbeaks; Ferruginous and Swainson's Hawks, and much more. Schedule your personalized tour now. Buffalo Commons Birding Safaris, 2704 10th Avenue NW, Mandan, ND 58554; (701) 228-5271 or (701) 663-4980; igibson@ndak.net; barnhart@btinet.net.

Pailia, Akopa, Akapolaau, Amakihl, Apapane, Elepalo, Hawaii Creeper, Iwi, Io, Omai, and Pueo. From Kailua-Kona (Hawaii). One and two-day packages any time of year. Hawaii Forest & Trail, 74-5035 B Queen Kaahumanu Hwy, Kailua-Kona, HI 96740; (800) 464-1993 info@hawaii-forest.com.

Bahama Parrot, Bahama Woodstar, Western Spindalis, Bahama Swallow, Bahama Yellow-throat, Black-faced Grassquit, Greater Antillean Bullfinch, Bahama Mockingbird; breeding tropicbird, Sooty Tern, Brown Noddy. 22 Bahamian specialties in all. Abaco, Bahamas: led by Ron Paggiaro. One, two, and three-day packages available year round. Abaco Outback, 5530 NW 21st Terrace, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309; (242) 367-5358; info@abacoutback.com.

Southern California

From Los Angeles. Coastal marshes for terns and gulls, coastal scrub for California Gnatcatcher, interior desert birds at remarkable Anza-Borrego State Park, the Salton Sea, and moister, higher elevations for regional passerines like Oak Titmouse and Clark's Nutcracker. Most California specialties are possible on this trip to a very birdy region. Robb Hamilton is the leader; limited to seven birders. September 18-27, 2005. Bob Odear at OBServ Tours, Inc., 3901 Trimble Road, Nashville, TN 37215; (615) 292-2739; observ@bellsouth.net; www.observtours.com.

Add southern California specialties to your life list on this enjoyable trip that hits all the birding hotspots in the area, including the Salton Sea. Led by Bob Miller. January 2005 dates to be announced. South-west Birders; (760) 455-1413; bob.miller@mindspring.com.

South Florida and the Dry Tortugas

We visit at the height of spring migration for Florida specialties, exotics, seabird colonies and possible Caribbean strays, including a three-day trip to the Dry Tortugas. Led by Adrian Binns. 17-26 April 2005. Jaeger Tours, (215) 364-4407; binns@jaegertours.net; www.jaegertours.net.

Gambell, Nome, and Pribilofs

Bird spring migration at the Pribilofs (St. Paul Island), Gambell, and Nome with a small group of hearty birders. Peak time for vagrants and Alaskan specialties. Stay in Siberian Yupik Eskimo home in Gambell; search for Bristle-thighed Curlew outside Nome; seabird colonies and fur seals rookeries on St. Paul. Small group, reasonable price. Pribilofs, 23-25 May 2005; Gambell and Nome, 27 May-4 June 2005. Wilderness Birding Adventures, 5515 Wild Mountain Road, Eagle River, AK 99577; (907) 694-7442; wildbird@alaska.net.

Caribbean

Island Endemics

OBServ Tours, Inc. has put together a package of Caribbean birding tours that focus on island endemics

Bahamas Endemics: Abaco and Andros islands are visited to get all the species found only in the Bahamas, Cuba, and Cayman, because there is no one island in the Bahamas that offers them all. There are 11 such species, and the trip usually sees about 90 species in all. The trip is led by Paul Dean of Nassau. 7-13 February 2005.

Jamaica Endemics: The interior of Jamaica is ruggedly beautiful, and the birds are fabulous. There are 28 endemics from Mandeville to Cockpit Country to Hardwar Gap to Ecclesdown. All are usually seen on this trip, along with 60 other species. The trip is led by Ann Sutton and/or Brandon Hay. 14-20 February 2005.

Cayman Islands: This short trip to a tourist haven targets two endemic species and features a visit to the largest Red-footed Booby colony in the Americas. Visit all three islands for different species. Led by Brandon Hay. 20-23 February 2005.

Puerto Rico Endemics: Puerto Rico has widely varying ecological zones, from xeric thorn forest to salt marshes to moist forests to high mountains. Of course that results in a wide variety of birds. There are 17 Puerto Rico endemics, and we usually see nearly 100 species. Led by José Colon. 25-29 March 2005.

Dominican Republic Endemics: Our oldest West Indies tour takes you to the southwest portion of the country, where dry thorn forest covers the lowlands and moist forest clothes the great Baharuco Mountain range. There is even a huge salt lake below sea level. As always, diversity of habitat leads to diversity of bird species. There are 25 Dominican endemics, and we usually find a total of approximately 100 species. Led by Kate Wallace. 3-8 April 2005. OBServ Tours, Inc., 3901 Trimble Road, Nashville, TN 37215; (615) 292-2739; observ@bellsouth.net; www.observtours.com.

Cuban Endemics

Our fourth winter with the ABA in Cuba will feature two birding programs: A 12-day itinerary led by Brett Walker and Arturo Kirkconnell covering Cuba's western highlands, northern archipelago, eastern reserves, and Zapata Peninsula, and a 10-day itinerary led by Dr. William Suarez and Nancy Norman to the western mountains and parks and the Zapata Peninsula. Legal travel programs approved by the U.S. Treasury Department. 17 February-1 March and 3-12 March 2005. Gary Markowski; (860) 350-6752; Cubbirds@aol.com; CBSP, P.O. Box 355, New Milford, CT 06776.

Trinidad and Tobago

Join Richard French, author of the Guide to the Birds of Trinidad and Tobago, to explore the rich avifauna of this beautiful island nation. From the new Cuffie River Lodge in the forests of Tobago and the famed Asa Wright Nature Centre in Trinidad's Northern Range, we will enjoy the best tropical birding in the West Indies. 9-19 January 2005. Caligo Ventures, (800) 426-7781; atrip@caligo.com.

Mexico

Oaxaca

Join Michael Malone birding in Mexico's Oaxaca state. Visit the Valley of Oaxaca, Monte Albán, and the Pacific coast at Puerto Escondido seeking Mexican endemics. 29 January-6 February 2005. Siemer & Hand Travel, 750 Battery St. Suite 300, San Francisco, CA 94111; (800) 451-4321; (415) 788-4000; fax (415) 788-4133; travel@siemerhand.com.

Yucatán

The trip begins in Cozumel with several insular endemics, goes south through the "Maya Riviera" to the famed Sian Ka'an refuge, then heads west across the peninsula to the new Calakmul Biosphere Reserve, which is on a high plateau that extends into Guatemala. Finally we bird near the west coast on the Gulf of Campeche. More than 25 endemics may be encountered, and about 150 other species. Leader is David Bacab. 5-15 February 2005. OBServ Tours, Inc., 3901 Trimble Road, Nashville, TN 37215; (615) 292-2739; observ@bellsouth.net; www.observtours.com.

Southern Veracruz and the Tuxtlas

At one time this area produced the highest Christmas count in the world. The parts of the area have been converted to agricultural uses, but this remains one of the most productive birding areas in Mexico. We cover the coastal plain as well as the Tuxtla volcanic complex. There are 26 species of special interest. Bob Odear and Bob Straub lead. 3-10 March 2005. OBServ Tours, Inc., 3901 Trimble Road, Nashville, TN 37215; (615) 292-2739; observ@bellsouth.net; www.observtours.com.

Central Veracruz Sierra

Beginning in coastal Veracruz, we head immediately to Xalapa, Capital of the state. Birding from there, we explore various elevations and rainfall zones. There are 18 endemics in this area, a place of great civility

and beauty. Bob Odear and Bob Straub lead. 30 March-3 April 2005. OBServ Tours, Inc., 3901 Trimble Road, Nashville, TN 37215; (615) 292-2739; observ@bellsouth.net; www.observtours.com

Northeastern Mexico

This is an area of desert and high forested mountains. We begin in Monterrey and go immediately to the high, dry plateau near Saltillo for three endemics. We next head south along the base of the Sierra Madre Occidental to the famed area around Rancho Cielo and finally to mountains west of Ciudad Monte in southern Tamaulipas and San Luis Potosí. Approximately 30 endemics are possible. P.D. Hulce and Bob Odear lead. 14-17 May 2005. OBServ Tours, Inc., 3901 Trimble Road Nashville, TN 37215; (615) 292-2739; observ@bellsouth.net; www.observtours.com.

Europe

North Wales and Norfolk

Highlands, islands, and wetlands: the contrast of the mountains, oak woods, and moorlands of North Wales and the coastal plain of North Norfolk may offer the most diverse range of habitats currently available on a United Kingdom tour. All of the highlights from of spring in these remarkable regions can be found. With ample time to enjoy the beauty of these unspoiled regions, this tour offers a first class introduction to birding in the UK. Led by Neil Donaghy and Steve Cale. 7-20 May 2005. Neil Donaghy, Celtic Bird Tours, 84 Coity Road, Bridgend CF31 1LJ, Wales, UK; telephone (+44) 01656 645709; cell (+44) 07971 983227; Birds@celticbirdtours.org.uk; www.celticbirdtours.com.

Pacific Ocean

Hawaii

We visit three islands—Kauai, Maui, and the Big Island—each markedly different, including the geologically oldest and youngest. We visit rain-forests and deserts and explore the incredible variety of habitats at elevations ranging from sea level to more than 12,000 feet, to see the greatest number of bird species, both endemic and introduced. Rob Pacheco and other professional birders will lead this group. 8-18 March 2005. Siemer & Hand Travel, 750 Battery St. Suite 300, San Francisco, CA 94111 (800) 451-4321; (415) 788-4000; fax (415) 788-4133; travel@siemerhand.com.

Fiji, Vanuatu, and New Caledonia

Cruise on the *Clipper Odyssey* from the Fiji islands to New Caledonia in the South Pacific, an area rich in endemic bird species. With well-appointed stops to see island endemics via zodiacs, Clipper Cruise Line has agreed to modify their traditional itinerary to make this cruise for birders. Beginning in Fiji, the *Odyssey* cruises to small islands of the Vanuatu Republic including Vila, Pele, Espiritu Santo, Ambrym, and Tanna Islands before arriving in Lifou and other islands in New Caledonia. ABA Leader: Board member Mike Ord. 15-26 November 2004. In trav/Clipper Cruise Line, 11969 Westline Industrial Drive, St. Louis, MO 63146-3220; (800) 456-0020; groupres@intrav.com.

Galapagos Islands

Join this short cruise among the Enchanted Isles aboard the Santa Cruz built for exploration of these islands. Many of the islands remain the same as when Darwin himself saw them. Come see Darwin's finches and other island endemics. 22-28 May 2005. Clipper Cruise Line, (800) 814-9393, x6813; csperry@intrav.com or (800) 456-0020, groupres@intrav.com.

Passage to Easter Island Polynesia

Cruise aboard the beautiful 106-guest Orion from Valparaiso, Chile to Papeete, Tahiti. Island stops include islands of the San Fernandez Archipelago, Rapa Nui (Easter Island), the Pitcairn Archipelago, and the Tuamotus, ending at Papeete, Tahiti. Pelagic birding and island specialties. 19 February-15 March 2005. With Robert Kiste and Robert Woollacott. Travel Dynamics International 132 East 70th St. New York, NY 10021 (800) 257-5767 www.traveldynamicsinternational.com, sales@traveldynamicsinternational.com.

Asia

China

This expedition explores China's geographical diversity. Join us as we visit many of the best birding locales in China. Led by some of China's foremost ornithologists. April/May 2005. Siemer & Hand Travel, 750 Battery St. Suite 300, San Francisco, CA 94111 (800) 451-4321; (415) 788-4000; fax (415) 788-4133; travel@siemerhand.com.

Africa

Morocco


Morocco boasts the richest bird life in North Africa, and along with its endemic, rare, and specialty birds, its Moorish and Berber culture and stunning scenery make this trip truly memorable. Led by Adrian Binns. 3-19 March 2005. Jaeger Tours, (215) 364-4407; binns@jaegertours.net; www.jaegertours.net.

For Tour Codes go to www.americanbirding.org



*Birds aren't the only ones who flock to Alabama
for our spring and fall migrations.*

Birding enthusiasts from all across the country have spotted something truly amazing: Alabama. Our Coastal Birding Trail is host to hundreds of species, from Herons to Loons, Plovers to Peeps. And our spring and fall migrations make Alabama truly worth the journey. FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 800-ALABAMA OR LOG ON TO 800ALABAMA.COM.

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